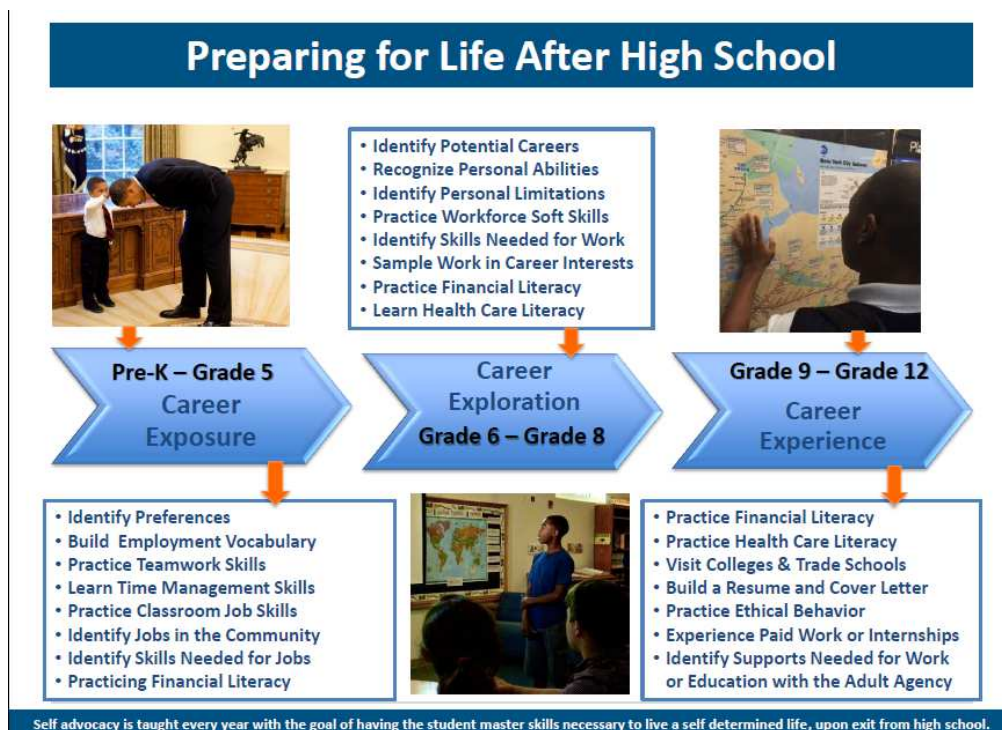




## Transition Services and Programs and Supports

**Secondary transition** is the process of preparing students for life after they leave high school, including participation in post-secondary education or training, employment, and community living. Secondary transition training begins in Pre-Kindergarten, with the ultimate outcome of students living independently based on their preferences, abilities and limitations.



DCPS has implemented a number of initiatives to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities and provide them with the opportunity to improve job skills, earn credits, and to learn the self-advocacy skills needed to live as independently as possible. The Transition Team has designed a website for everything related to secondary transition. [WWW.DCPSTRANSITION.COM](http://WWW.DCPSTRANSITION.COM)

## Central Office Based Programs

### Project SEARCH

Project SEARCH is a competitive one-year, high school transition program that provides skills training and work experience for accepted students ages 18-21.

At Project SEARCH, students work three 10-12 week supported employment rotations in a variety of offices within a government agency or private organization. To participate, each student has to apply to the program and be accepted by the selection committee.

At Project SEARCH, students learn employable skills in the classroom and practical job skills while at work. As a result, students work with a variety of resources to support them. At the job site, students have access to a training classroom, a business liaison, mentors and different rotational internships for on-the-job training. Students also have an instructor and transition coordinator.

Through Project SEARCH, students are eligible for career counseling, job coaching, placement services and follow-along services with the District's Rehabilitation Services Administration. Students participating in the Project SEARCH program will have access to job coaches provided by the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

DCPS has partnered with Project SEARCH since the 2009-10 school year. More than 70 DCPS students have participated in the program, serving at the Departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services. Teachers often refer students to apply to Project SEARCH, but students also can seek these programs out for themselves and apply.

For more information about Project SEARCH or to learn more about the application process, please email [osi.transition@dc.gov](mailto:osi.transition@dc.gov).

### Admissions Criteria

- Must be on the IEP Certificate Track
- Students must agree that their participation in this program will conclude their enrollment in school
- The minimum age for the program is 18 and the maximum age is 21
- Strong attendance record is preferred
- Desire to work in an office setting

### Competitive Employment Opportunity (CEO) Program

The CEO Program is an innovative professional development, mentoring, and paid internship program that matches high school students with disabilities to mentors who work in their career fields of interest. The program can be broken down into three primary components:

**Pairing:** Students apply online at the beginning of the school year. Students who are selected for the CEO Program are paired with mentors who work in their career fields of interest. Student participants work with their mentors on career focused projects twice a month, after school, January through June from 4:30 – 6:30, at the National Youth Transition Center.

**Learning:** CEO Program students participate in bi-monthly professional development sessions that focus on job skills and financial literacy.

**Earning:** Upon completion of the program, mentors assist student participants in securing paid summer internships at their place of employment.

For more details, please visit our website at [dcpsceo.com](https://dcpsceo.com).

To head directly to the *Frequently Asked Questions* section of our website [click here](#).

For updates, news, and notes, follow us [@DCPSCEOProgram](#).

## Transition Supports

### Transfer of Rights

In accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (20 USC § 1415(m)) and the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR) (Title 5 § 3023.1), rights given to parents under Part B of IDEA automatically transfer to a child with a disability when that child reaches the age of eighteen. This also applies to youth who are incarcerated. To comply with IDEA and the DCMR, LEA Representatives, special education teachers, case managers, and IEP team members shall adhere to the following guidelines when parental rights transfer to an adult student.

In the District of Columbia, a student shall be presumed competent to assume rights upon reaching age 18, including the rights to make all educational decisions and sign legal documents. In some instances a court may find the adult student incompetent and create a legal guardianship in which a parent or other adult is granted the power to make all decisions for the adult student. However, there are alternatives to guardianship in which family members or former guardians can make educational decisions for or support adult students in the decision-making process; even they are competent and capable of making decisions on their own.

Beginning when the student is in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, but in no cases later than the year the student will turn 16 and in all subsequent IEP meetings before the student's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, the LEA Representative shall:

- Inform parents and students that parental rights under IDEA Part B will transfer to the student when the student reaches age 18, unless the student has been determined, by court order, to be incompetent.
- Offer parents information on the various ways in which they continue to offer support to their adult student, including supported decision making.
- If parents express concern regarding the ability of their student to assume rights, LEA Representatives shall refer parents to the following organizations for more information:
  - ARC of DC, 415 Michigan Ave., NE, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20017. [arcdc@arcdc.net](mailto:arcdc@arcdc.net). 202-636-2950.
  - Quality Trust for Individuals with Disabilities, 5335 Wisconsin Avenue NW< Suite 825, Washington, DC 20015. (202)448-1450
  - Department on Disability Services (DDS), 1125 15th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005. [dds@dc.gov](mailto:dds@dc.gov). (202) 730-1700

- The Department of Human Services (DHS), 64 New York Avenue, NE, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Washington, DC 20002. [dhs@dc.gov](mailto:dhs@dc.gov), 202-671-4200
- DC Superior Court, Probate Division, 500 Indiana Ave, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Washington, DC 20001. 202-879-9640.
- Review the procedural safeguards document (*Caring for Our Students with Disabilities: A Procedural Manual for Parents*) with parents and students.
- Verify in SEDS and document in the IEP meeting notes that the transfer of rights was discussed, confirming that both the student and the parent were informed that parental rights under IDEA will transfer to the student upon reaching the age of majority.

The LEA Representative shall convene an IEP team meeting as soon as possible after the student's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday to confirm the transfer of parental rights to the student. This meeting may be combined with the student's annual IEP review meeting if appropriate.

At the meeting following the student's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, the LEA Representative shall:

- Generate a pre-transfer of rights document in SEDS under the Student/Parent Information section. For more information, see the SEDS Resource Site at <https://sites.google.com/a/dc.gov/seds-help-resources/feedback/video/seds-basic-user-training-course/module-3-student-parent-information>
- Inform parents and students that parental rights under IDEA Part B transferred to the student on the student's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, unless the student has been determined incompetent or the student has executed and presented to the school for review a valid educational power of attorney.
- Discuss the rights that accrue to the student on the student's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, as outlined in IDEA Part B and the procedural safeguards manual (*Caring for Our Students with Disabilities: A Procedural Manual for Parents*).
- Review the "Notice of Transfer of Parental Rights" form and procedural safeguards manual (*Caring for Our Students with Disabilities: A Procedural Manual for Parents*) with parents and students.
- Obtain signatures from the parent and student on the "Notice of Transfer of Parental Rights" form.
- At this meeting, the LEA representative should reiterate that the adult student has the option of ensuring that their parents remain informed and active in the special education process through supported decision-making. The LEA Representative must provide a copy of the consent for their parent to remain involved through the supported decision making process.
- Fax the completed "Notice of Transfer of Parental Rights" form into SEDS, verifying that both the student and the parent have been informed that parental rights under IDEA transferred to the student on the student's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- Additionally, if the adult student and their parent wish to create a supported decision-making network either at the meeting or following the meeting, both the student letter and the "Supported Decision-Making Request Form" release must be uploaded into SEDS with a miscellaneous fax sheet titled, "Supported Decision-Making Network Form".

## Supported Decision Making

When a student turns 18, parents and other IEP team members should keep in mind that the ability to make sound, reasoned decisions is a skill acquired over time, and that students with disabilities would benefit from the opportunity to practice making decisions in a supported environment. Even though

educational rights are essentially automatically transferred to a student with a disability at age 18, there are still ways to grant parents some ability to assist and be considered in the educational decision-making process, without completely taking away an individual's rights through a guardianship hearing. Supported decision-making is a method by which either parents or other adults the student chooses can remain involved in the educational decision-making process and form the student's network:

- **Supported decision-making:** Supported decision-making is when a student over the age of 18 years retains their rights as the ultimate decision-maker but consents to let parents continue to be involved. It is essentially an option in which families or other adults the adult student chooses for their educational decision-making network remain engaged while children keep formal rights.
  - **Steps to creating a supported decision-making network:**
    - Parents must have the student sign the "Supported Decision-Making Request Form" allowing the parent, former guardian, or some other adult of the student's choosing have access to educational records and information, including all educational notices sent to the student.
    - School staff, the parent, or other adult of the adult student's choosing should assist the student in completing the "Supported Decision-Making Request Form".
      - Note: Although educational rights under IDEA Part B transfer to the student, parents continue to be allowed access to their child's education records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 USC § 1232 g) if the student is the parent's dependent, as defined in Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code. When the student is a dependent of the parents, the parents will also continue to receive meeting notices, but may only participate in these meetings if allowed by the student.
    - Both the student letter and the "Supported Decision-Making Request Form" release should be uploaded in SEDS.

## Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA)

RSA, which is a division of the DC Department on Disability Services, provides services to adults whose disabilities are a barrier to finding and maintaining competitive employment. In partnership with DCPS, RSA can begin working with DCPS students as early as age 14 to begin the process of determining whether their disability will be a barrier to finding and maintaining competitive employment.

DCPS and RSA work together to determine whether a student is eligible to receive RSA services.

For eligible students likely to face barriers to employment after leaving high school, RSA can provide vocational rehabilitation services as early as age 16. These vocational rehabilitation services include job development, placement and coaching. Ultimately, these services help break down barriers and help DCPS students live independently as adults.

Visit the [RSA website](#) to learn more about their mission and the services they provide.

## Transition Courses

The following courses are part of the course of study for students with disabilities in the District of Columbia Public Schools. The curriculum has been designed to infuse community-based learning, workforce competencies, and self-advocacy skills to help ensure a seamless transition to post school options. These courses are offered on all grade levels, they include:

Course	Grade Levels	Description
Foundational Skills	Pre-K to 5 <sup>th</sup> (7 Courses)	Foundational Skills teaches students the basics of transition. Focusing on what it means to have a job, how to demonstrate responsibility, and what to do to begin planning for post-secondary life.
Self-Advocacy	Pre-K to 12 <sup>th</sup> (14 Courses)	In the self-advocacy course, students will learn leadership techniques as it relates to participating in their IEP team meetings. The course focuses on teaching students about their disability, their limitations, and their abilities as it relates to accommodations. The course prepares students to take a more active role in IEP/504 development.
Character Development	6 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> (7 Courses)	Character Development explores the key components of what it means to be a good citizen and contribute to the world around you. This course discusses a great deal of conflict resolution strategies for student to employ in their daily lives.
Learning Labs	9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> (8 Courses)	The Learning Labs are characterized by four courses. Strategizing, Career Exploration, Career Management, and Daily Independence. Students have the opportunity to take a deep dive to explore the career of their choice.
Computer Skills	6 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> (7 Courses)	Computer Skills are necessary for any individual transitioning to post-secondary life. Computers drive the world around us and our students need to understand the fundamentals of utilizing a computer in post-secondary life. This course offers a variety of ways to explore the functions and uses of a computer.
Test Taking Strategies	6 <sup>th</sup> to 8 <sup>th</sup> (3 Courses)	As students prepare to take standardized tests in and outside of the educational environment, this course helps students explore various modalities of testing and how to find the best accommodations to ensure success on any test.
General Explorations	10 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> (3 Courses)	General Explorations allows students to shadow various careers outside of the educational environment. Students are exploring a “day in the life” of a particular career.
Independent Living Skills	9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> (4 Courses)	Functional Living Skills is a community-based instruction course that takes students into the field to explore various community resources available to them. Students explore concepts of recreation, government, and community living.
Transition	11 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup>	In Transition Study Skills, students begin to develop resumes,

Course	Grade Levels	Description
Study Skills and Academic Study Skills	(4 Courses)	cover letters, and complete applications for post-secondary education/training and employment opportunities. In Study Skills, students explore best practices to maintain a healthy study schedule.
Real World Applications	9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> (4 Courses)	Real World Applications is a course that allows students to begin to apply their knowledge of transition skills to the world beyond high school. Students will explore real world mathematics and communication skills.
Career Development	11 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> (2 Courses)	Career Development offers an opportunity for students who have jobs while in high school or are seeking a job in high school can learn skills to further enhance their work experience and grow in their jobs.