

FAQ on Transitions for the 2016-17 School Year

The Special Education Advisory Council discussed the topic of transitions at the last two meetings. Families shared feedback and thoughts with department staff and information about transition was shared. Here is a written summary of information shared at the February 4, 2016 meeting.

<p>Do I have to fill out the lottery card, or will the special education department place my child?</p>	<p>In Minneapolis Public Schools, there are two ways that a student is placed in a school. If a student is receiving special education services in the general education setting for the majority of time, families would fill out a school choice card and Student Placement Center staff would complete the placement. For students who receive most of their educational services in a separate program, IEP case managers will guide families through the placement process.</p>
<p>What are the school options I have for my child? Are the options any different for a child who receives special education services versus a child who does not?</p>	<p>Students who receive the majority of their special education services in general education have all the same school options as their general education peers. To research your school options, please visit the online Minneapolis Public Schools Pre-K-8 School Request Center at http://schoolrequest.mpls.k12.mn.us/</p> <p>Students who receive the majority of their educational services in a separate special education program can work through their IEP case manager to discuss options for programs. Placement into Citywide Special Education classrooms is determined by the needs of each student and the geographical location of appropriate supports. During the month of February, the special education department will be working with Associate Superintendents and various Departments to make final decisions regarding locations of special education programming for the 2016-17 school year.</p>
<p>Who can assist me with making decisions?</p>	<p>Your IEP team will have the best information and will work with you regarding placement decisions for your student. Attending school open houses and the School Choice Fair are good ways to learn more about schools that might be options for your student. Information about the school choice fair can be found at the MPS home page - http://www.mpls.k12.mn.us/home</p> <p>The Special Education Advisory Council has many parents that are willing to talk about their transition experiences and the schools their students have attended. You may contact members of SEAC at http://speced.mpls.k12.mn.us/advisory_council_2</p> <p>Kindergarten Information Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * CityView Schools: Monday, February 8th drop in during the day * Hmong International Academy: Monday, February 8th

	<p>drop in during the day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Webster School: January 30th at open house * Wilder Auditorium: Wednesday, February 17th 6:00-7:00pm <p>Staff from the special education department are always available for questions and information at 612-668-5438.</p>
<p>How do I know if my child is eligible to attend a school with a Citywide Autism Program?</p>	<p>Placement in a Citywide Autism Program is an IEP team decision. For students receiving Federal Setting I, II, and III special education services, the Citywide Autism Program is part of the continuum of placements that an IEP team should discuss. In the last school year, MPS has increased supports to serve students with Autism, PHD, and DCD in their community schools through itinerant services, SEA support, and professional development.</p> <p>For more information about changes to the MPS Citywide Autism Program made last year, click link below: http://speced.mpls.k12.mn.us/changes_to_mps_autism_program</p>
<p>Does Jefferson School currently have an autism program?</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>Where on the MPS website can I find a current list of schools that will continue to have a citywide autism program for the 2016-17 school year?</p>	<p>Decisions about the placement of special education programs for the 2016-17 school year will be finalized by the end of February. When final decisions are made, you will be able to find the information on the MPS special education department website - http://speced.mpls.k12.mn.us/</p>
<p>If my community school is not a good fit for my child, what other choices do I have?</p>	<p>Families in MPS have many options available to them. To see all the school options available for your address, please visit the online Minneapolis Public Schools Pre-K-8 School Request Center at http://schoolrequest.mpls.k12.mn.us/ Attending the School Choice Fair is a good way to learn more about schools that are options for your student. Information about the School Choice Fair can be found at the MPS home page - http://www.mpls.k12.mn.us/home</p>
<p>Where can I get comparative information about what is available at what schools (class sizes, student to teacher ratio, ASD teachers vs. special education teachers, availability of programs such as Lunch Bunch, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and social groups)?</p>	<p>For comprehensive information about each school, go to http://www.mpls.k12.mn.us/new_schools. On the left hand side of the webpage, click on elementary, middle school, or high school. This will bring up a list of schools in that category. Click on the school you would like to learn more about. For even more information about a school's special education programming, you can click on the link to take you directly to the school's website.</p> <p>All of our schools have special education services and related</p>

	<p>services, like speech, occupational therapy and school social work.</p>
<p>Where can I find contact information for the person at each school who can tell me about the services that are available for ASD students at that school?</p>	<p>The school social worker is often a good contact person. Their contact information is typically under the staff directory on the school's website. By calling the school office, they will be able to put you in contact with the appropriate person.</p>
<p>What is Transition Plus, where is it offered, and how can I learn more about it?</p>	<p>Transition Plus is a program for 18-21 year old students within the Minneapolis Public Schools. Transition Plus provides a variety of instructional services and training to young adults who are eligible for special education transition services. Students at Transition Plus have an enormous diversity of abilities and potential. Every year, 30 or more Transition Plus students attend college classes, and another 30 or more are preparing for college. Many students are living and working independently. Some Transition Plus students are parents.</p> <p>Most students are preparing to enter the employment market, in either the competitive or supported sectors. They are building their resumes by participating in employment sites and volunteering. They are exploring options for training and education outside of Transition Plus. They are practicing and using employment acquisition skills.</p> <p>In addition to employment skills, students at Transition Plus often work on interpersonal and independent living skills. Negotiating personal conflict, changing a tire, cooking a meal, initiating conversations, and reading and understanding an apartment lease are all skills a student might learn at Transition Plus.</p> <p>All services fall into three areas of transition: employment, living independently, and preparing for/accessing postsecondary education/training. Students must have identified educational needs in one or more of the three transition areas in order to enroll, and have typically completed four years in a high school setting prior to enrolling.</p> <p>The main location for Transition Plus is in the Wilder Complex at 3320 Elliot Avenue South Minneapolis, MN 55407 (Phone: 612-668-4100). Transition Plus students use 100 or more community sites for a variety of community-based learning activities. Student schedules include working in the community, attending postsecondary programs, and receiving employment training. In addition, students visit dozens of community sites each year for the purposes of exploring postsecondary, employment, independent living, and recreational resources which match individual student interests and needs. Students are coming and</p>

	<p>going from community sites many times each day via school buses, public transit, walking and rides from our school social workers.</p> <p>More information about Transition Plus can be found at the website - http://transplus.mpls.k12.mn.us/</p>
<p>Which students are eligible for Transition Plus?</p>	<p>Students aged 18 – 21 years are considered for enrollment at Transition Plus Services. The following factors are considered when determining whether a student needs programming at Transition Plus: completion of 4 years of high school, qualifies for special education services, has unmet goals in secondary transition (employment, post-secondary education and training, and/or independent living).</p> <p>The IEP team determines the student’s graduation plan, courses of study and makes a decision about requirements for graduation, including evaluating transition needs, necessary linkages to community resources, and plans for the future.</p> <p>Students are referred to Transition Plus by their case manager and IEP team.</p>
<p>What should I do if my child is in Grade 12 but is still several years below grade level in academics? Can I delay my child’s graduation so he/she has more time to get closer to Grade 12 level before graduating?</p>	<p>In most cases, students should move on to the next step in the natural progression of post-secondary education, employment and/or career development. This next step may be referral to Transition Plus and accessing the services provided. The student’s graduation plan should be identified in grade 9 and updated each subsequent year at the student’s IEP team meeting. The graduation plan is included in the adaptations section of the IEP.</p>
<p>Can we have district wide social skills education for general education kids to help with the acceptance of special education kids in the classroom?</p>	<p>MPS has a rich social emotional learning focus led by: Surbhi Madia Barber <i>Social Emotional Learning Facilitator</i> 612.668.0843 surbhi.barber@mpls.k12.mn.us</p> <p>The special education department also is keenly interested in social emotional learning opportunities for all students. Our department staff has provided disability awareness training for general education students and staff and is available for training requests from individual schools.</p>
<p>Can evaluation reports, progress reports, and IEPs be sent to parents as PDFs?</p>	<p>Yes. Parent’s can make this request to their child’s special education case manager.</p>