College Planning with an IEP

Karen Wang, Transition Specialist

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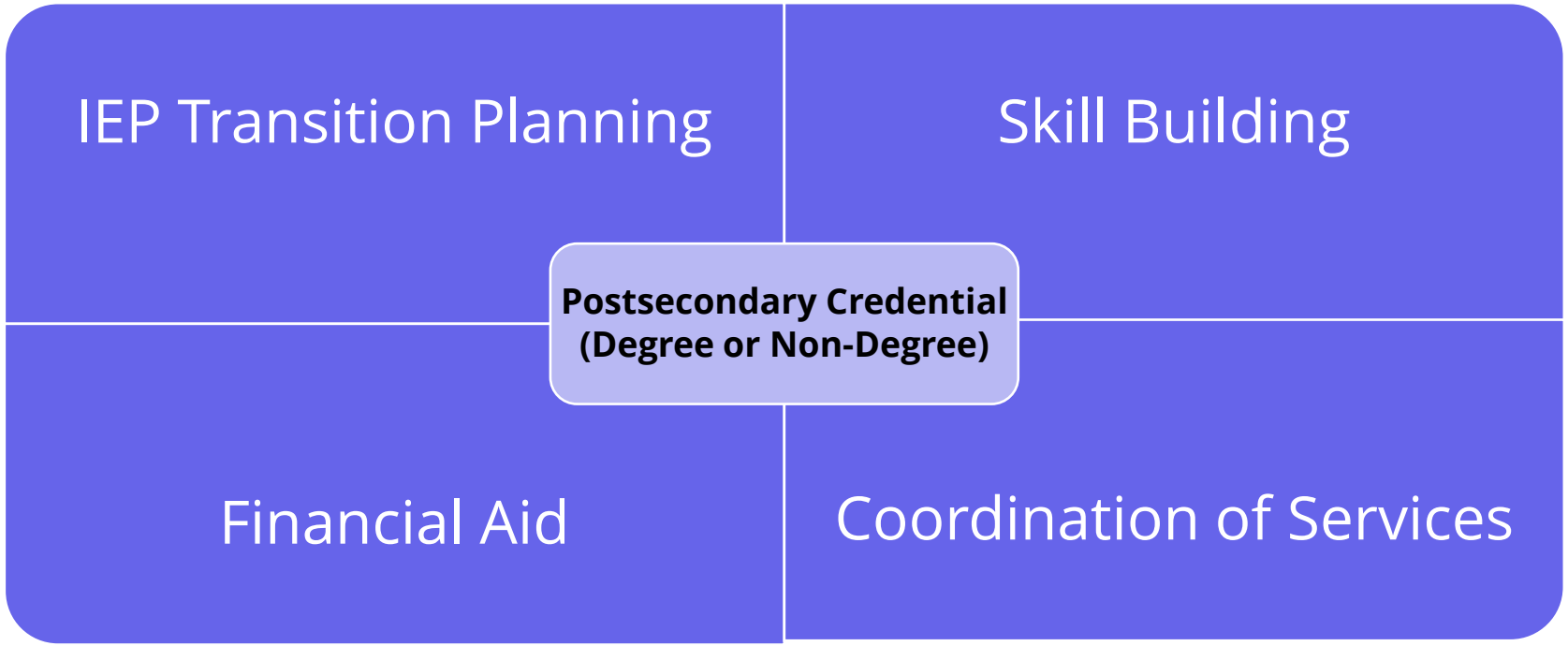
Yes, college is possible.

But…how?



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Individualized Education Program (IEP): Transition Planning



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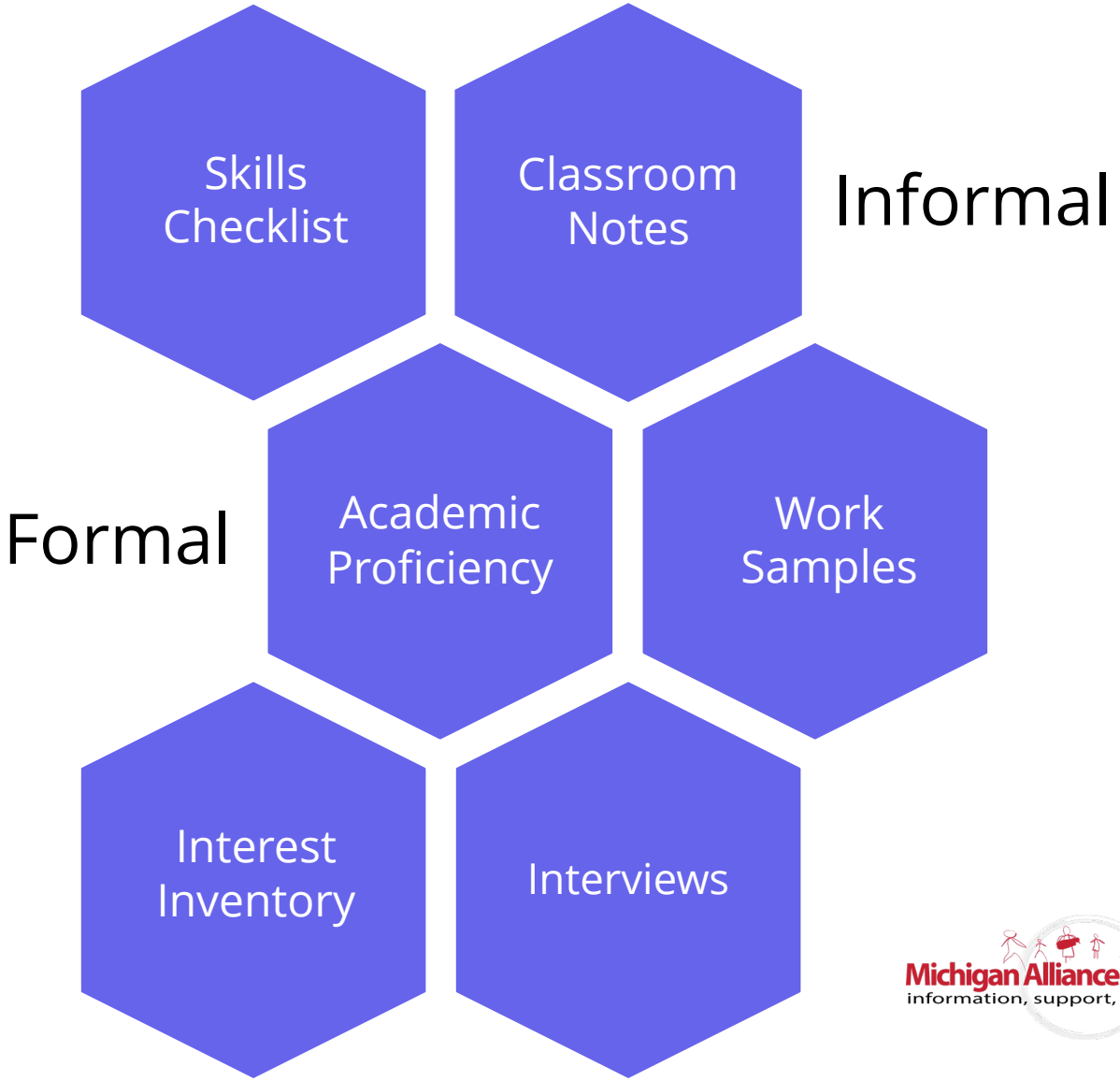
Transition Assessments

Start with Educational Development Plan (EDP)



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Postsecondary Goals

Education and Training

Student Input

Employment

Independent Living





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High School Diploma

- Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC)
- Personal Curriculum (PC)

- **Apprenticeship**
- **Professional Certificate**
- **Associate Degree**
- **Bachelor's Degree**

All Students with IEPs

- IEP Transition Planning
- Strengths, Preferences, Interests, Needs (SPIN)
- General Education
- Career and Technical Education (CTE)



Certificate of Completion

- Modified curriculum

- **18-26 Transition Program**
- **Non-Degree Program**
- **Apprenticeship**
- **Professional Certificate**

Course of Study with an IEP

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Transition Services

Strengths, preferences, interests, needs

School, family and outside agencies

Preparation for postsecondary goals

Skills, activities, connections

"A results-oriented process"







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Age of Majority: Transfer of Rights

Age 17

- Discussion at school
- Required transition service for students with IEPs
- On or before the student's 17th birthday

Age 18

- Legal age of adults in Michigan
- Adults have the right to make their own decisions
- Legal, financial, medical, educational



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Supported Decision-Making

Every adult has the right to make decisions and to be treated with dignity.

- Long-term plan
- Help from family, friends, professionals
- Formal or informal tool
- Alternative to guardianship

Examples:

- ✓ Power of Attorney
- ✓ Patient Advocate
- ✓ Person-Centered Planning
- ✓ Supported Decision-Making Agreement
- ✓ Representative Payee (Social Security)

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I speak up

I understand

I make things right

Self-Advocacy Skills

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Coordination with Adult Services

- College students who have disabilities may be eligible for:
    - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
    - Medicaid
    - Community Mental Health services, including support staff
    - Children's Special Health Care services
    - Food benefits
    - Vocational Rehabilitation services, **including tuition support**
    - Center for Independent Living (CIL) services
- Representatives of these agencies can be invited to the IEP
- Helping to apply for services can be an IEP Transition Service

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Coordination with Adult Services: IEP Example #1

Team discussion BEFORE the IEP: Parker will turn 18 next month, and will earn a high school diploma in June. Parker already receives Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) through MRS, including a paid summer work experience, and has already applied to in-state universities. Parker needs help understanding how to apply for Social Security and community mental health services at the age of majority.

- [x] There was a need to invite a community agency representative likely to provide or pay for transition services.

- [x] Consent was obtained. Date: **November 7**
- [ ] Consent was not obtained. Reason: _____

Did the community agency representative attend the IEP?

- [x] Yes
- [ ] No

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Coordination with Adult Services: IEP Example #2

Team discussion BEFORE the IEP: Jamal is a 20 year old student in an ISD transition program. Jamal is interested in working in a health care setting. Last summer, MRS placed Jamal in a paid work experience with a job coach at a hospital as a patient transporter. The local community college offers an 8 week program for a Certified Nursing Aide (CNA).

☒ There was a need to invite a community agency representative likely to provide or pay for transition services.

☒ Consent was obtained. Date: **September 23**
☐ Consent was not obtained. Reason: _____

Did the community agency representative attend the IEP?
☐ Yes
☒ No

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There is no IEP in college. But...

- **Civil Rights Protections**
  - Americans with Disabilities Act
  - Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- **Eligibility Process**
  - Self-disclosure
  - Documentation
  - Reasonable Accommodations







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Degree vs. Non-Degree Programs

Degree

- 2 years: Associate Degree
- 4 years: Bachelor's Degree
- Postgraduate: Master's Degree, M.D., J.D., etc.

Non-Degree

- Life Skills Program
- Professional Certificate
- Career Credential

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Non-Degree Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities



- ThinkCollege.net
- Life Skills Instruction
- General Education classes
- Residential or Commuter
- Out-of-pocket expense

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Professional Certificates

Examples:

- Business Technician
- Medical Assistant
- Certified Mechanic
- Graphic Artist/Printer
- Cosmetologist

- Focused Study
- Job Credential
- Community College or 4 Year University
- 6 Weeks to 2 Years
- Variable Admissions Requirements
- Financial Aid for Some Programs



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Finding the Right College

- Guidance Counselor
- Start Local
- College Fairs
- Search engines (BigFuture, CollegeNavigator, etc.)
- Specific programs
- Types of support
- Campus visits







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College Admissions Process

- Plan in advance
- Support from IEP team
- Exams
- Application Essay
- Common App
- High School Transcript
- Keep track of deadlines



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Requesting Supports in College

At college or trade school, you have to share your disability, so that you can ask for help.

After admission:

- Appointment with the school's Disability Resource Office to share your disability officially
- Accommodations may look different in college compared to high school
- Most recent IEP or 504 Plan from high school
- Medical documentation



7 things to know about college disability services

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Paying for College

- Federal Student Aid Form (FAFSA)
- Michigan Student Aid
- Tuition-Free Community College
- Local Scholarships
- College Scholarships
- Vocational Rehabilitation

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Federal and State Financial Aid

Federal

- Studentaid.gov
- Complete the FAFSA
- High School Diploma
- Grants and/or loans



Michigan

- Complete the FAFSA
- Automatic consideration for Michigan Student Aid
- Diploma NOT required
- Michigan.gov/mistudentaid

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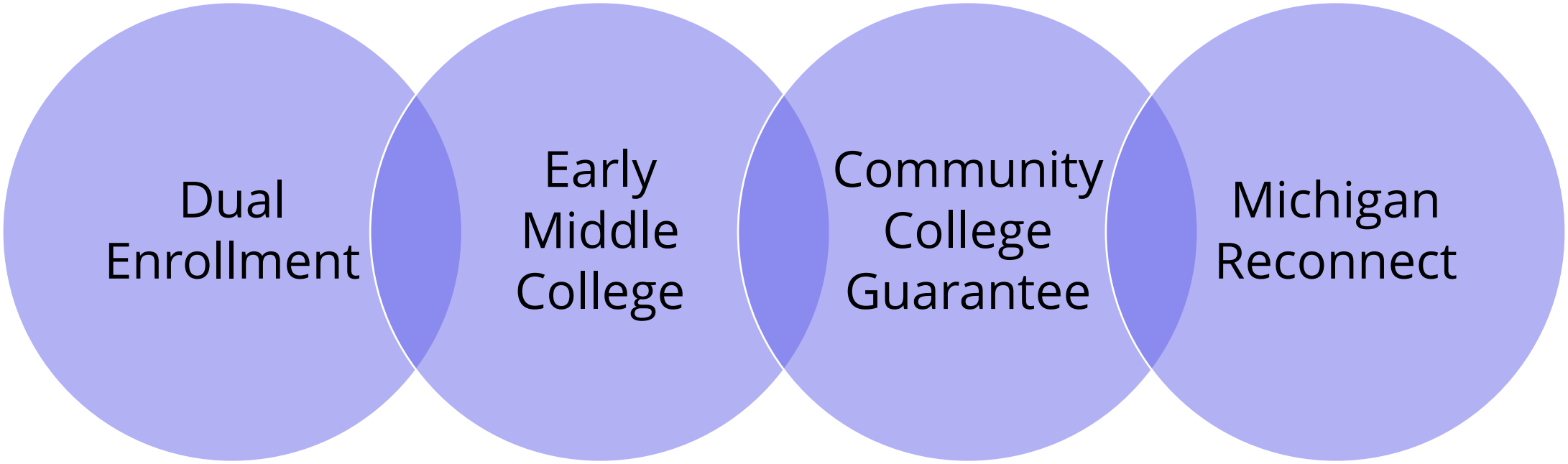
Tuition-Free Community College



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Dual Enrollment and Early Middle College

Dual Enrollment

- Classes not offered by high school
- Receive both high school and college credit
- School district pays at least part of cost, up to 10 classes per student
- Transportation is not covered

Early Middle College

- 5 year program
- High school diploma **and** associate's degree
- Up to 60 transferable credits
- Each program has different admissions requirements
- Meet with guidance counselor
- Apply during 9th or 10th grade

Source: Michigan Department of Education, "Dual Enrollment and Early Middle College: What's the Difference?"

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Community College Guarantee

Recent high school graduate from Michigan high schools only

Meet with college admissions counselor

Submit a federal student aid application (FAFSA)

Enroll FULL-TIME within 15 months of graduating high school

Up to 60 credits tuition-free

Part of Michigan Achievement Scholarship Program

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Michigan Reconnect

Age 21 and up
Already have a high school diploma, GED, or Certificate of Completion
Michigan resident for at least 1 year
Do NOT already have an associate's or bachelor's degree
Meet with college admissions counselor for eligibility
In-district community college
Up to 60 transferable credits or professional certificate
Submit a federal student aid application (FAFSA)
Regular college application process

Apply to Reconnect online here

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Michigan Transfer Agreement

www.mitransfer.org



- Course Equivalency
- General Education courses
- At least 30 credits
- Minimum GPA 2.0

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Scholarships



Both public and private organizations award grants to youth who match the organization's ideals

Local Scholarships:

- Ask at high school counseling office
- Online searches
- Separate applications
- Usually merit-based

College Scholarships:

- Admitted students
- Complete the FAFSA
- Both need-based and merit-based
- Sometimes also separate applications and interviews

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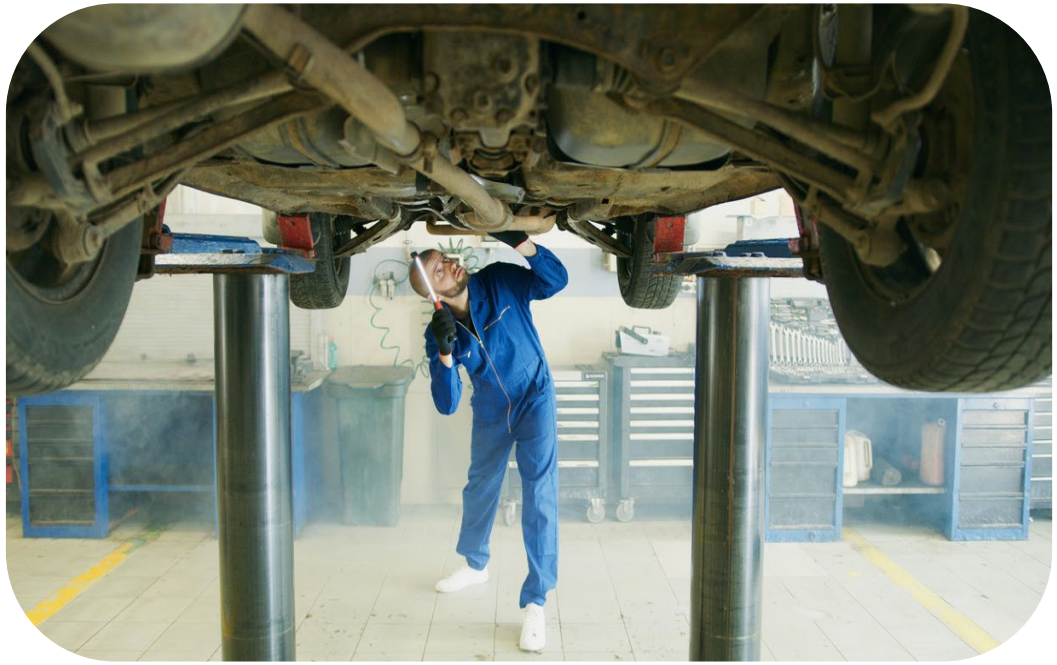
Vocational Rehabilitation

Vocational Rehabilitation Ages 14+

- Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), Michigan.gov/mrs
- Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP), Michigan.gov/bsbp



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Summary



- College planning starts in 8th grade
- IEP transition planning starts by age 16
- Team effort
- Self-Advocacy
- Be optimistic and realistic
- Identify a few possible options
- Complete the FAFSA!

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