

Topic Brief

Post-School Outcome Goal Statements

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. What is a Post-School Outcome Goal Statement?** – A Post-School Outcome Goal Statement (PSOGS) is Connecticut’s term for the “appropriate measurable postsecondary goals” required by IDEA 2004 for transition-age students that can be found on page 6 (#5 a-c) of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) that was disseminated in February (footer says February 2009a).
- 2. Why did Connecticut rename “appropriate measurable postsecondary goals” as Post-School Outcome Goal Statements?** – The Department collects “post-school outcome” data using the *Post-School Outcomes Survey* to determine if a student has met his/her “postsecondary goals.” In order to reduce confusion between post-school/postsecondary goals which cannot be measured until after a student exits high school and annual goals, that are measured and reported on an annual basis, Connecticut opted to rename “postsecondary goals” as Post-School Outcome Goal Statements.
- 3. When should a student’s IEP contain a Post-School Outcome Goal Statement?** – IDEA 2004 requires that beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when a student turns 16 (or younger), and updated annually thereafter, the student’s IEP must include PSOGS that are based on “age-appropriate transition assessments” and that are “related to postsecondary education or training, employment, and if appropriate, independent living skills.”
- 4. What should an IEP look like for a transition-age student?** Every IEP that is written for a student who will turn 16 during the course of the school year **MUST** include transition planning (i.e., PSOGSs and annual goals and related objectives). The “transition planning” box in the “Reason for Meeting” section of page 1 of the IEP should be checked in addition to any other appropriate reasons when holding a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meeting to develop transition goals and objectives. **ALL** aspects of an IEP for students age 15 – 21 must be related to transition and helping the student reasonably meet his/her Post-School Outcome Goal Statements.
- 5. How many Post-School Outcome Goal Statements must a student have in his/her IEP?** – Each IEP for a transition age student must include a minimum of two PSOGS and related annual goals: one PSOGS in postsecondary education or training (February 2009a IEP page 6, #5a) and an annual goal on page 7 with related objectives and one PSOGS in employment (page 6, #5b) and an annual goal on page 7 with related objectives. If appropriate, a student may also have a third PSOGS in independent living skills (page 6, #5c) with an annual goal on page 7 with related objectives.
- 6. What is the difference between a Post-School Outcome Goal Statement and an annual goal?** – A Post-School Outcome Goal Statement is an “umbrella” or over-arching goal that describes what a student will be doing (or wishes to be doing) after graduating or exiting from high school. A PSOGS is not something that can be completed or measured until **AFTER** a student exits high school. Annual goals are defined as goals and objectives that can be completed within one year and will assist a student to move toward the completion of his/her post-school outcome goal/postsecondary goal. Progress toward annual goals and related objectives must be reported in a student’s IEP.

7. **Are there components that ALL Post-School Outcome Goal Statements must contain?** – Yes. All PSOGSs must be written so that they occur AFTER a student exits high school. Phrases such as: “after high school,” “upon graduating,” “after exiting high school,” should be a part of every goal. PSOGSs must also be measurable and may not reflect a process (which cannot be measured). The following examples reflect processes that cannot be measured and therefore are NOT appropriate PSOGSs: “After high school, Alex will **explore** taking classes at the local community college.” “Following graduation, Cynthia **plans to** obtain a job in the food service industry.” Rewriting these PSOGSs using measurable activities is acceptable (e.g., “After high school, Alex will enroll in classes at the local community college.” “Following graduation, Cynthia will obtain a job in the food service industry.”)
8. **How can district personnel learn how to write appropriate Post-School Outcome Goal Statements?** – In collaboration with SERC, the Department offered four full-day trainings on *Transition Assessment and the IEP* (October & December, 2008; March & April, 2009). At least two additional sessions are scheduled for the fall of 2009 and more sessions will be added if required. A Power Point presentation with examples of appropriate Post-School Outcome Goal Statements can be found on the Department’s Web site: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&Q=320730#publications> (Publications/Secondary Transition). Web-based training on writing postsecondary goals can also be found on the website of the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC) (www.nsttac.org) – [Click on Indicator #13 on the top of the page and “training” on the left-hand side.]
9. **Where can district personnel find examples of Post-School Outcome Goal Statements?** – The Department adapted examples of postsecondary goals from training materials developed by the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC). Additional examples can be found on their website: www.nsttac.org – [Click on Indicator #13 on the top of the page and “training” on the left-hand side.]
10. **Can the same Post-School Outcome Goal Statement be used for more than one area (e.g., page 6, # 5a-c)?** – Yes. A Post-School Outcome Goal Statement can contain one, two or all three of the areas that need to be covered in a student’s transition IEP (i.e., postsecondary education/training, employment, and if appropriate, independent living skills). However, each PSOGS requires a separate annual goal and related objectives using the annual goal page (page 7) with the appropriate box checked at the top of the page. The following example contains all three transition areas and can be used for #5 a, b, & c – “Upon completion of high school, Carol will independently [5c] attend culinary training [5a] at the XYZ Center, so that she can obtain entry level employment within the food services industry [5b].” This one PSOGS **MUST** be written in all three sections of #5 on page 6 of the student’s IEP.
11. **Can the same annual goal be used for more than one Post-School Outcome Goal Statement?** – No. Each Post-School Outcome Goal Statement must have a corresponding annual goal and related objectives. At a minimum, a student must have at least two annual goal pages that address transition goals – one in postsecondary education or training and one in employment. The specific goal and/or objectives may be in any one of the three transition areas depending upon the needs of the student, but may not be repeated in more than one annual goal area for an individual student. For example, Student A might have self-advocacy listed under postsecondary education/training so that he/she learns how to request appropriate accommodations at the college level. Student B might have self-advocacy listed under employment and communication so that he/she could learn to appropriately request accommodations on the job. Employment is a transition goal category and “Communication” is a non-transition area, therefore self-advocacy could be addressed in both areas. Neither student

should have self-advocacy listed under more than one Post-School Outcome Goal Statement or transition annual goal area on page 7.

- 12. Can more than one box be checked on the top of the annual goal page 7 for secondary transition?** – Yes. Especially when students are primarily included in general education classes, transition goals and objectives may be met via general education classes or meetings with school counselors with the oversight of a special education teacher or case manager. For example, goals and objectives in self-advocacy, study skills, learning strategies, and/or organization/time management may be checked off as postsecondary education/training goals as well as in the areas of academic/cognitive, communication, or social/emotional. A student may have annual goals in an academic/cognitive area (e.g., writing, math, reading) that could also be addressed functionally for employment, training, or independent living purposes.
- 13. Who is responsible for measuring whether or not a student met his/her Post-School Outcome Goal Statements?** – Since a PSOGS is not something that can be completed or measured until AFTER a student exits high school, the Department collects data about student’s post-school outcomes using the *Post-School Outcomes Survey*. All students who have graduated or exited high school in a given year are surveyed one year after leaving high school to determine if they are or have attended postsecondary education or training, are competitively employed, and/or are working with a state agency. The Department will provide an LEA with a written data summary specific to the district if 20 or more exiters complete and return their survey.
- 14. What would a Post-School Outcome Goal Statement in the area of employment look like for a 15-year old student who was not sure “what he/she wanted to be when he/she grew up?”** – When a student initially begins transition planning, he/she may not know what he/she wants to do after high school. For many youth, with or without disabilities, this is common. Most students will end up working competitively after high school so an initial PSOGS in employment might be: “Jose will work full-time in a competitive job in an area of his choice after high school.” Jose’s annual goals and objectives for the first year of transition planning should be designed to help him explore appropriate career areas that will ultimately lead to a more specific employment PSOGS in future IEPs. It is expected that most students will have PSOGS that change and become more specific throughout their high school years.
- 15. Why do student’s who are planning on going to college require a PSOGS in the area of employment as well?** – Attending college is not an end goal, but a step to obtaining competitive employment for most students. Therefore, before a student can make an appropriate choice for a postsecondary education setting, he/she will need to at least have an idea about an appropriate career path. The college selection process will then be able to incorporate the type of training or education a student would need (including a choice of major) in order to obtain a job in the career area of his/her choice. For example, a student who wanted to work as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), a biotechnical engineer in manufacturing clean rooms or in the field of hospitality, would not necessarily need to attend a competitive four-year university, but might find more appropriate training at a technical or community college.
- 16. What would a Post-School Outcome Goal Statement look like for students who have more severe disabilities and will not be attending formal postsecondary education or training?** – For all students, the purpose of transition planning is to help them become the most independent, responsible, self-determined individuals that they can be. A PSOGS in postsecondary education/training might emphasize life-long learning instead of actually attending a formal learning program. All students will be expected to continue learning whether it is learning a procedure, word,

task, or how to operate a new device. It is important for all students to acquire the ability to identify something that they want to learn, explore how they will learn it, and complete the steps necessary to engage in that learning process. This might be on-line learning, a one-day workshop, continuing education at a community college or adult education setting, engaging in recreational activities, or training in a retail setting (e.g., cake decorating at Michaels, cooking classes at a local supermarket). For example: “After graduation Rolanda will live at home and participate to the maximum extent possible in her daily routines (e.g., feeding, dressing, bathing, activating small appliances/media devices, choice making) and environment through the use of technology.” Or “After high school, Jeremy will improve his social, self-advocacy, and self-care skills by **attending instruction** at a center-based adult day program.”

17. What would a Post-School Outcome Goal Statement look like for students who have more severe disabilities? – Most students, even if they will not be working competitively with or without support, might be able to work in a part-time or volunteer situation. In Connecticut, “competitive employment” is defined as “work, in the competitive labor market that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis in an integrated setting, and for which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled.” (SPP, 2007) Even if a student will be attending an adult day program or may be confined to a bed either at home or in a hospital, educators have the responsibility to help students identify tasks that can be performed in an integrated setting in the community in addition to demonstrating appropriate independent living skills. An employment goal for such students initially might be more task-oriented than “job” oriented. For example: “Upon completion of high school, Kevin will select and complete one daily task in his group home for the benefit of others, given picture symbols on an augmentative communication device.” Ultimately, the PSOGS for employment should assist the student to be able to perform tasks in the community either as volunteer or part-time work if full-time competitive employment is not currently a viable option.

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