

NOVEMBER 2024



**WHAT'S NEW!**

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE: TRANSITION

- Special Education Transition Services
- Virtual Parent Education Sessions: Fall Transition Series
- Transition Strategies
- Community Resource of the Month: Ga. Vocational Rehab
- Who to Contact

### Meet our new Senior Coordinator of Transition Services!



Dr. Donnielle Howard-Thomas  
Senior Coordinator, Exceptional Education  
DeKalb County School District

As the Senior Coordinator of Transition Services, I am excited to work alongside our Transition Liaisons and connect with families to share updates, resources, and important information that supports the diverse needs of our students with disabilities who are preparing to transition out of high school.

The DCSD Special Education Transition team primarily supports the individual needs of students with disabilities who are moving from high school to post-secondary environments. Our transition liaisons work hard to educate families on a variety of post-secondary options. They also assist with the development of transition plans and appropriate goals to ensure the student acquires the necessary skills to be successful in education, employment, and independent living after the completion of high school.



## SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSITION SERVICES

### Transition Programs

1. The Community-Based Vocational Training (CBVT) program offers an Off-Campus Transition Class for students who are seniors and have been successfully enrolled in the CBVT program.
2. Project SEARCH is a unique, business-led, one-year school-to-work program that takes place entirely in the business. Total workplace immersion facilitates a combination of employability skills instruction, career exploration, and hands-on training.

### Transition Liaisons

Supports teachers in the development of Transition Plans and goals in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that can address:

- Post Secondary Education/Training
- Identifying Adult Programs, Services, and Funding
- Employment Options (Supported)
- Living Arrangements
- Community Involvement
- Vocational and Life Skill preparation



# TRANSITION PLANNING SUGGESTIONS FOR FAMILIES!

NOVEMBER 2024  
ISSUE 2

Leadership from each of the Georgia Inclusive Post-Secondary Education Programs contributed recommendations for transition-aged youth interested in how to prepare to be successful in an IPSE program. Several of these recommendations would make excellent IEP Transition Plan Goals/Activities, and each easily fit into five Life Categories that IPSE students need to manage with more independence when they get on campus.

TECHNOLOGY	FINANCE	RELATIONSHIPS	TIME	COMMUNICATION
Practice sending and receiving formal and informal emails from their own email address.	Develop moderation strategies around spending.	Cultivate social experiences that encourage building relationship skills, including attending club meetings, social groups, and overnight camps.	Utilize smartphone calendars/alarms/reminders to manage complex schedules.	Strategize knowing when to ask for help and when to work independently.
Practice safety rules for social media and the internet.	Explore responsible use of money—consider using a pre-loadable debit card (ex: Green Dot) with an app that both of you can monitor.	Work on conflict resolution skills and become familiar with the concept of compromise.	Strategize independence around planning to break down large projects into smaller, manageable components.	Practice talking about diagnosis, disability characteristics, strengths, challenges, and advocating for needed accommodations.
Learn how to drop a pin when using a navigational app (good when using public transportation!)	Let your youth be responsible for purchasing their own toiletries and remaining within a budget.	Volunteer for a cause or an organization (excellent work experience, and great to put on an application!)	Practice various coping strategies for unexpected schedule and/or staff changes.	Practice Free Writing in preparation for the Application/Interview process. Answer the question: <b>Why do you want to go to college?</b>
Become familiar with educational technology—ex: grammar check and spell check, already embedded in word processing software.	Get in the habit of allowing your youth to <b>experience the consequences</b> of not being able to make a desired purchase because of low funds. Talk through solutions.	Give your youth the freedom to make choices, and the <b>dignity of risk</b> .	Build the habit of including travel time into the consideration of what time to leave for a destination.	Tour multiple IPSE programs, attend Open House events, and take part in as many IPSE summer programs as possible, in order to build communication and independence skills.

**PARENTS!** Learn strategies, activities and meaningful ways to prepare your student for transitioning from elementary to graduation and beyond! Thank you Ga. Inclusive Post-Secondary Education Consortium(GAIPSEC) for providing this helpful resource for our DCSD families! Learn more at <https://gaipsec.org>.

## PARENT ENGAGEMENT EVENTS:



- November 19th, 2024: PEERS Virtual Parent Education Session!  
Topic: Guardianship  
Time: 6-7:30pm  
Where: Online

Parent Education, Empowerment, Resources & Support (PEERS) and Transition Services presents

### Virtual Parent Education Sessions

FALL TRANSITION SERIES:

<p>October 22, 2024</p> <p>Transitional Services</p> <p>Speaker: Sheryl Arno, GAIPSEC</p>	<p>November 19, 2024</p> <p>Guardianship</p> <p>Speaker: Atty DJ Jayaram, Jayaram &amp; Associates</p>	<p>December 3, 2024</p> <p>NOW/COMP &amp; Katie Beckett Waivers</p> <p>Speaker: Parent to Parent of Georgia</p>
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All sessions are Tuesday evenings from 6:00- 7:30pm!

**REGISTER NOW!** SCAN ME!

REGISTER by scanning the QR code or go to <https://forms.office.com/r/RJHGq748sv>

For more information contact [dcsdpeers@dekalbschools.ga](mailto:dcsdpeers@dekalbschools.ga)

## Parent Education, Empowerment, Resources, and Support (PEERS) Virtual Parent Education Sessions!

Our Nov. 19th session topic is: Guardianship. This virtual session will cover guardianship, conservatorship, powers of attorney and supportive decision making. Register today to attend!

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

### MONTHLY

## Spotlight



## Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency

**Mission**  
Our mission is to serve Georgians with disabilities and to empower them to live independently.

Phone: (844) 367-4872  
Website: <https://gvs.georgia.gov/>

**Who We Are**  
Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) is a state agency helping individuals with disabilities to work and live independent lives.

**Our Divisions**

- **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)**  
Provides services for individuals with disabilities who want to work or maintain their current jobs.
- **Roosevelt Warm Springs (RWS)/Cave Spring**  
Offer academic support, job training, and career opportunities to students in a residential, college-like environment.
- **Disability Adjudication Services (DAS)**  
Processes claims and determines Social Security benefit eligibility for individuals who cannot work due to their disabilities.
- **Business Enterprise Program (BEP)**  
Helps visually-impaired Georgians become independent business owners in the food service industry.
- **Georgia Industries for the Blind (GIB)**  
Creates job opportunities for individuals who are blind or visually-impaired.



# TRANSITION RESOURCES FOR ALL AGES

## Georgia Department of Education Kindergarten Transition Toolkit



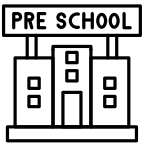
## Georgia Department of Education Middle School Transition Toolkit



## Georgia Department of Education High School Transition Toolkit



For more information on School Transition, please visit <https://gadoe.org/schoolimprovement/FederalPrograms>



## BABIES CAN'T WAIT

Georgia's Early Intervention program that provides service coordination for infants and toddlers, ages birth to 3 years of age as well as transition services to public preschool special education.

<https://dph.georgia.gov/babies-cant-wait>

## COLLEGE OPTIONS

**4 Year- Georgia Public Colleges and Universities -**  
<https://www.usg.edu>

**2 Year- Technical College System of Georgia-**  
<https://tcsge.edu>

**Inclusive Post-Secondary Programs for Intellectual Disabilities-**  
Georgia Inclusive Post Secondary Education Consortium -  
<https://gaipsec.org>

## COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT

Full or part-time employment in which individuals are compensated for their work.

### Work Source Dekalb:

<https://www.dekalbcountyga.gov/workforce-center>

### Career One Stop:

<https://careeronestop.org>

## SUPPORTIVE EMPLOYMENT

Employment for individuals with disabilities that need support to locate, obtain and maintain paid employment.

**Bobby Dodd Institute(BDI):** <https://bobbydodd.org>

**Briggs & Associates:** <https://www.briggsassociates.org>

**Ga. Vocational Rehabilitation Agency:** <https://gvs.georgia.gov>

**Tommy Nobis Center:** <https://tommynobiscenter.org>

## GUARDIANSHIP

Seeking legal responsibility and authority from a probate court to make decisions on behalf of an individual who lacks the ability to make important decisions for themselves. A petition must be filed with probate court to establish guardianship along with payment of the initial filing fee. An attorney can also be used to make the petition and attend court proceedings. Contact Dekalb County Probate Court for more information.

## SERVICE COORDINATION

Provides resources and support to locate respite, day programs, funding, employment, peer support, and recreation options.

**InCommunity:** <https://www.incommunityga.org>

**DisabilityLink:** <https://disabilitylink.org>

**Dept. of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities(DBHDD):**  
<https://dbhdd.georgia.gov>

**Parent to Parent of Ga.:** <https://www.p2pga.org>

# WHO DO I CONTACT?

## School Support

Your child's **SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER or CASEMANAGER:**

- Concerns involving: Academics (grades, curriculum, classwork, homework), student behavior, interactions, and social-emotional development in the classroom (social skills, regulating emotions, making friends)

Your school's **LEAD TEACHER for SPECIAL EDUCATION (LTSE):**

- Concerns involving: Initial Individualized Education Plans (IEP), re-evaluations, parental consent, IEP transportation issues, transferring IEP to a new school, case-manager/teacher communication issues

Your school **ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL:**

- Concerns involving: Disciplinary actions, school safety, procedures and policies, inappropriate staff conduct, building maintenance, PTA, unresolved parent-teacher communication issues.

Your school **PRINCIPAL:**

- Concerns involving: All unresolved concerns brought to the Assistant Principal properly but were not addressed to satisfaction.

## Department of Exceptional Education Support

Exceptional Education **Parent Mentor/Parent Liaison:**

- General questions on how to navigate the DCSD Department of Exceptional Education, Special Education, transitions, parent rights, learn district protocols and processes, find appropriate staff, get resources, education and support.

## Department of Exceptional Education Leadership

**Special Education Director:**

- Concerns involving: All unresolved special education concerns and IEP related issues (implementation, meeting concerns, goals/objectives, progress monitoring, services) that have been previously communicated with the appropriate staff at your student's attendance school (see who to contact above first) but have not been addressed to satisfaction.

**Senior Coordinator for School Psychology:**

- Parents should reach out to the Senior Coordinator of School Psychology when there are unresolved concerns that have been appropriately shared with the local school principal or designee that involves psychological services, evaluations, or mental health support for a child.

**Senior Coordinator for Section 504/Hospital Homebound:**

- Parents should contact the Senior Coordinator of Section 504/HHB when their concerns involve ensuring that their child, who has a disability, is receiving appropriate accommodations and protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Concerns involving 504 plan development or eligibility, plan implementation or discrimination concerns may require District level support.

**Executive Director of Exceptional Education:**

- Parents should reach out to the Executive Director of Exceptional Education when there is a need for leadership-level intervention or advocacy to ensure their child receives appropriate and equitable educational services.

## General Parent Support

The Ga. Dept. of Education **Special Education HELP DESK (404-656-3963):**

- General questions about Special Education and related services, statewide initiatives, rules, projects, outreach, processes, and support agencies for students with disabilities.

*\*All phone numbers and emails can be found on the DCSD website.*

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and Transition Services



presents

# Virtual Parent Education Sessions

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NOW/COMP &  
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SCAN  
ME! >>>



REGISTER by scanning  
the QR code or go to  
[https://forms.office.com/r/  
RJHGq748sv](https://forms.office.com/r/RJHGq748sv)

For more information contact [dcsdpeers@dekalbschoolsga.org](mailto:dcsdpeers@dekalbschoolsga.org)

# Parent Mentors

Support. Advise. Educate.



## What is a Parent Mentor?

Parent Mentors are parents of children with disabilities, hired by the District, to support other families in their county by providing resources and education to help parents of students with disabilities navigate special education services and supports. They support family engagement and work with special education directors and staff to increase parent participation in Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings and school programs and events.

## Why should I contact the Parent Mentor?

- I need to talk to another parent that understands and will listen to my educational concerns.
- I need help locating resources that will help me support my child.
- I have questions about my child's education program and how to be engaged in the process.
- I am unsure what my child may need to graduate and options after high school.
- I worry that my child will struggle with transitions to new schools.
- I would like to know what family engagement activities, events and parent training's are available.

Contact your DeKalb County Parent Mentors today!



SCAN!  
ME!