

# Laying the Foundation for Graduation Success: Transition IEP Meetings

## THE CHALLENGE

A high school diploma is a critical stepping stone for success after graduation. However, **nearly 30%** of students with disabilities in California leave high school each year without earning one. In 2021, only 69% of students with disabilities across the seven districts in the SIL Graduation Network earned a high school diploma.

## THE SOLUTION

Seven districts joined SIL's Graduation Network as part of California's Compliance and Improvement Monitoring (CIM) process. Together, they set an ambitious goal: to increase the percentage of students with disabilities graduating with a diploma by 10% within two years.

With the IEP Process identified as a key driver, districts in the graduation network honed in on the IEP transition meetings as a leverage point for change. They identified that a key first step toward high school success is holding a transition IEP meeting before students enter high school—with high school staff present. This ensures that each student's needs are addressed, graduation requirements are reviewed, and a 9th grade schedule is created to keep them on track.

## THE IMPACT

The The SIL Graduation Network collectively increased graduation rates for students with disabilities by **10% in the first year**, exceeding the original goal.



"Most people think that the path to high school graduation begins in the freshman year of high school. However, two-way communication is essential to ensure that the middle school staff understand the impact of their placements and decisions have on setting students up for high school success when they become high school students. To be successful, students need to be equipped with both academic and essential non academic attributes."

**Eric Beam, Ed.D.,**

*Special Education Coordinator,  
Fallbrook Union High School District*



## TRANSITION IEP MEETINGS

### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TOOLS

- Create a plan for scheduling transition meetings for all incoming 9th students from feeder schools and/or districts.
- Use electronic calendar invites and send reminders prior to the meeting.
- Calendar extra time for students transitioning from outside of the district or known feeder schools.
- Invite ALL required personnel and ensure their availability.
- Review the meeting checklist to capture transition meeting elements.
- Hold the transition meetings and use the [Transition IEP Meeting Protocol \(MS to HS\)](#).

#### Tips:

- Begin planning as early as fall for spring transition meetings.
- Make adjustments to the protocol as needed based on the unique context of the district.
- Utilize the suggested norms, or co-create norms, to ensure a collaborative and productive meeting.
- Use the agenda and checklist as guides. Each transition meeting should be personalized to the unique needs of the student and family.

**Transition IEP Meeting Protocol (MS to HS)**

Meeting Norms  
*Student-centered*  
*Strive for equity of voice*  
*Speak respectfully*

**Meeting Participants**  
 IEP meeting participants for a an 8th grade transition IEP should include:

- Current case manager
- Parent or guardian
- High school personnel (SAI teacher and/or school counselor)
- An administrator
- A general education teacher
- Any other service provider that may need to make a recommendation for high school services
- Student

**MATRICULATION IEP TEAM MEETING AGENDA:**

- ❖ Introductions
- ❖ Review Agenda and Norms
- ❖ Purpose of meeting
- ❖ Parent Procedural Safeguards
- ❖ Present Levels of Performance, including parent concerns
  - Student also shares out re: present levels and goal progress as appropriate
- ❖ Discussion of High School Program, services and supports
  - Student shares re: accommodations and modifications
- ❖ Update any other appropriate IEP forms
- ❖ Offer of placement and related services, to include fall services
- ❖ Gather signatures and consent

[Transition IEP Meeting Protocol \(MS to HS\)](#)

