



PTI & Answers4families Webinar

Informational Sessions from the convenience of
your Office or Home – 12:30pm or 8:30pm

Presented by PTI Nebraska
Speaker – Sandra Peterson
PTI Transition Specialist

Graduation & Summary of Performance (SOP)

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Parent Training and Information Nebraska

**PTI Nebraska is a
statewide resource
for families of
children with
disabilities and
special health care
needs.**

- *PTI Nebraska's staff are parent/professionals*
- *PTI Nebraska conducts relevant workshops across the state.*
- *PTI Nebraska has printed and electronic resources available at no cost.*
- *PTI Nebraska encourages and supports parents in leadership roles locally and statewide.*



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Family to Family Health Information Center



PTI NEBRASKA IS THE HOME OF
NEBRASKA'S FAMILY TO FAMILY
HEALTH INFORMATION CENTER

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Thank you to Our Partner



Special thanks to
Answers4families in providing the
website connection allowing PTI
Nebraska to share information
with families and professionals
free of cost.

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Answers Families.org

Check out
answers4families.org

For more information about children with special healthcare needs and/or disabilities:

- Discussion groups
- Ask an Expert
- Ask Rx
- Nebraska Resource & Referral System (NRRS)
 - A state wide system to locate services in your area by
 - State, county, city or zip code.
 - Self Assessments for Services

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Webinar Information

- Please ask questions to guide your learning.
 - Type in the question box on the right
- Documents are available – Sent by email or
 - Click in the box on the lower right side of the presentation to download to your computer
- Certificate of Attendance will be sent to all registered participants.
 - If you are not registered, email nbaker@pti-Nebraska.org and provide Name & US mailing address.

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Understanding Graduation and the Summary of Performance



SANDRA PETERSON
PTI NEBRASKA



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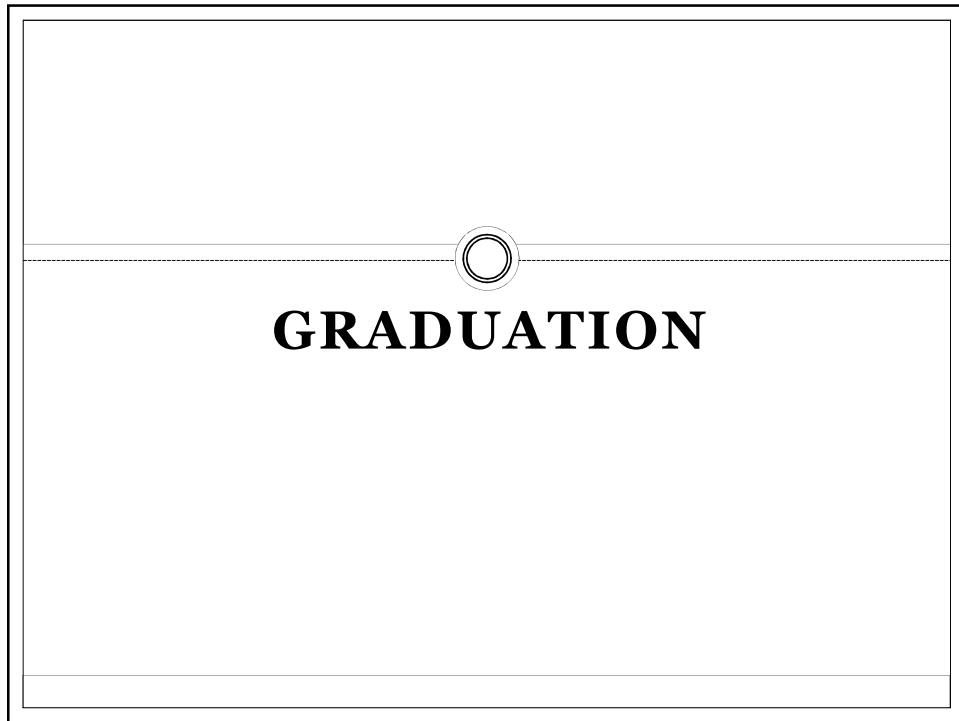
Outcomes



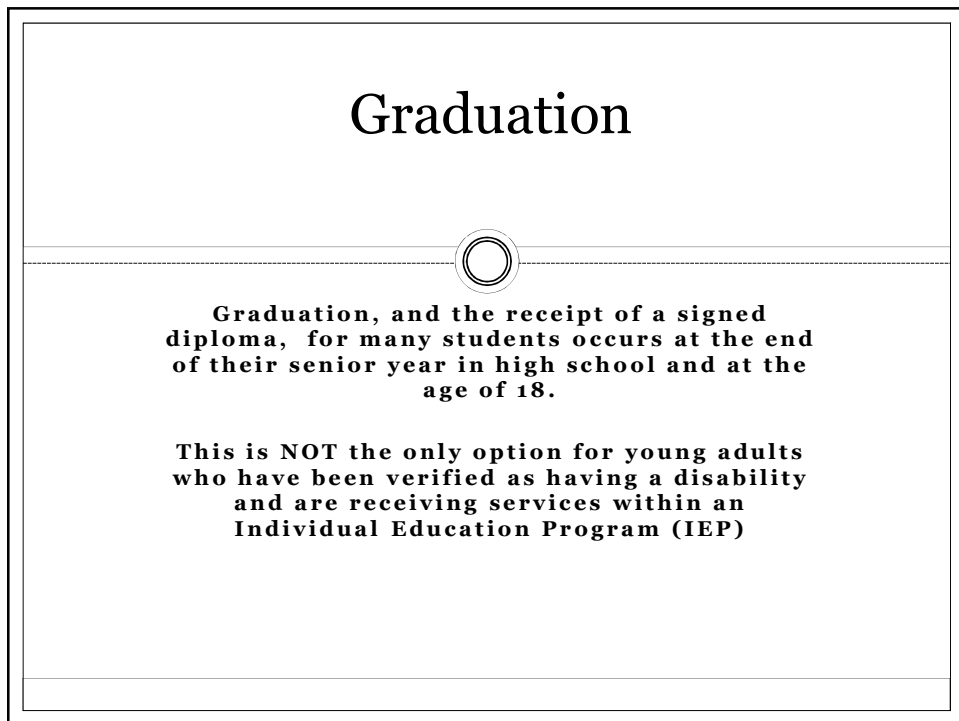
- ❖ Understand the graduation process
- ❖ Understand the graduation considerations
- ❖ Understand the Summary of Performance
- ❖ Understand the process and the value of the document



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Graduation Considerations



#1 – The student **completes the standard course of study** based upon meeting all of the (1) **requirements for graduation** and (2) **IEP goals**.

Course of study meaning the standard curriculum requirements and electives. AND including the courses related to the student's post-secondary goals in the transition plan. goals/objectives, and community activities.

IEP goals which include the annual academic and functional goals, as well as, the transition plan and activities.

The student would be eligible to receive a signed, regular diploma and participate in the regular graduation ceremonies with his/her peers.

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Graduation Considerations (continued)



#2 – The student completes the standard or modified course of study, **but NOT the IEP/transition goals**.

Course of study meaning what we just reviewed but NOT the IEP goals which include the annual academic and functional goals (i.e., social skills, community activities, etc.), as well as, the transition plan and activities (i.e., employability skills).

The student may participate in graduation ceremonies with his/her peers without receiving a signed, regular diploma. He/she may continue to receive services and supports from the school district until the IEP/transition goals are met or until he/she completes the school year in which 21 years of age is reached. At this time, the student will receive a signed, regular diploma required for graduation, **This is an IEP team decision.**

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Graduation Considerations (continued)



- **#3** – The student completes his/her IEP/transition goals, but **not the modified or standard course of study**.
- This is another reason that course of study is so very important and must be clarified.

The IEP team must identify IEP/transition goals for graduation that are consistent with the student's individual needs. AND, clearly state those courses the student must accomplish whether modified or standard. Upon completion of those goals and courses, the student will be allowed to graduate with a signed, regular diploma. **A student may elect to participate in graduation ceremonies with peer classmates or upon completion of his/her course of study.**

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MORE Graduation Considerations



- Projected graduation is when the student is expected to graduate. The IEP team needs to identify how the student's completion of course work or participation in an alternate curriculum meets the requirements established by the district's board of education for graduation and a diploma
- Graduation **should be addressed** in ALL IEP/transition meetings through the discussion of goals/futures planning/etc. Document!!
- The course of study, goals, future plans, and graduation are reviewed annually.

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More Graduation Considerations



- Several options are possible for an IEP team in prescribing the course of study and describing how the student will earn a diploma and graduate, without meeting the general education requirements. Two examples:
 1. Certain courses with corresponding credits are developed and offered for students with disabilities with the same basic content as the general education program, although there would be **modifications in instruction, materials, level of detail, etc.**
 2. An **alternate curriculum** is offered that does not correspond to general education courses and would focus on functional life skills, behavioral needs, self-help skills, social skill development, functional academics, vocational training, etc.

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AND



- The receipt of a signed, regular diploma terminates the service eligibility of students with special education needs.



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AND



- All diplomas awarded by a school district are to be identical in appearance, content and effect, except that symbols or notations may be added to individual student's diplomas to reflect official school honors or awards earned by students.
- Diplomas are needed to attain the post-secondary goals (job, education, etc.) Other documents, for example a school transcript, will be needed to support eligibility for post-secondary education.

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AND



- The IEP team must review and document that all requirements (IEP goals/transition post-secondary goals and curricular requirements) for receipt of a signed, regular high school diploma have been met.



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AND



- A student who, at graduation, receives a document such as an unsigned diploma, or blank folder is eligible to continue receiving special education supports and services until receipt of a signed, regular diploma or until the end of the school year in which the student becomes 21 years of age.



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Continued.....



Important.....

The IEP team must convene a meeting prior to graduating a student with a disability in order to review the IEP to ensure that graduation requirements will be met and the goals of the IEP/transition post-secondary plan will be completed.

Graduation constitutes a change of placement and, therefore, requires Prior Written Notice

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Graduation Discussion Points:

- *Must a district continue to provide a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to an individual with disabilities who has received a regular high school diploma?*

No. The district is not required to continue providing FAPE to a student with disabilities who has received a regular high school diploma (34 CFR Sec. 300.122 (a)(3)(i)). It is expected, however, that this would have been addressed within the IEP planning process. Part of that process should include the provision of **Prior Written Notice** to the student and his or her family, regarding the student's projected change in eligibility and placement.

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Graduation Discussion Points:

- *Are special education rights transferred from parent to student when the student reaches the age of majority (19 in Nebraska)?*

In Nebraska, there is no such procedure to do that. special education rights do not transfer from parents to students when the student reaches the age of majority.

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MORE Discussion Points



- ***Must an IEP contain graduation criteria?***

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) does not include a requirement that an IEP contain specifically identified graduation criteria or a graduation “plan”. However, the IEP team must include appropriate, measurable annual post-secondary goals and transition services (including course of study) needed to assist the student to reach these goals. The decision to graduate a student must be made by the IEP team. Document!!!

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MORE Discussion Points



- ***Is a Multidisciplinary team evaluation required prior to graduation?***

No, an evaluation is not required before the termination of a student’s eligibility due to graduation

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MORE Discussion Points



- ***Can a student participate in a graduation ceremony and continue to receive transition supports and services the following year?***

If it is age or socially appropriate for students to participate in the graduation ceremony with their peer group, they can do so. However, **the issuance of a signed, regular diploma would end eligibility for special education supports and services for the student.** An unsigned diploma or a blank folder would be appropriate to give the student at the ceremony, allowing them to continue with transition services until IEP transition goals are met, or until the end of the school year in which the student becomes age 21.

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MORE Discussion Points



- ***Is a student entitled to receive adult agency services upon graduation?***

School systems are required by IDEA to provide educational services to meet the needs of the student with disabilities. This is known as **entitlement**. There is NO ENTITLEMENT for services in adult agencies such as Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) or Developmental Disabilities (DD). These agencies have specific criteria that individuals must meet in order to be **eligible**. Services may be provided only when applications are completed. DD will not supplant Education Transition Services. It is important that connections are made early with adult agencies to ensure no gaps in services following graduation.

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MORE Discussion Points



- ***If a student with disabilities has been awarded a certificate of achievement (GED) in place of a diploma, may that student continue to receive FAPE?***

Yes. According to IDEA, the right to FAPE is not ended if a student with disabilities is awarded some other certificate of completion or attendance instead of a regular high school diploma. The right to FAPE is ended either by a student successfully finishing a regular secondary education program or reaching age 21.

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QUESTIONS



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SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

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SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE (SOP)



- The Summary of Performance (SOP) is to provide specific, meaningful, and understandable information to be utilized by the student, his/her family, and any agency that may provide services after high school. The SOP **increases the likelihood that students will successfully achieve their post-secondary goals** by providing them with current and relevant information about their academic and functional performance.

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What is the SOP?



- The purpose of the summary is to provide the student with a document that will help establish eligibility for reasonable accommodations and supports in post-school settings (employment, community college, etc.).
- It is not an assessment in itself!!!



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What is the SOP?



Parts of the SOP:

Background information
Student's post-secondary goals
Summary of academic and functional
performance (describing
accommodations/modifications)
Recommendations to assist goals
Student input (recommended)

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Eligibility Termination

- In section 300.305 (IDEA)

“For a child whose eligibility terminates a public agency must provide the child with a summary of the child’s academic achievement and functional performance which shall include recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child’s post high school goals”.

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Who gets a SOP?

- The SOP is required for students with an IEP who are:
 - Graduating with a signed, regular diploma
 - Aging out of special education (21 years of age)



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How does the SOP requirement impact practice?

- The word *summary* provides a clue:

Districts accumulate a wealth of information regarding their students including: life goals, preferences and interests, functional and academic strengths and needs, needed accommodations, strategies for success, etc.

A SOP is closely tied to information in the IEP, **but**, it is a separate document that condenses and organizes key information that will follow the student to assist the student in achieving post-secondary goals – employment, training, and life skills.

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Timing of completion of SOP may vary

- Completed during the final year of the student's secondary education. We recommend a compilation of information over high school years.
- Most useful when linked with the IEP process and the student has had the opportunity to actively participate in the development of this document.
- Includes information about a student's accommodation and academic skills/functioning which are very useful to post-secondary employment, education, personal care, and adult services

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Tips for timing.....



- Begin thinking “with the end in mind” during the high school years and create a note page or portfolio of important accomplishments, accommodations, etc. that will assist in synthesizing the most important information for the SOP.
- Involve other key people in the student’s life, e.g., significant teachers, mentors, counselors, employers, community members, peers, family.

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A well-written SOP:



- Should make the reader feel like they know the student.
- Can be thought of as a portable, user-friendly tool that students and families can use (just as you or I might develop a portfolio to back up our resume).
- Provides a crucial linkage from secondary school to post-secondary life!!!

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Who should be involved in completing the SOP??

- It is valuable and practical to use a team process that includes people who know the student:
 - Student
 - Family
 - Peers
 - Community members
 - Employers
 - School personnel including the special education teacher, general education teacher(s), guidance counselor, school psychologist, and/or related services personnel who know the student and
 - Adult agency personnel such as vocational rehabilitation counselor, and pre-admission and screening agencies.

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Connection to self-advocacy skills

- Students need effective self-advocacy skills to actually use the SOP.
- Students need effective self-advocacy skills to negotiate work and post-secondary schools settings (where they might use the document).
 - Students need to gain hands-on practice in self-advocacy and self-determination!! These skills are vital in a post-secondary setting!!
 - Authoring the SOP provides an opportunity to gain practice in describing their academic strengths and needs.

STUDENT'S DECISION TO SHARE OR NOT TO SHARE!

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Recommendations from Providers in Postsecondary Positions:

- Student strengths and needs should be written in an objective manner
 - **Use** assessment language like average, below average, above average, etc.
 - **Do not use** value words like good, nice, slow, brilliant, significant, etc.
 - Eligibility is dependent upon a need, deficit and a disability so document actual levels of performance clearly and without an overly positive bias.
 - **Honest, objective, clear and concise.**
 - **Support active student involvement to build self-determination skills.**
 - Student Perspective page is a **must** from the post-secondary perspective!!

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Clarifications

- The IDEA does not require school districts to include in the SOP the documentation necessary to determine a student's eligibility for another programs
- However, the SOP, with the IEP and MDT, will include information that may assist another programs to determine a student's eligibility for services or accommodations.
- Students with disabilities in post-secondary settings, whether education or employment, must articulate their need/desire for accommodations and be able to talk about past accommodations and academic supports. **This is called self-advocacy.**

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Discussion Points of SOP



- ***Will the SOP provide the documentation needed to determine eligibility for adult agency services?***

It is not anticipated that a SOP will provide all of the information necessary for adult agencies to determine eligibility for services. However, the SOP may include information that will assist other programs in determining eligibility. For example, the SOP is one of the educational records that has been identified as a resource to eligibility for Vocational Rehabilitation services.



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Discussion Points of SOP



- ***Will the SOP provide the documentation needed to determine eligibility for post-secondary education or to receive accommodations in a post-secondary setting?***

No, it is not anticipated that a SOP will provide all of the information necessary to determine eligibility for enrollment. A student who has requested academic adjustments, auxiliary aids or modifications of policies, practices, or procedures from a post-secondary institution may provide the SOP, IEP, and MDT as part of the documentation to demonstrate need to warrant the accommodations or modifications.

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Discussion Points of SOP



- ***If a re-evaluation is completed for a student, is a SOP still needed?***

YES! Requirements state that the school “shall provide the child with a summary of the child’s academic achievement and functional performance, which shall include recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child’s post-secondary goals.”

Rule 51 006.06E1

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Discussion Points of SOP



- ***What areas should be considered when addressing academic achievement and functional performance?***

Academic achievement includes areas such as reading, writing, math, and learning styles. Functional performance includes areas such as problem solving and decision making, organization, attention, social skills and behaviors, communication, career and technical skills, daily living skills and self-advocacy skills.

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QUESTIONS

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HANDOUTS



- **SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE PACKET - OHIO**
- **SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE TEMPLATES**
- **HOW MIGHT A STUDENT USE THE SOP**
- **SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE SCRIPT**
- **COURSE OF STUDY**
- **TRANSITION TIMELINE**

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THANK YOU



Sandra Peterson
speterson@pti-nebraska.org

402-403-3915

402-346-0525

800-284-8520

