

# Introduction to the Student-led IEP Initiative

OSSE Secondary Transition Institute  
May 1, 2014





# Promoting Successful Transition Outcomes

# Indicator 13

- Required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as part of Annual Performance Report to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) within the US Department of Education
- Indicator 13 measures the percentage of youth aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes coordinated, measurable, annual IEP goals and transition services that will reasonably enable the child to meet the postsecondary goals.

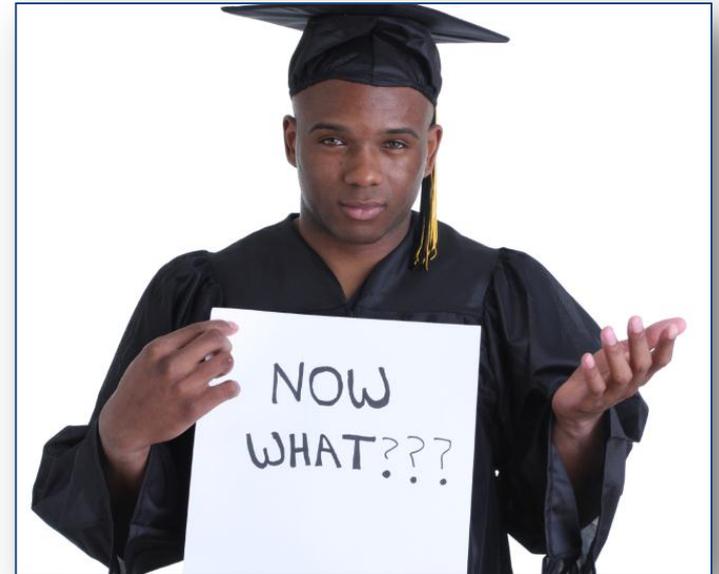


# OSEP Secondary Transition Monitoring

- U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has designated DC as "high risk" and imposed Special Conditions for FFY 2013
  - Based in part on reports of very low levels of compliance with IDEA Secondary Transition requirements
- Corrective Action Plan & Progress Reports
  - Focused quarterly monitoring
  - Directed use of funds
  - Targeted training and technical assistance
  - Resource development
  - Secondary Transition Community of Practice

# Consequences of Poor Transition Planning

- Unemployment or underemployment
- Dependent living arrangements
- Limited recreational and leisure opportunities
- Social isolation
- Overdependence on governmental agencies/services



# Taxonomy for Transition Programming



Recommended by the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC).  
Available at <http://homepages.wmich.edu/~kohlerp/pdf/Taxonomy.pdf>.

# Guideposts for Success

School  
Preparation

Career  
Preparation

Youth  
Development  
& Leadership

Connecting  
Activities

Family  
Involvement

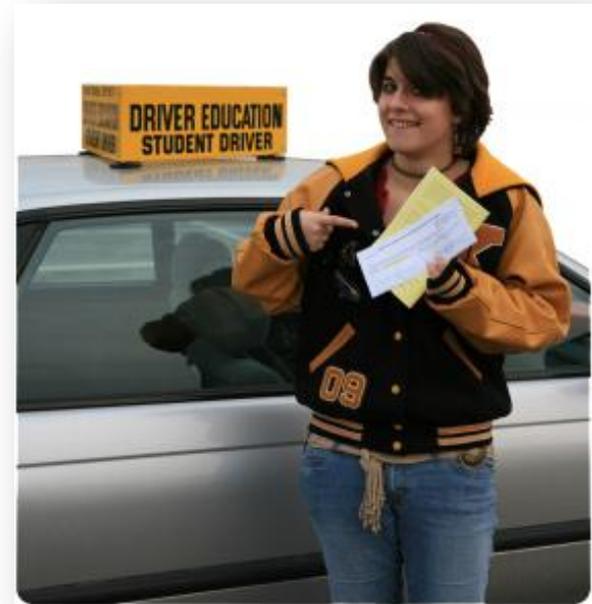
Recommended by the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth.  
Available at: <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/guideposts>.

# Who's Driving?

## Educator-Directed Transition



## Student-Directed Transition



Schools with higher levels of student participation in IEP meetings have higher Indicator 13 compliance rates.

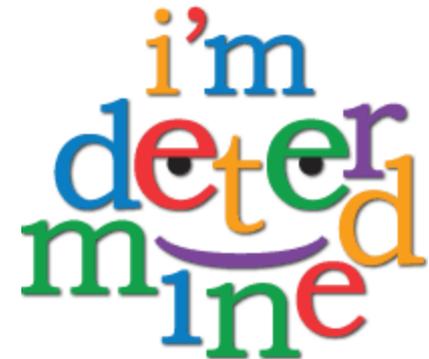
# Best Practices in Transition Planning Lead to Positive Outcomes

- Increased self-determination
- Increased enrollment in academic/training courses
- Lower dropout rates
- Higher expectations and more accountability for post-school success
- Higher levels of interagency collaboration
- Higher employment rate for 18 to 25 year olds



# Initiative Background

- DC Secondary Transition Community of Practice
- Ongoing collaboration:
  - Virginia Department of Education Self-Determination Project
  - National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center
- OSSE Student-led IEP Demonstration Project





# **Self-Determination & Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)**

# Predictors of Post-School Success



Students with higher self-determination skills were more likely to be engaged in postsecondary education and employment.

<http://www.nsttac.org/content/predictors-post-school-success>

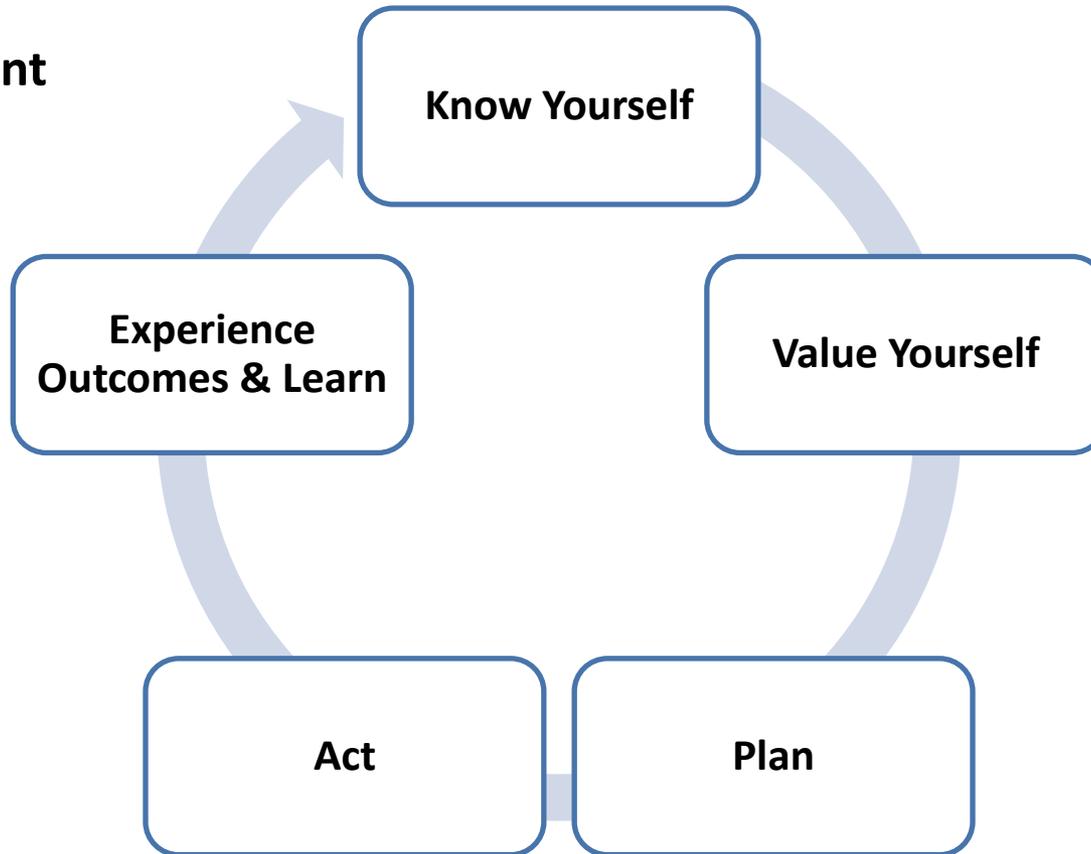
# Self-Determination

“Self-determination is a combination of skills, knowledge and beliefs that enables a person to engage in goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior. An understanding of one's strengths and limitations together with a belief in one's self as capable and effective is essential to self-determination. When acting on the basis of these skills and attitudes, individuals have greater ability to take control of their lives and assume the role of successful adults in our society.”

Field, S., Martin, J., Miller, R., Ward, M., & Wehmeyer, M. A. (1998). *Practical Guide to Teaching Self-Determination*. Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.

# Self-Determination

Environment



# What is the IEP?

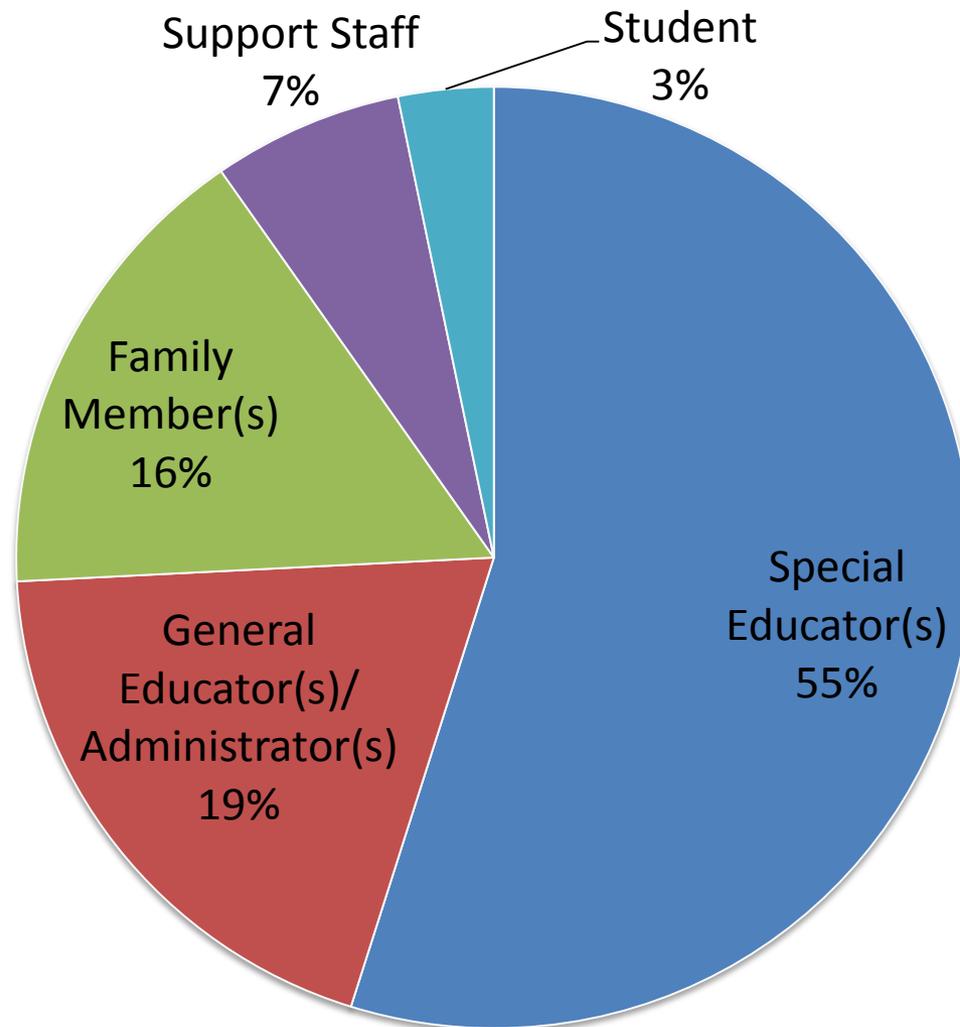


A roadmap that informs instruction and leads to educational and postsecondary success

# What is an IEP?

- A process that is just as important as the product
- A communication tool between parents, school, and others
- A method for joint planning, problem solving, and decision-making
- A written commitment for service delivery

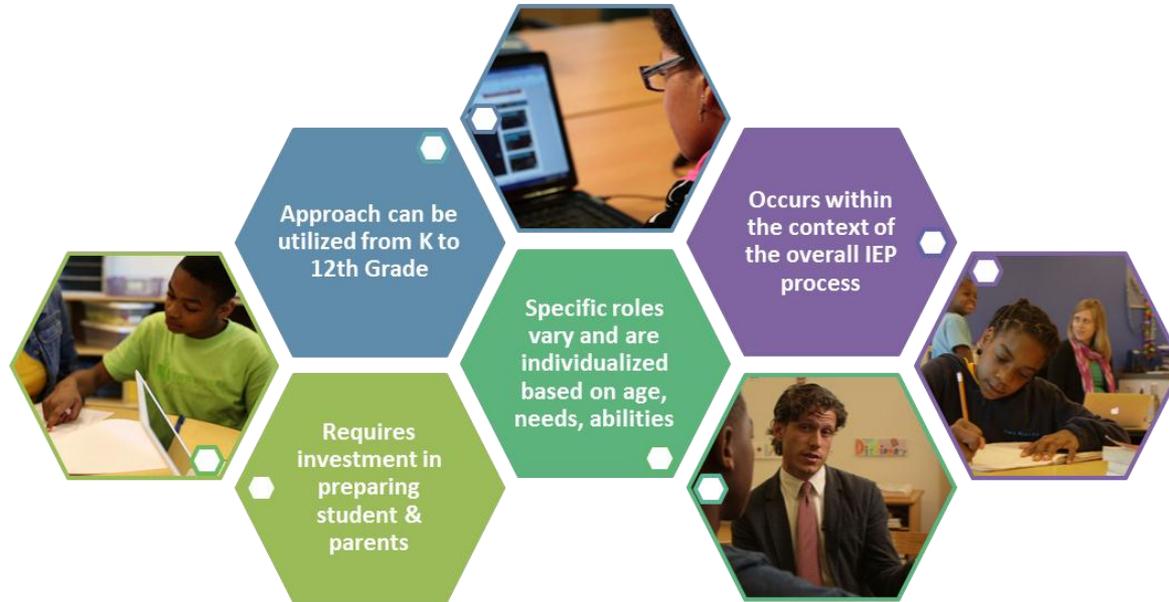
# IEP Participation: Who Talks?



# Educator-Driven IEPs Lead to Poor Outcomes

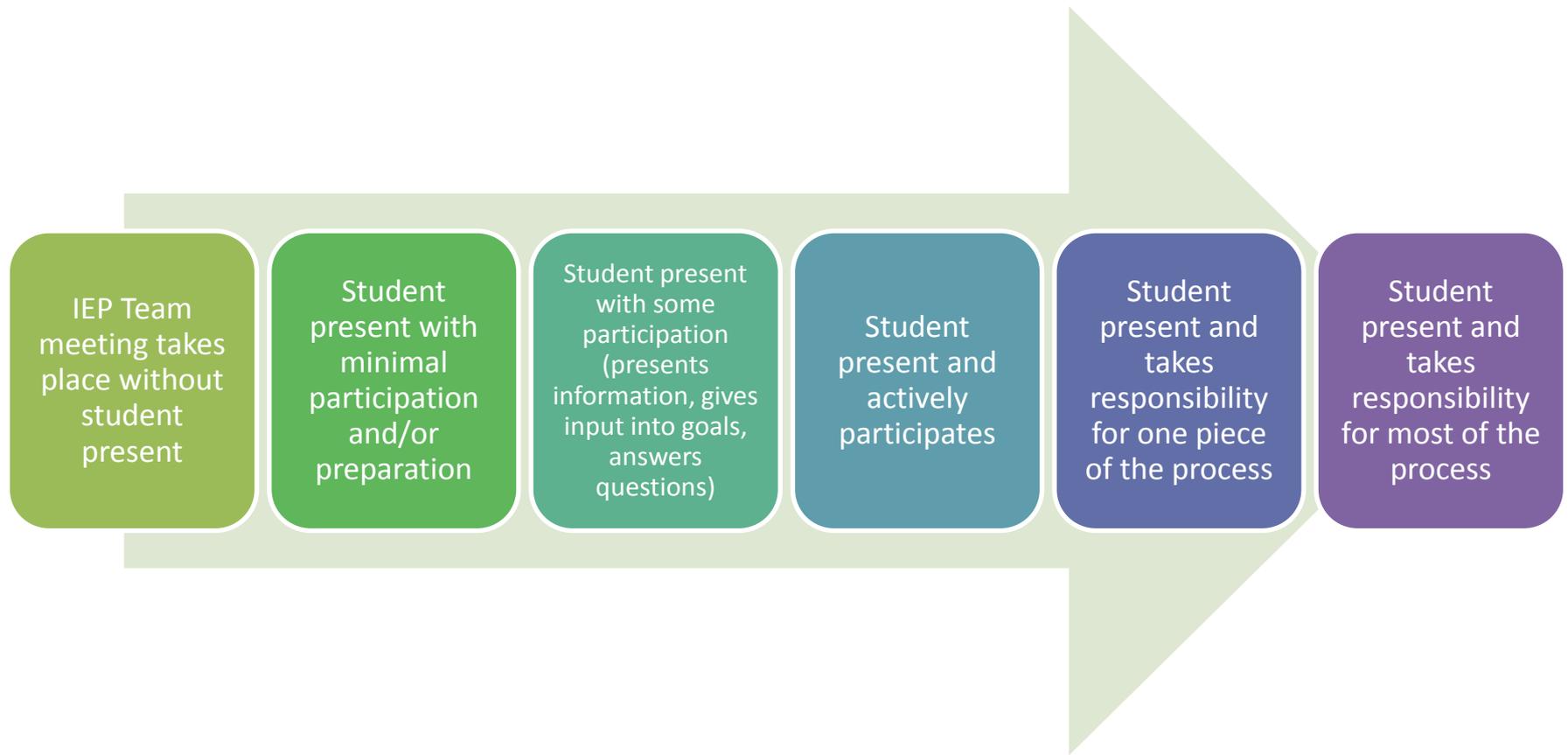
- Students unaware of the purpose of IEP meetings
- Students report making few if any decisions at IEP meetings
- Students are unaware of teacher/parent expectations during IEP meetings

# Defining the Student-led IEP



- Meaningful student participation in IEP development
- Student takes a leadership and decision-making role

# IEP Participation Spectrum



Student engagement levels based on individual needs and abilities

# Implementation Challenges

## What does the research say?

- Belief that students have more urgent needs and will not benefit from skills and practices
- Lack of information and knowledge of self-determination
- Lack of resources and school level support
- Lack of instructional time to implement

# Implementation Challenges

- Students are unaware that they have a disability
- Students unfamiliar with IEP process and/or do not understand their IEPs
- Parent or teacher hesitations about student participation
- Trust issues



Feedback provided by focus group participants at the Inclusive Schools Week Capstone, held February 4, 2013 and at the SLIEP Stakeholder Meeting, held May 23,

# Student-led IEPs: Research-Based Benefits

- Students develop stronger self-advocacy and self-determination skills, leads to increased self-confidence
- Increased parent and general education teacher participation
- Less tension—meeting environment becomes a forum for inclusive positive communication between all participants
- Reduced stigma associated with having a disability
- Increased student engagement and accountability

# Impact of Increased Participation

Students who lead and participate in IEP meetings gain:

- Greater awareness about their disability
- Understanding of how their disability impacts their academic performance
- Knowledge about available and appropriate accommodations
- Familiarity with the IEP process

# Building Self-Awareness

A 20-year longitudinal study by Raskind, Goldberg, Higgins, and Herman (1999) found that six attributes, including **self-awareness** and **use of support systems**, were more powerful predictors of students' post-school success than any of the demographic variables examined in their research (IQ, socio-economic status, age, gender, or academic achievement).

# Improved Transition Outcomes

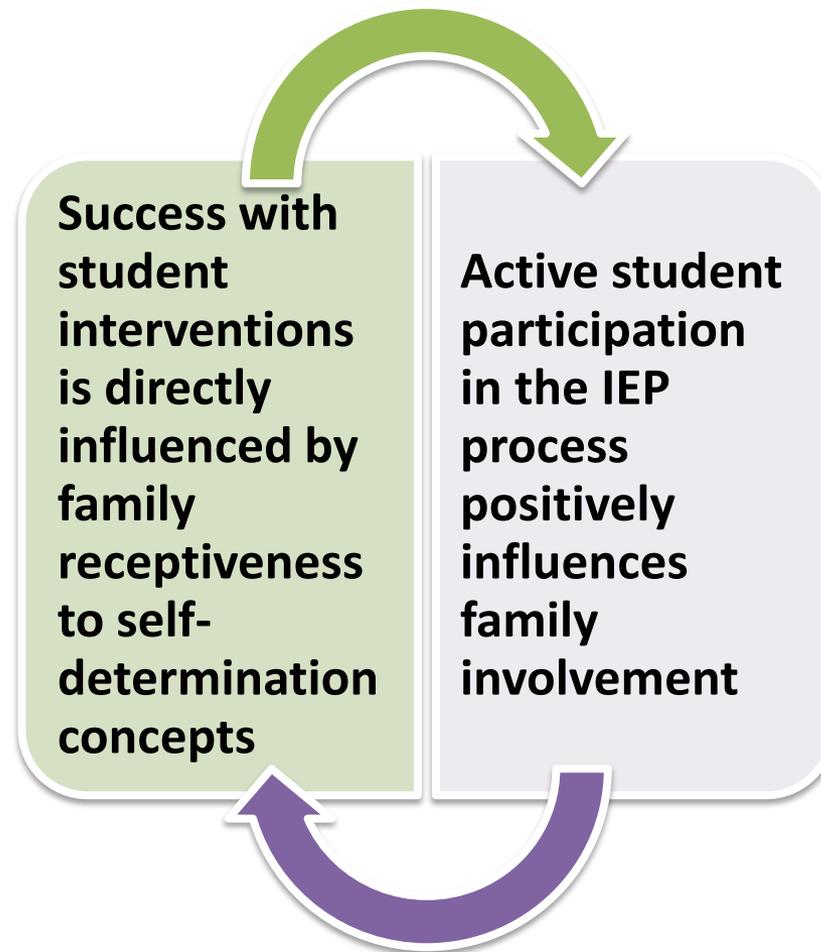
## Secondary Outcomes

- Students gain self-determination skills and demonstrate increased participation in transition planning
- Students are more likely to be engaged in school work
- Transition goals are more aligned with interests and preferences
- Increased students participation in plan implementation and goal attainment

## Postsecondary Outcomes

- Increase in graduation and employment rates
- Increase in ability to advocate outside of school and access adult services

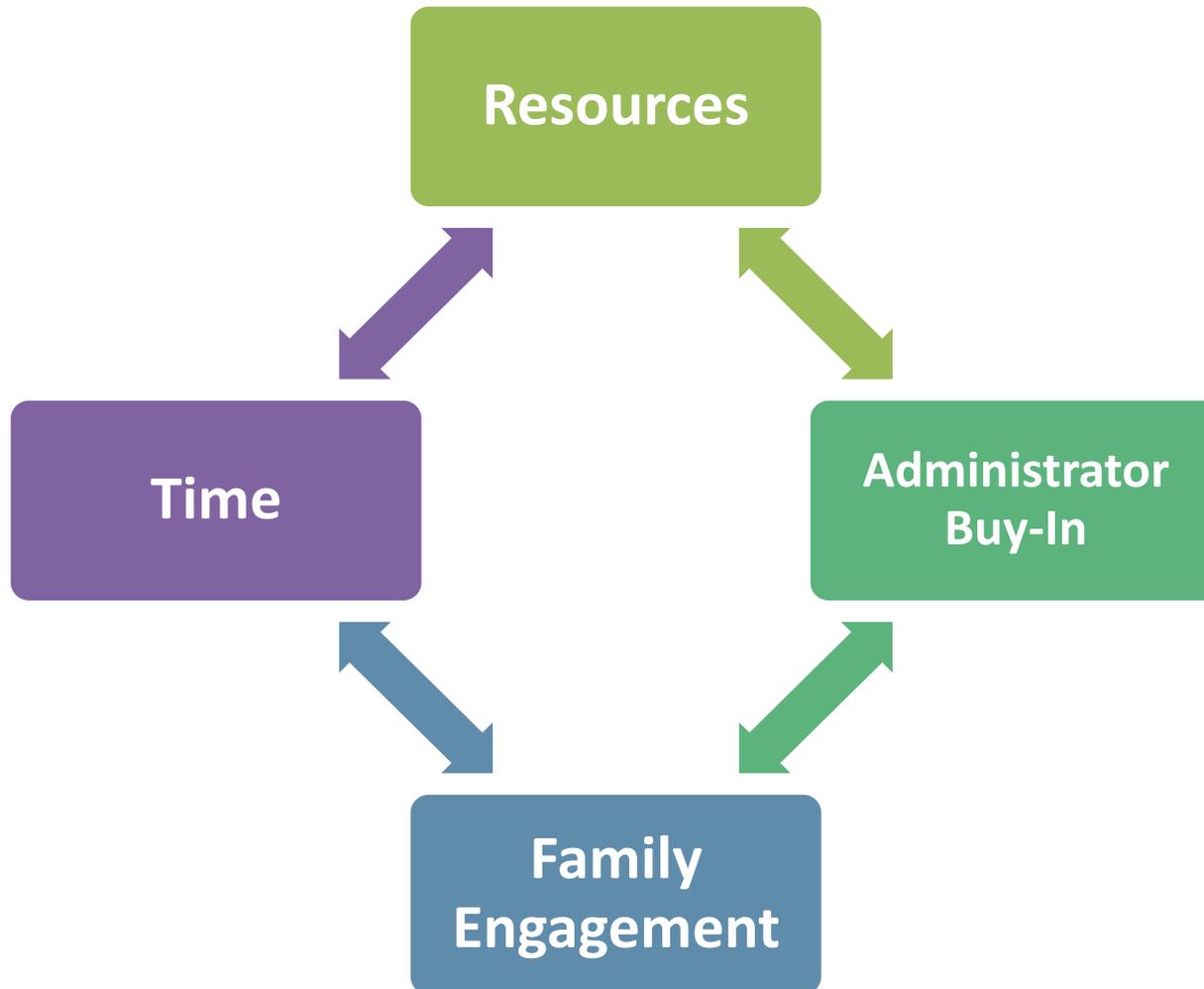
# Empowering Students & Families





# Getting Started

# Essential Components



# Student-led IEP Toolkit



Getting Started



Building Self-Awareness



Understanding Your IEP

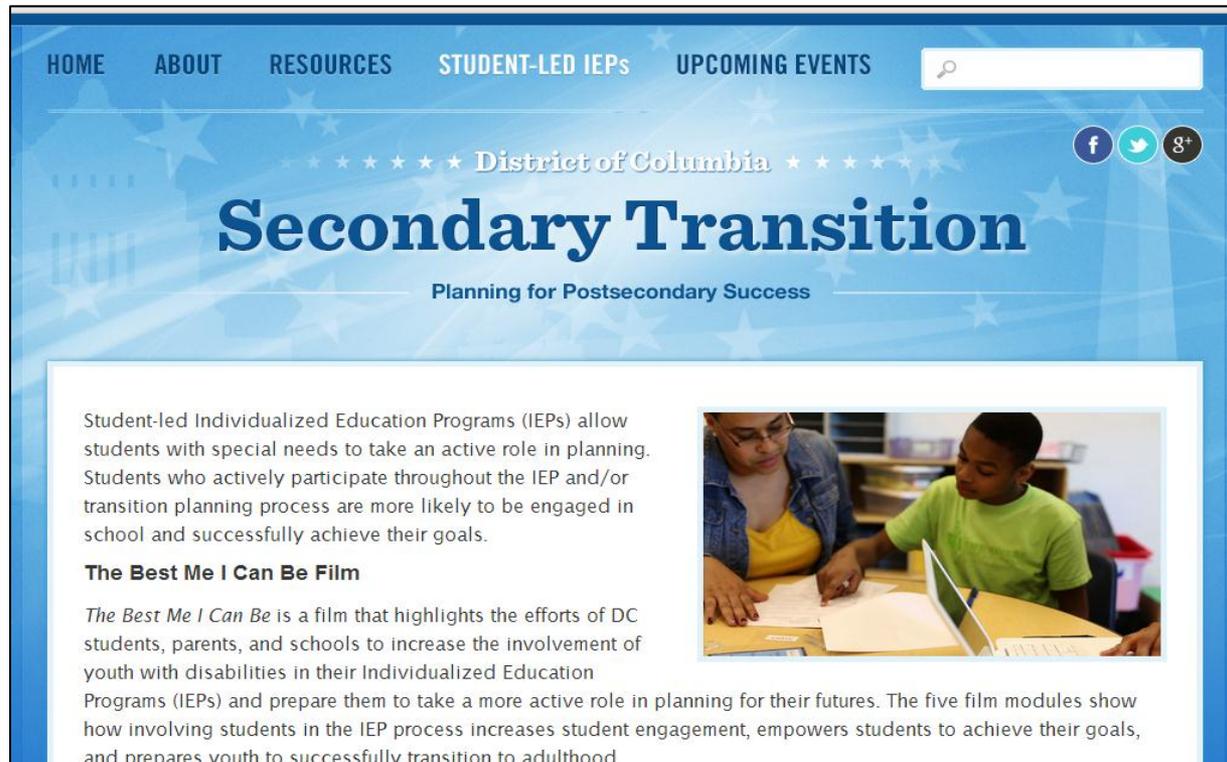


Preparing for Participation



Conducting a Student-led IEP

# Secondary Transition Website



HOME ABOUT RESOURCES STUDENT-LED IEPs UPCOMING EVENTS

District of Columbia

## Secondary Transition

Planning for Postsecondary Success

Student-led Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) allow students with special needs to take an active role in planning. Students who actively participate throughout the IEP and/or transition planning process are more likely to be engaged in school and successfully achieve their goals.

**The Best Me I Can Be Film**

*The Best Me I Can Be* is a film that highlights the efforts of DC students, parents, and schools to increase the involvement of youth with disabilities in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and prepare them to take a more active role in planning for their futures. The five film modules show how involving students in the IEP process increases student engagement, empowers students to achieve their goals, and prepares youth to successfully transition to adulthood.



[www.ossesecondarytransition.org](http://www.ossesecondarytransition.org)

# Initial Steps

- Obtain administrator and leadership buy-in
- Start small—choose 2-3 students to work with
- Assess the types of activities that are appropriate for your students
- Make time to work with students
- Engage with parents and other family members



# Next Steps

# Training & Technical Assistance

- Attend an upcoming SLIEP Trainings:
  - Wednesday, May 28, 2014
  - Thursday, May 29, 2014
- Host a screening of *The Best Me I Can Be* using the SLIEP Discussion Guide
- Participate in the SLIEP Professional Learning Community (TBD)
- Visit *Upcoming Events* at [www.osse.dc.gov](http://www.osse.dc.gov) for additional training opportunities

# Contact Information

- For additional information about OSSE's Student-led IEP Initiative, please contact:
- Ms. Naté Dearden
- Secondary Transition Specialist
- Division of Specialized Education, Training & Technical Assistance Unit
- Email: [nate.dearden@dc.gov](mailto:nate.dearden@dc.gov)
- Phone: 202-741-0267

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