

The Adult Education Transition Services (AETs) Program

Users Guide

Revised September 2011



**A Joint Program of the Department of Public
Instruction/Office of Special Education and the
Department of Human Services/ Divisions of
Developmental Disabilities and Vocational
Rehabilitation**

Introduction

In May 2000, a joint program between the Department of Human Services and Department of Public Instruction Office of Special Education was started.

The AETs Program was designed to enhance transition training and experiences for a student beyond what is reasonably expected of the school under IDEA. Consideration for the AETs program should be part of the IEP transition planning process to facilitate achievement of the student's postsecondary goals. Consideration for the student's involvement in the AETs program needs to be discussed by the student's IEP Team. AETS is not a mandatory program. The AETs is not a shift of responsibility for a student from school to adult services but rather a means to enhance or expand the transition process for those that qualify. All parties- student, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), Developmental Disabilities (DD), School District, and special education district – must agree to services for a student. The team determines what needs to occur for the student to assist the student in reaching their desired postsecondary goals. The AETs program may be an avenue for the student to get the “extra” training and other experiences to help them be successful once they enter the adult world.

The AETs program is a collaborative team process between the school, VR and DD. The AETs is able to enhance transition activities for students by accessing federal Medicaid funding. This effectively turns \$.30 worth of local contribution into \$1.00 in services for the student. Medicaid regulations vary, therefore coordination between the Department of Human Services and the Department of Public Instruction is essential to ensure Medicaid and IDEA guidelines are followed appropriately. The requirements as set out in the DHS/ND DPI Joint Initiative statement and policy of May 1, 2000 do apply.

IEP Team Considerations for Adult Education Transition Services (AETS)

The following criteria must be considered for a student to be eligible for an AETS Program:

AGE:

An IEP team may consider this option for any participant receiving special education services who is at least 18 years of age and not more than 22 years of age.

GRADUATION STATUS:

A student must be willing to accept an unsigned diploma and can participate in graduation as a social ceremony. The diploma will be signed only upon completion of the Adult Education Transition Services or the age of 21. A student who has received a signed diploma is no longer eligible for Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). A Student must be eligible for FAPE to be enrolled in this program. The School District must maintain an IEP for the student throughout the duration of the student's participation in the AET's program.

STUDENT INTEREST, NEEDS, PREFERENCES:

The IEP team will need to discuss the following questions and document the rationale in the IEP as it relates to the students post secondary goals.

1. What are the post secondary goals for the student?
2. What are the unmet needs of the student that the school cannot provide?
3. Have the adult service needs of the student been identified?
4. How is the student going to benefit from the adult service rather than school?

COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES:

In order to maximize application of the academic subjects, it is critical to demonstrate participation in a variety of community work experiences, along with competencies and occupational abilities to justify the student's individual readiness for employment situations.

FUNCTIONAL VOCATIONAL EVALUATION

A functional vocational evaluation is considered a helpful tool for the IEP team and the referring agencies to identify the outcomes of the community experiences and vocational strengths and challenges in any pending employment situation. This also helps to identify future employment opportunities and work conditions for the participant.

THE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)

The IEP must document the transition services to date, the expected benefit to the participant, and the outcomes expected during the remainder of the time the participant would be eligible for FAPE. The Postsecondary goals and present level information identified in the T-I section of the Transition IEP must document reasonable correlation between adult service opportunities and current levels of functioning.

In order to maximize the high school experience, students should be able to demonstrate participation in a variety of **community work experiences**, along with competencies and occupational abilities to justify their individual readiness for employment situations.

The team must complete an IEP that specifies services related to AETS training. The IEP also needs to identify the School District, DD, VR personnel and others who will participate in the PCSP (Person Centered Service Plan).

ELIGIBILITY FOR DD SERVICES:

Any student wishing to access this program must be eligible for case management services under DD. The participant must be also eligible for Waiver Services.

ELIGIBILITY FOR MEDICAID:

Any student wishing to access this program must be found eligible for Medicaid, be enrolled in the Medicaid program and be screen able to the DD Medicaid Traditional Waiver.

ELIGIBILITY FOR VR SERVICES:

Any participant who is considering competitive employment must apply and be found eligible for VR services. In addition, if the individual requires ongoing supports once the VR case is closed, they must also be determine eligible for supported employment services under Vocational Rehabilitation, if SEP is to be the service delivery mode. In addition, assurance that extended services is available once the VR case is closed,

and must be determined prior to the developing the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) and authorizing for SEP services through VR.

Considerations for the School District/Special Ed Unit

- Must have provided the student with transition training and experiences as required by IDEA.
- Must maintain the individual as an enrolled student and maintain a transition IEP.
- Provide the actual match (approximately 45% (effective October 1, 2011)) to Medicaid funding for the DD licensed services that are planned. The School District obligation is not limited to the foundation aid payment if the 45% match requirement exceeds the foundation aid payment. If the 45% required match is less than the foundation aid payment, the School District obligation is limited to the 45% match.
- DPI will withhold the 45% match from distributions to the responsible School District necessary to cover billings by DD providers for the DD licensed services the School District has agreed to fund in the Funding Agreement (Attachment A).
 - DHS will not pay for day services (Day Supports or Extended Services) prior to the end of the school year in which the student turns 21 years of age before August 1.
- If a student is to be provided Supported Employment training and stabilization through VR, the School District must obligate to the match for Extended Services from the conclusion of training and stabilization to the end of the school year in which the student turns 21 years of age prior to August 1.
- If the plan for the student is to use Day Supports through DD, the School District must obligate to the match for those services to the end of the school year in which the student turns 21 years of age prior to August 1.
 - DHS will not pay for Individualized Supported living Arrangement (ISLA) or Supported Living Arrangement (SLA) services prior to the date an individual turns 21 years of age or is in the last semester of the school year in which the individual will turn 21 prior to August 1 and participation is part of a formal transition plan.
- Group home residential services may be prioritized for a student prior to age 21 if necessary due to concerns of health and welfare for the individual in the current residential arrangement. Otherwise, match costs for residential placements to provide transition services through the AETS program will be the responsibility of the School District until the

student turns 21 or until the end of the last year of school in which the student turns 21.

- DHS does not pay for room and board or transportation under the DD Medicaid Traditional Waiver and are therefore not eligible for FFP (Federal Financial Participation). The student or the responsible School District will need to provide for these services outside of the Funding Agreement.
 - Agency-Placed children do not qualify for the AETS funding.
 - A student who will require one-to-one constant supervision in an adult service setting must have arrangements for that supervision made and provided by parties other than the AETS program in which they will be enrolled.

Considerations for DD

- Must agree to appropriateness of the service
- Must participate in service planning via the IEP
- Provide follow up information to School District on DD services provided
- Provide IEP team/School District with examples of appropriate DD services and providers and cost estimates to use in planning
- Be prepared to continue DD services at the conclusion of the school's responsibility
- Relay AETS proposals from IEP team to the State Review Team (to include evidence of agreement of School District, DD, and VR).
- Screen the student for DD Waiver and authorize DD service via the ISP (Individual Service Plan).
- Coordinate completion of 'Attachment A' (funding agreement).
- Advise the School District of any recommended changes in DD service that may affect the school's financial responsibility.

Considerations for VR

- Participation is necessary when Supported Employment (SEP) or other VR services may be part of the Individualized Plan for Employment.
- When SEP is to be part of the plan, estimate time of transition to Extended Services and rates of intervention for the funding agreement.
 - Identification of Extended Services funding source must be determined before SEP services can begin.
 - Provide IEP team/School District with examples of appropriate VR services and providers and cost estimates to use in AETs planning.

The AETS Referral and Program Development Process:

- Once IEP Team members are in agreement, the IEP is revised to detail the proposed services and how they will go beyond the schools obligation under IDEA and enhance the transition for the student.
- The DD Program Manager forwards the IEP and a cover letter outlining services the student has received to date and also describing the proposed services to the AETs State Review Team. *Example: Cover letter from DD Program Manager to the DD State Office requesting consideration for the AETs Program (Attachment C).*
- The AETs State Review Team evaluates the proposed IEP to determine if the responsible School District has met its obligations for transition under IDEA. The Team also determines whether the proposed plan represents an enhancement to the student's transition services beyond what would be expected of the school by IDEA.
- The AETs State Review Team sends notice to the regional DD and VR offices of the results of the review.
- After approval by the AETs State Review Team, the DD Program Manager provides the School District and Special Education Unit with an estimated cost for the student's participation in the AETs Program.
- Once agreement is reached on the cost a funding agreement is drafted.
- The funding agreement is sent to the State DD Program Administrator for approval.

Example: AETs Plan Process after approval by the AETs State Review Team

SEP, Extended Services and SLA are the services the IEP team has determined will be needed for the transition goals of the student.

- The VR counselor refers the student to SEP providers and the DD case manager refers the student to DD licensed SLA providers.

- The student selects providers who then meet with the IEP team to develop service plans. The IEP Team and adult service providers determine support needs for Extended Services and SLA.
- The DD Case Manager obtains specific cost figures from the DD state office.
- The responsible School District agrees to funding requirements.
- The funding agreement is completed by the DD Case Manager and is sent to the State DD office.
- Once approved by the DD State Office the funding agreement is sent to DPI Special Education Office and the State VR.
- VR counselor authorizes SEP and the DD case manager authorizes SLA and Extended Services.
- DD state office issues provider numbers to licensed DD provider for billing purposes.
- DD services are billed to DD state office by the DD provider and forwarded to DPI.
- DPI withholds the matching requirement from payments to the School District and makes them available to DHS. DHS accesses the funds, pays DD providers full amounts billed and claims 55% from the federal Medicaid program.
- VR/DD regional offices monitor progress of the student in services and provide reports to the School District.
- School District must maintain the individual as an enrolled student and maintain a transition IEP. VR, DD, and adult service providers meet with IEP team to review plans and services provided.
- Once the student entitlement to education ends, the student continues in adult services and the IEP and funding agreement terminate.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Funding Agreement
- B. Glossary of Acronyms
- C. Cover Letter Example
- D. AETs Process At a Glance

Attachment A

**Adult Education Transition Services
Match Funding Agreement**

School District _____ agrees to participate in the Adult Education
Transition Services for student _____.

School District agrees to contribute:

Foundation aid payment \$ _____

Special Education payment \$ _____

Other Unit payment(s) \$ _____
(e.g. summer school payment applicable if during June – July)

TOTAL SCHOOL CONTRIBUTION (45%) \$ _____

Monthly amount of \$ _____ from

Start date ____/____/____ to ending date ____/____/____

Comments:

Services:

Provider(s):

Typed Name of School District Official

Date

School District Official Signature

Date

Typed Name of Special Education Director

Date

Special Education Director Signature

Date

DHS USE ONLY:
Medicaid Match: (approximately 55%) \$ _____

DPI USE ONLY:
Special Education Approval _____ Date _____
Special Education Approval _____ Date _____

Adult Education Transition Services Match Funding Agreement

Instructions

1. Determine costs of the services to be provided through the Developmental Disabilities service system. If 45% of that projected cost is not greater than the foundation aid payment for the student, enter the amount of the foundation aid payment. If greater, enter 45% of total estimated costs. (Rates for specific services and providers are available from the DHS Developmental Disabilities Unit.)
2. Enter the dates of service. The ending date should be the end of the school year in which the student reaches age 21.
3. List the Developmental Disabilities services to be provided under this agreement. Do not include other DD services (such as Family Support Services) which the student may be receiving. DD services which may be included are: Day Support Services, Extended Services, Transitional Community Living Facility; Minimally Supervised Living Arrangement, Supported Living Arrangement, and Individualized Supported Living Arrangement.
4. Type in the name of the local school district official who is authorized to make this agreement and the director of the Special Education Unit and obtain signatures.
5. Send copies to:

Brianne Skachenko, Department of Human Services
Developmental Disabilities Unit

Copies of the Developmental Disabilities Individual Service Plan (ISP) and Vocational Rehabilitation Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), if applicable, should be included.

Attachment B

Glossary of Acronyms

AETS	Adult Education Transition Service
DD	Developmental Disabilities
DDPM	Developmental Disabilities Program Manager
DHS	North Dakota Department of Human Services
DPI	North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
FFP	Federal Financial Participation
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individualized Education Program
IPE	Individualized Plan for Employment

ISLA	Individualized Supported Living Arrangement
ISP	Individual Service Plan
PCSP	Person Centered Service Plan
SEP	Supported Employment Program
SLA	Supported Living Arrangement
VR	Vocational Rehabilitation

Attachment C

Cover Letter Example

Date

Dear AETS committee members:

The IEP team and Person Centered Service Plan team for (student name) wish to finalize plans to access AETS for (student name)'s last year of school. (Student name)'s date of birth is 02/08/90. She will turn 21 years of age this coming February. The school has offered (student name) the coursework necessary for graduation and last year assisted in providing some vocational training in the special needs preschool center in the school for Sunny Town.

(Student name) is presumed eligible for VR in light of her SSI benefit: she has had a VR case opened and successfully closed in the last fiscal year. (Student name) was provided Vocational Rehabilitation funding to assist her in learning soft skills (appropriate response to supervisors, communication skills, interpersonal skills and morning routines), clothing needed for placement at the Sunny Town Preschool, as well as assistive technology (specialized alarm in light of her hearing deficit, specialized fire alarm and telephone with amplification) for her apartment. (Student name) will be accessing Day Supports if the AETS plan is approved.

(Student name) is enrolled in the Happy School program and has a current IEP. Her IEP team reconvened September 21, 2010 to review progress this past year and set new goals.

(Student name) is eligible for DDPM supports and currently accesses FCO III funding until her 21st birthday, at which point she will move to ISLA funding. (Student name)'s licensed DD provider is Open Door Center, Sunny Town. Her current PAR level is 3 and the HCBS screening indicator identifies her as eligible for the DD Waiver: she is currently "G" screened. Her Medicaid is current/active and she receives SSI benefits.

All releases are current and active between the LEA, DDPM and VR. (Student name) retains all rights at this time and is legally capable of signing releases as well as entering into service arrangements. (Student name) continues to rely on family for direction and her family is also in agreement with her current IEP and PCSP plans. (Student name) pays for her room and board with her benefits and earned income. She accesses Housing Assistance and SNAP benefits.

Attachment C

Cover Letter Example

The LEA has expressed a desire to utilize an AETS plan from 8/17/2010 through 5/25/2011 at which point the Happy schools will host graduation ceremonies and (student name)'s Diploma will be officially conferred upon her.

The IEP team has identified that (student name) needs to develop employment skills in community settings. The long range goal is for (student name) to be employed 15-20 hours per week in a job that best matches her wishes for employment with her skills to complete the job. The school has provided all the coursework necessary for graduation and has provided a year of soft skills training in the special needs preschool working with young children. (student name) continues to require supervision consistent with a 1:4 supervision level in a small group/team of people completing typical community employment tasks under the type of supports consistent with the Day Supports model available from DDPM services. This level of employment will afford (student name) the supervision she requires due to her ability level and her hearing needs, as well as affording her the level of training needed to move toward greater independence. Progress in the areas of training over the last year is found in progress reports from the LEA and the Special Education Unit Director.

**The AETS Process at a Glance
Attachment D**

