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December 2022


Volume 11, Issue 6

#### PROJECT 10 TOPICAL BRIEFS

are published on a bi-monthly basis. Each issue focuses on a specific topic or theme, highlighting current and upcoming information and events related to secondary transition. This month the Topical Brief is focused on Deferment Requirements and Procedures.



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## Topics

- Learning About the Deferment Process
- Managing the Deferment Process
- Project 10 Website Updates

### Learning About the Deferment Process

Students with disabilities may be eligible to defer receiving their high school diploma and continue to receive educational services



through the school district. When a student is eligible for deferment, the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) will document that the IEP team has made the determination of eligibility. The deferment process is necessary because students who receive their high school diploma are no longer eligible for a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). To continue to receive FAPE, eligible students with disabilities may defer receiving their high school diplomas. The student must meet all credit, grade point average (GPA) and testing for graduation requirements.

Deferment eligibility includes two parts:

1. As mentioned above, the student must have an IEP that "prescribes special education, transition planning, transition services, or related services through 21" to be eligible for deferment. This means that, because of the student's disability, the student needs continued education and services. Remember the IEP team is responsible for determining the student's need for continued education and services and documenting the need in the IEP.
2. The student must be enrolled in one of the programs listed below according to [section 1003.4282, Florida Statutes \(F.S.\)](#). Refer to the table below for programs and their descriptions.

**Deferment requirements include enrollment in one of the following programs:**

Accelerated college credit instruction, as described in [s. 1007.27\(1\), F.S.](#), includes dual enrollment and early admission, advanced placement, credit by examination, the International Baccalaureate (IB) program and the Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) program. Please note: Available courses and programs for dual enrollment will vary by school district.

Industry certification courses that lead to college credit. [Career and Technical Education Clusters](#)

Early college program. This means "a structured high school acceleration program in which a cohort of students is enrolled full time in postsecondary courses toward an associate degree. The early college program must prioritize courses applicable as general education core courses under s. 1007.25, (F.S.) for an associate degree or a baccalaureate degree". [Section 1007.273, F.S.](#)

Courses necessary to satisfy the requirements for the Scholar designation. (See scholar designation requirements - [s.1003.4385, F.S.](#))

**Structured Work Study, Internship or Preapprenticeship.** These programs provide employment skill development, work-readiness training, inclusionary opportunities within the community and/or other benefits

specifically aligned to meeting the needs and postsecondary goals identified in a student's IEP. School districts may develop such programs in partnership with local businesses, state agencies and community employment partners, and/or unique structures within the school or school district.

**Structured Work-Study** - Such as Project Search or a district-based work-based learning experience/program.

- <https://projectsearch.us/>
- <https://transitionta.org/topics/pre-ets-wble/>
- [https://project10.info/Documents/January\\_2021\\_Topica\\_Brief\\_Work-Based\\_Learning\\_Experiences\\_WBLEs\\_at\\_a\\_Distance.pdf](https://project10.info/Documents/January_2021_Topica_Brief_Work-Based_Learning_Experiences_WBLEs_at_a_Distance.pdf)

**Internship** - Such as Guided Workplace Learning (Internship)/Career and Technical Education Internship

**Preapprenticeship** - <https://www.fl DOE.org/academics/career-adult-edu/apprenticeship-programs/preapprenticeship.stml>

Also note: A student with a disability who has an IEP that specifies the need for on-going exceptional student education; transition planning and services; or related services through the ages of 21; and receives a certificate of completion, may continue to receive the instruction and/or services specified in the IEP ([section 1003.4282, F.S.](#))

## Managing the Deferment Process

Because Florida legislation allows students with disabilities to defer receipt of their standard diploma and continue to receive exceptional education services from their school district ([section 1003.4282, F.S.](#)), it

is essential that a system be in place to ensure that students with disabilities who have a need to defer receiving their high school diplomas are appropriately identified.



In the transition IEP (TIEP) there is an identified timeline to identify students who have educational and/or service needs that extend past the fulfillment of graduation requirements. Three specific points in the educational timeline require actions mandated in Florida Statute. They are as follows:

1. **In Place and operational on the first day of high school** - For the IEP in effect at age 14, or to be in place and operational on the student's first day of high school. A discussion including a review of the benefits of deferring the standard high school diploma will be documented in the TIEP ([Rule 6A-1.09963, Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C.](#)).
2. **Prior to the beginning of the school year in which the student is**

**expected to meet all requirements for a standard high school diploma** - Prior to the beginning of the school year the student is expected to graduate, there must be a signed statement by the parent, guardian, or the student, if the student has reached the age of majority and rights have transferred to the student, that states the process for deferment is understood and identifies whether the student will defer the receipt of his or her standard high school diploma ([Rule 6A-1.09963, Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C.](#)).

- 3. During the year in which the student is expected to meet graduation requirements** - During the year in which the student is expected to meet graduation requirements- School districts must inform the parent and the student that failure to defer receipt of a standard high school diploma after all requirements are met releases the school district from the obligation to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE). This communication must state that the deadline for acceptance or deferral of the diploma is May 15 of the year in which the student is expected to meet graduation requirements and that failure to attend a graduation ceremony does not constitute a deferral ([Rule 6A-1.09963, Florida Administrative Code, F.A.C.](#)).

Regional Transition Representatives (RTRs) are available to provide technical assistance on the topic of deferment if needed. Find your RTR's contact information listed under the Project 10 region in which your school is located. <https://project10.info/ResourcesByLocation.php#NS82>

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## Project 10 Website Updates

If you've visited the Project 10 website recently, you may have noticed a new opening page that provides a portal to identify your role in relation to transition. This will track the types of transition stakeholders using the website. This information will help us to update and expand our website with information that is relevant to the website users' roles. Be assured that the only information collected through this portal is the role that you select.

Thank you for helping us to better serve you with your transition information interests.

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## Announcement

Announcement from the BEESS Weekly:  
Para-to-Teacher Tuition Support Program

for Undergraduate and Graduate Degrees The state of Florida is experiencing a critical shortage of special education teachers. Individuals who can help bridge the gap and become teachers may already work in your schools. The Para-to-Teacher Tuition Support Program is available to help provide



financial assistance to paraprofessionals currently working with students receiving exceptional student education in Florida's public schools. Paraprofessionals who already have an Associate of Arts degree or equivalent college coursework or those who currently hold a bachelor's degree in a noneducation field may be eligible to receive tuition support to earn a degree in an initial certification teacher preparation program for exceptional student education, deaf or hard of hearing, or visual impairment. For program requirements and information, go to <https://paratoteacherprogram.com>. For questions, contact Dr. Keri Fogle at [paratoteach@uwf.edu](mailto:paratoteach@uwf.edu).



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Project 10 Topical Briefs provide informational summaries and resource links related to secondary transition.

Have a question? Want to find or recommend a resource? Have some great news to share?

Email us at [project10@stpete.usf.edu](mailto:project10@stpete.usf.edu).

For back issues of Project 10 Topical Briefs, visit our [Topical Briefs](#) page on the [Project 10](#) website.

### **Project 10: Transition Education Network**

Assists Florida school districts and relevant stakeholders in building capacity to provide secondary transition services to students with disabilities in order to improve their academic success and post-school outcomes.

Project 10: Transition Education Network

University of South Florida St. Petersburg

Questions or comments?

Email us at [project10@stpete.usf.edu](mailto:project10@stpete.usf.edu).

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