



GUIDE TO IMPLEMENTATION

for Transitioning a Student from a Self-Contained to a General Education Classroom



What can educators do to support the transition of a student from a self-contained to a general education classroom for inclusion?

This guide lists specific steps you can take to transition a student with complex access needs from a self-contained to a general education classroom. The information in this guide is aligned with Chapter 7 of the Cheryl M. Jorgensen book, *It's More Than "Just Being In."*

AT LEAST 3 MONTHS PRIOR TO THE TRANSITION

- Enlist the school principal and special education administrator in support of the transition.
- Enlist the student and family in support of the transition.
- Provide professional development, customized by educator and student need, to support the transition. Topics might include presuming competence, accessible instructional materials, assistive technology, positive behavior supports, belonging and social relationships, sensory supports, movement supports, emotional needs, environmental adaptations, the collaborative instructional support planning process, and grading.
- Introduce the idea of presuming the student's competence using the principle of the least dangerous assumption.
- Send potential team members to visit other inclusive schools.
- Have open discussions with potential team members to address concerns.

For specialized trainings developed for educators working with students with complex access needs, visit [TX CAN's Online Course Library](#).

ABOUT 2 MONTHS PRIOR TO THE TRANSITION

- Schedule a transition meeting between family and school members of the student's ARD committee.
- Write or revise the IEP to reflect inclusive goals, supports, and placement.
- Assign the student to a classroom or select high school courses.
- Tell the student that he or she will be going to a new classroom/school and schedule a tour.
- Create common planning time for the team.
- Schedule special education and related services with most being delivered in the general education classroom.
- Order equipment, curricula, software, or prepare for its transfer when the student leaves their old placement.
- Arrange for the student to get to school on the regular bus.
- Assess the classroom and other school environments for accessibility and make the necessary adaptations.
- Determine where the student will sit in the classroom.
- Visit the classroom during common classroom activities and begin creating [instructional support plans](#) for upcoming units.
- Ensure that medical and safety procedures are in place.

For a more detailed look at planning supports for the student's participation in general education take the TX CAN online course [Supports for Participation](#).

THE WEEK BEFORE THE TRANSITION

- Schedule a team meeting to discuss the first week in the new class and ensure that supports are ready for the student's full participation on the day they arrive.
- Set up the student's desk and ensure that the student has all the same materials as other students, as well as any additional assistive technology or accessible instructional materials he or she may need.
- Tell other students that a new student will be joining their classroom and support them to welcome the student.
- Determine how you will communicate how the student's day went with the family.

THE WEEK THAT THE STUDENT ARRIVES

- Do a welcoming activity with young children that highlights individual student interests and strengths. For example, have each student create and share an “All About Me” book, or engage in classroom graphing activities where students vote for their favorite items or showcase different traits.
- As a class, read a book about disability, such as *Ian’s Walk: A Story About Autism* (Lears, 1998), *Just Because* (Elliott, 2012), *All Cats Have Asperger Syndrome* (Hoopmann, 2006), *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (Haddon, 2003), *No Pity: People with Disabilities Forging a New Civil Rights Movement* (Shapiro, 1993), *Wonder* (Palacio, 2012), or *We are All Wonders* (Palacio, 2017).
- Hold brief team meetings every day at a time that is convenient for the group. This may be during a planning period, before or after school duties, or a quick huddle during lunch.
- Call the family to share how the week went at school, and ask how the student is adjusting at home.

TWO WEEKS AFTER THE STUDENT ARRIVES

- Schedule a team meeting to discuss how well supports are working. Adjust, as necessary.
- Continue to check in with the family to see how the student is adjusting at home.
- Work with the family to set up a social gathering outside of school for the student and a few classmates.

This document was designed to accompany the [Transitioning a Student from Self-Contained to a General Education Classroom](#) training from TX CAN.