

This document serves as guidance for IEP teams to ensure that students on the Jump Start TOPS Tech diploma path are prepared for their post-secondary aspirations.

Table of Contents

[Step 1: Determine a student's interest and needs](#)

[Step 2: Determine which IBC is appropriate for post-high school aspirations](#)

[Step 3: Determine what supports are needed for the student to successfully earn IBC and course credit](#)

[Step 4: Determine what supports are needed for the student to secure a job after high school](#)

Students with disabilities are not limited in their choices of pathways to graduating with a high school diploma. Students with disabilities, as well as their non-disabled peers, can choose to pursue the TOPS University or Jump Start TOPS Tech Pathway. The Jump Start Pathway prepares students to continue on to postsecondary opportunities or enter into the workforce. This document offers an overview of the steps in selecting a Jump Start Graduation Pathway, selecting a Jump Start Culminating Industry Credential (IBC), and scheduling courses for students with disabilities. As members of the IEP team, students, families and educators must collaborate to make pathway decisions based on a student's interests, capabilities and ambitions.

The Career and Technical Education teacher should be a member of the student's IEP team. The CTE teacher can provide course descriptions, review the essential course competencies, describe occupational hazards that exist in the course, explain credentialing exams, and provide expert guidance on which competencies the student will be accountable for mastering in order to be workplace ready.

Step 1: Determining a student's interests and needs

Discussions about students' postsecondary aspirations take place well before they enter high school. While in middle school, students should explore Jump Start pathways available at the high school they will attend. By the end of eighth grade those conversations are included in the [individual graduation planning process](#). Additionally, career exploration courses such as JAG and Quest for Success help students explore workforce opportunities that align to their interests. Each [Jump Start Pathway](#) is available to all students. Depending upon the student's interests and needs, Jump Start Graduation Pathways provide a full spectrum of opportunities for students.

Before the student selects a pathway or IBC, the IEP Team should:

- Identify the student's interests and goals
 - Interview the student and have the student complete an interest inventory such as [LOFSA's Unlock My Future](#), [My Next Move](#), Reading Free Vocational Interest Inventory 3 or [Career Clusters Student Interest Survey](#).
- Understand the student's areas of strengths and weaknesses (academic, life skills, and employability)
 - Utilize resources such as [Ohio's Employability Skills/Life Skills Assessment](#), [Brigance Transition Skills Inventory](#), [AIR](#), [Self-Determination Assessment](#), or [ARC Self-Determination Scale](#).

- Explore Postsecondary opportunities
 - Consider what educational attainment is required for the student’s specific career goals.
 - [Louisiana Star Jobs](#) can provide a listing of minimum education required for specific jobs.
 - Consider the entry level job requirements related to the student’s specific career goals.
 - Consider post-secondary institutions that offer programs aligned to the student’s career goals.
 - The United States Department of Education’s [College Scorecard](#) allows students to search and compare their fields of study, costs, admissions and results for colleges
 - Consider the area where the student will be living, job availability, transportation, and safety.
 - [Louisiana Star Jobs](#) can provide a listing of available jobs in a given location.
 - Consult with CTE instructors to determine what local company’s align to the student’s specific career goals.

Step 2: Determine which IBC is appropriate for post-high school aspirations

Students who graduate with a [Jump Start TOPS Tech Career Diploma](#) also attain a Jump Start credential as part of graduation requirements. The attainment of these IBCs will help better prepare students to continue on to postsecondary opportunities. These opportunities can include entering the workforce, enrolling in a community or technical college or entering into an apprenticeship program. The [Special Education Guidance for High School Students](#) offers additional information about graduation requirements. The IEP team should engage in the following activities:

- Consider Jump Start Pathways that closely align to the student’s specific career goals and are appropriate for the student to work towards.
- Review the IBCs included in the pathway and consult with CTE instructors to determine which IBC most closely align to the student’s specific career goals.
- Review assessment accommodations and the process to apply for accommodations for the IBCs in the pathway aligned with the student’s needs. It should be noted that not every accommodation that may be a part of a student’s IEP is available for each credentialing exam or in the workforce; see the [Jump Start Industry Credential Fact Sheets](#) for more information.
- Determine what job the student could qualify for after earning this credential.
- Ensure that all components of an [Individual Graduation Plan](#) are completed and outline the courses required to pursue IBC attainment.

Step 3: Determine what supports are needed for the student to successfully earn IBC and course credit

As with any instructional goals, IEP teams should scaffold supports so that a student will be able to meet grade-level standards with appropriate accommodations. It is recommended that IEP teams include CTE instructors in discussions around courses the student is or may take and in IEP Meetings to determine what skills are required for successful completion of the IBC and success in the workplace. While each IBC is unique, IEP teams should consider the following when determining supports for both IBC attainment and success in securing a job aligned to the student’s specific career goals:

- What are the key literacy skills needed for success on the IBC exam and secure a position in the industry or a job in the industry?

- What are the key numeracy skills needed for success on the IBC exam and secure a position in the industry or a job in the industry?
- What are the 'soft' skills specific to the industry sector? What are the 'soft' skills needed for success on the IBC exam? These could include communication skills, time management skills, or social skills such as empathy and patience.
- What are the test taking skills needed to pass the IBC exam? These could include note-taking skills, creating and following checklists, or using diagrams.
- What are the technical skills needed to secure a job in the industry? What are the technical skills needed for success on the IBC exam?
- What are the safety skills required in the classroom and industry? What safety skills are included in the IBC exam?
- Are special computer skills required?
- How can courses such as Study Skills be utilized to provide scaffolding skillsets?

IEP teams should consider accommodations that will be similar to what the student will encounter in industry experiences and during the credentialing assessment. Each IBC and certifying agency has specific accommodations. These accommodations should be reviewed by the IEP team as they may not necessarily align to the student's IEP.

All Jump Start Pathways indicate the courses students can select to satisfy their nine-credit requirement for attaining a Jump Start Diploma. The CTE teacher should consult with the special education teacher for assistance in providing services for the student. If the student continues to be unsuccessful, the CTE teacher may request an IEP Team Meeting to review the student's placement in the course. IEP teams may approve up to four credits of course substitutions out of the nine credit Jump Start graduation requirement. Students who receive approval for their course substitutions must still take at least one credit of Career Readiness courses. These courses may include:

- Study Skills courses the IEP team deems necessary for the student's academic success and/or
 - CTE courses completed by the student in 8th grade or transitional 9th grade where a Carnegie Unit was earned.
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IBC Skill Attainment Example

If a student is pursuing the NCCER Core credential, the Module 7 Performance Profile has the following tasks:

Tasks Included on Module 7 for NCCER Core Credential	Skills to Target During Instruction
Perform a given task after listening to oral instructions.	Listening/following directions
Fill out a work-related form provided by your instructor.	Technical Reading and comprehension
Read and interpret a set of instructions for properly donning a safety harness and then orally instruct another person on how to don the harness.	Verbal communication

Step 4: Determine what supports are needed for the student to secure a job after high school

Beginning at age 16, the IEP team should discuss transition service needs that focus on the student’s course of study and should include any interagency responsibilities or linkages. IEP teams should take into consideration the location of instruction/services and other issues related to placement and ensure Louisiana Rehabilitative Services (LRS) is invited to the IEP team meeting. School systems may utilize funding to engage with [Student Planning Partners](#) to support students during this process. Transition services can include the following:

- opportunities to participate in job shadowing, site visits, apprenticeships, or internships
- soft skill instruction and job specific skills
- training on the use of transportation and community safety
- job training, evaluations, and supports
- identifying a course of study, create IEP goals, develop post-secondary goals, identify transition services for post-school success
 - What knowledge and skills does the student need to successfully enter employment, post-secondary education, adult services, independent living, or community participation?
 - What will the school do to ensure the student is successful through the transition process?
 - What will the student do to work towards a successful transition?
 - What steps will the family take to support the student in transitioning out of high school?
 - How will LRS or the outside agency prepare the student to move from a secondary setting to the workforce?
 - What knowledge and skills does the student currently demonstrate in each of these areas?
 - What knowledge and skills does the student need to acquire while in high school?

[April Dunn Act](#)

Students with disabilities who are eligible for the April Dunn Act may participate in any Jump Start TOPS Tech Pathway to graduation and will earn industry experience. The IEP team should select a Jump Start pathway no

later than the end of the student's tenth grade. The student, parent, and school counselor will sign the IGP to acknowledge that selection. The IEP team may deem it necessary to create appropriately rigorous goals for the student targeting a course, credential, and/or end-of-course assessment.