



# Expanded Post-Secondary Options Counseling Curriculum

**Total Units: 20 (10 hours total)**

This curriculum provides a deeper exploration of post-secondary pathways, financial planning, and career readiness. It allows for more personalized support, practical exercises, and student engagement.

## **Session 1: Introduction to Post-Secondary Pathways - 4 Units (2 Hours)**

**Goal:** Understand different post-secondary options and assess student interests.

### **Topics Covered:**

- Overview of **college, trade schools, apprenticeships, military, and direct-to-workforce pathways.**
- Identifying strengths, interests, and career aspirations.
- Understanding **disability support services** available in post-secondary settings.

### **Activities:**

- **Career Interest Inventory** to assess student preferences.
- Group discussion on personal goals and aspirations.
- Research different post-secondary pathways and discuss pros/cons.

**Outcome:** Students identify 2-3 potential career or education paths for further exploration.

## **Session 2: College & Vocational Training Exploration - Units (2 Hours)**

**Goal:** Research and evaluate higher education options.

### **Topics Covered:**

- Difference between **community colleges, universities, trade schools, and certification programs.**
- Understanding degree programs and career alignment.
- Admission requirements (GPA, SAT/ACT, application essays).
- Disability resource centers & accommodations in college.

### **Activities:**

- Research and compare **3 post-secondary programs** using structured templates.
- Explore school websites and identify application deadlines.
- Begin a **college or vocational training application plan.**

**Outcome:** Students create a shortlist of post-secondary institutions or programs.

### **Session 3: Financial Planning & Application Support - 4 Units (2 Hours)**

**Goal:** Help students navigate financial aid, budgeting, and applications.

#### **Topics Covered:**

- FAFSA, Pell Grants, state aid, and **scholarships for students with disabilities**.
- Understanding **student loans vs. grants vs. work-study** options.
- Budgeting for school (tuition, housing, books, living expenses).
- Personal statements, essays, and letters of recommendation.

#### **Activities:**

- Create a **financial aid checklist** and begin FAFSA.
- Identify and apply for at least **one scholarship**.
- Draft a **personal statement** for college or job applications.

**Outcome:** Students complete at least one financial aid application and finalize a college or job application essay draft.

### **Session 4: Workforce & Alternative Career Pathways - 4 Units (2 Hours)**

**Goal:** Explore career options outside traditional college paths.

#### **Topics Covered:**

- Trade certifications, apprenticeships, and vocational programs.
- Military service as a career option.
- Entrepreneurship & self-employment for students with disabilities.
- Employer expectations, interview readiness, and professional skills.

#### **Activities:**

- Identify **3 career pathways** and explore related training options.
- Conduct a **mock job interview** and receive feedback.
- Research local apprenticeship or job training programs.

**Outcome:** Students develop an understanding of different career paths and complete a **career exploration worksheet**.

### **Session 5: Decision-Making & Transition Planning - 4 Units (2 Hours)**

**Goal:** Finalize a **personalized transition plan** with next steps.

#### **Topics Covered:**

- Decision-making strategies and evaluating options.
- Planning for a smooth transition (accommodations, transportation, life skills).
- Identifying and leveraging support systems (family, ACCESS-VR, mentors).
- Reviewing important deadlines and action items.

#### **Activities:**


- Complete a **Post-Secondary Transition Plan**, outlining education or career goals.
- Finalize applications or job search steps.
- Conduct a **self-advocacy role-play** (practicing requesting accommodations or job interviews).


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**Outcome:** Each student leaves with a clear, actionable **transition plan** and confidence in their next steps.

**Additional Support Components**

 **Parental Workshops** – Educating families on financial aid, disability services, and transition planning.

 **1-on-1 Advising** – For students needing individualized support beyond group sessions.

 **College & Career Fairs** – Connecting students with admissions representatives and employers.

 **Ongoing Check-ins** – Follow-up meetings to track progress and adjust plans.