

“4+ services are activities focused on improving academic, vocational and independent living skills so students can transition from high school to a post-secondary setting”

4+ services are:

- Part of the student’s secondary schooling and included in his or her Individualized Education Program (IEP)
Fill any gaps in instruction designed for the student to complete general education requirements
- Fulfill unmet transition needs identified the student’s IEP team

Transition services are a coordinated set of activities focused on improving academic, vocational and independent living skills so the student can move from high school to the post-high school setting.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) hold local districts responsible for appropriateness of services and educational progress for each student.

When completion of the graduation requirements will not adequately facilitate movement from school to post-school activities deemed necessary for the provision of a Free and Appropriate Public Education, 4+ services may be considered.

Post-school activities necessary for transition might include:

- Post-secondary or vocational education
- Job skills
- Integrated employment (including supported employment)
- Continuing and adult education
- Adult services
- Independent living,
- Community participation

4+ programs and services may be located at a site other than the high school. They may be located;

- At a community college
- In the school district through a collaborative program with Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (known as the Transition Alliance Program)
- In the community through other providers
- At the Iowa School for the Deaf and Iowa Educational Services for Blind and Visually Impaired

4+ programs have their own referral processes, program options and criteria for completion.

4+ programs are staffed by certified special education teachers, rehabilitation counselors, and community college faculty.

Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired – “Post-Senior Living for Ultimate Success”

- Until 2010 an independent living skill program, “Working to Improve Needed Skills” (WINS) served students on the campus of the Braille and Sight Saving School when the school was closed.
- In 2016 the 4Plus program for blind and visually impaired students was reestablished on Iowa School for the Deaf campus.

Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired 4 PLUS program meets the unique transition needs of blind and visually impaired students

Teachers in the 4PLUS student center provide classes in expanded core curriculum:

- Compensatory or functional academic skills including communication modes
- Orientation and mobility
- Social interaction
- Independent living skills
- Career education
- Assistive technology
- Self-advocacy
- Tutoring and support for students enrolling into local community colleges

To be eligible for the program students must:

- Meet all requirements for high school graduation but not received a diploma
- IEP team has determined additional transition goals are needed beyond 12th grade
- Under the age of 21

Program staff and services include:

- 2 Teachers of the Visually Impaired
- 1 Work Experience Coordinator
- 1 Volunteer Coordinator, driver, job coach

Shared staff with Iowa School for the Deaf include:

- Residential Counselors and dormitory staff
- Transportation
- Health Services
- Food Services

Student data and success of program

Enrollment has grown from 1 to 10 students

- 5 students taking and passing community college course (s)
- 2 students attending community college since exiting the program

Students engaged in work experience (September-December 2019)

- 5 Job shadows
- 7 job offers with 5 students employed

- 9 student interviews

Collaboration to Develop 4 + Programs

In 2015 the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Iowa Department for the Blind collected data on transition service needs. Approximately 40 students had unmet transition needs requiring IEP services beyond the 12th grade.

In 2017 the enrollment in the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired 4PLUS program was 4 students with projected enrollment of 10 for 2018-19 school year. The optimal program capacity is between 10 to 15 students. This promoted conversations among the Iowa Department for the Blind, Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Management Team for Statewide Services about additional 4+ programming.