



Massachusetts Inclusive Postsecondary Education

MAIPSE

Questions and Answers for Parents

1. Who can be a part of Massachusetts Inclusive Postsecondary Education (MAIPSE)?

Young adults with severe intellectual disability, autism, or other developmental disabilities are eligible to participate in public colleges and universities in Massachusetts. They are supported by their school district during the transition period between 18 and 22 years old, or by a provider agency if aged 18 or older.

2. What are the benefits of attending college?

Students with severe intellectual disability, autism, or other developmental disabilities benefit from taking inclusive college classes that are aligned with their postsecondary goals and interests. They also have opportunities to participate in campus activities and events, take part in career development experiences, and socialize with same-aged peers.

3. What does inclusive concurrent enrollment mean?

Inclusive concurrent enrollment refers to transition services that take place on a college campus and include postsecondary education, career development, and independent living opportunities. Students are concurrently enrolled in their K-12 school and a college or university, with both institutions serving as transition partners.

4. What about students over 22 years old who have exited school?

Young adults over the age of 22 may pursue college in public institutions of higher education with the support of their adult agency team.

5. What does it mean for postsecondary education to be inclusive?

Inclusive postsecondary education means that students participate in college courses and events with peers without disabilities. Students may receive academic accommodations and staff support to experience college as their peers without disabilities do.

6. How do students participate?

Students register as non-matriculating students with access to a wide range of courses and campus life. They are advised to enroll in courses that are aligned with their career goals and interests, as well as participate in campus events and take part in organized campus activities.

7. What kind of supports are available for students to attend college?

Concurrently enrolled students receive support from both school transition staff and college program staff. School districts provide transportation training to and from the campus as well as academic coaching support. College staff use their expertise in course advising and peer mentoring to create a person-centered college plan. This plan includes attending courses that are aligned with the students' postsecondary goals and interests, engaging in career development activities, and participating in campus events. If the student is supported by an adult agency, agency staff work with college program staff to develop a support plan.

8. Is this initiative specific to Massachusetts?

Yes, it is. Inclusive Postsecondary Education has been an ongoing option since 2007. In July 2022, the MA State Legislature expanded this inclusive postsecondary option for young adults over the age of 22.

9. How can parents ensure their young adult's safety?

Campuses are generally safe places where students build a support network that will help them when needed. Students learn how to make decisions and behave safely just as their college peers do. That said, students benefit from the dignity of risk, similar to all college students, and learn to make their own decisions regarding unstructured and leisure time.

10. How can I get more information about this initiative?

You can contact the Program Director, Mary Price, at mprice@dhe.mass.edu.