



**Massachusetts Inclusive
Postsecondary Education**

MAIPSE

Questions and Answers for Transition Specialists and Special Education Staff

1. What does inclusive concurrent enrollment mean?

Inclusive concurrent enrollment describes college-based transition services. Students with disabilities have access to courses and campus activities that are available to the general student body. Students receive supports such as academic accommodations and extra staff coaching, but their overall experience should resemble that of their peers without disabilities.

2. Who is eligible to participate in the Massachusetts Inclusive Postsecondary Education (MAIPSE) initiative?

Young adults with severe intellectual disability, autism, or other developmental disabilities are eligible to attend college through the Massachusetts Inclusive Postsecondary Education (MAIPSE) initiative. School districts who partner with a participating college support students through travel planning and educational coaching. The initiative is meant for students who would not otherwise have a chance to go to college. Eligible students are 18 or 19 years old and have: (A) a severe intellectual disability, severe autism spectrum disorder, or other severe developmental disability; and (B) been unable to achieve the competency determination necessary to pass the statewide assessment test, or have been determined by the individualized education program team to have severe functional delays impacting independent living, communication, or behavioral skills, resulting in skills that are significantly below chronological age. Students who are 20 or 21 years old are also eligible if they have: (A) a severe intellectual disability, severe autism spectrum disorder or other severe developmental disability; and (B) been unable to obtain a passing score on the statewide assessment tests or have been determined by the individualized education program team to have severe functional delays impacting independent living, communication, or behavioral skills resulting in skills that are significantly below chronological age.

3. What are the benefits of attending college?

Program coordinators work with school partners to identify students' career and personal interests. With this information, the coordinators work with the students and transition staff to identify and enroll students in college courses that are aligned with their postsecondary goals and interests. Students also have opportunities to participate in campus activities and events, take part in career development activities, and socialize with

same-aged peers. Participation in college-based transition services has been associated with increased self-determination and employment participation.

4. What does inclusive concurrent enrollment entail for the school district?

The school district provides an education coach who will support the student during courses and provide transportation training. The goal is for the coach to fade support as the student becomes more independent in their college activities.

5. What does the college provide?

College staff use their expertise in course advising and peer mentorship to create a person-centered plan of college experiences. These experiences include attending courses that are aligned with the students' postsecondary goals and interests, participation in campus offerings, and pursuing work through career development activities. The college program coordinator takes the lead in identifying college resources for students, including disability services, academic supports, and campus-wide events.

6. How do students participate?

Students register as non-matriculating students and often self-identify with disability services to request accommodations. Using a supported education model of supports, college program staff often assess to what extent students might benefit from educational coaching and regular check-ins with peer mentors and staff.

7. Where does funding come from?

The Massachusetts State Legislature has approved funding for MA public colleges and universities to establish inclusive postsecondary education services and supports. This includes hiring a coordinator and planning with school partners. School districts provide students with an educational coach as well as travel training to and from campus and pay a program fee. Districts can use special education funding for these expenses.

8. Is this initiative specific to Massachusetts?

Yes, it is. The Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment has been an ongoing initiative since 2007. What is new is that in the summer of 2022, the Massachusetts State Legislature expanded this model, requiring all public institutes of higher education in the state to provide inclusive opportunities to students over 22 years of age.

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

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