



**SOUTH DAKOTA'S
GUIDE TO
POST-SECONDARY
DISABILITY
DOCUMENTATION**

2008



In carrying out its mission, the South Dakota Department of Education will ensure the equitable participation of and appropriate educational opportunities for all learners to the fullest extent possible. State level activities and services funded by programs will be accessible to all teachers, students, schools, and other participants with special needs. In addition to activities and services provided by the department, state level commissions, advisory committees, task forces and/or other groups will be representative of diverse groups and populations within the state.



Transition Services Liaison Project mission: "To enable students with disabilities to reach their maximum potential in their transition from high school to the adult world."

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PLEASE SEE YOUR UNIVERSITY, TECHNICAL INSTITUTE OR STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS STAFF FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE. THIS GUIDE IS AVAILABLE IN ALTERNATIVE FORMATS UPON REQUEST.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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I. Disability Documentation

Introduction

South Dakota educators in pre K-12 and postsecondary institutions, as well as disability services professionals in state agencies serving students, have expressed a need for guidance related to documentation of disability for adolescents and adults continuing their education after high school.

This guide will assist all organizations to determine their roles and to assist students with disabilities who enroll in postsecondary education to obtain needed documentation. Each partner in K-12 and postsecondary has a role in disability documentation.

This Guide provides the following:

- A. Summary of Applicable Laws**
- B. Guiding Principles for Disability Documentation**
- C. Elements of Proper Documentation of the Disability**
- D. Resources Websites**
- E. Appendices that includes the following documents: Copy of SD High School Exit Survey, Types of Records Parents Should Keep, Letters showing Documentation History, and Summary of Performance example**

The guide is intended to improve the quality and usefulness of documentation of students' disabilities, and to create improved communication between K-12 schools and postsecondary education regarding transition planning to postsecondary education.

Procedures, guidelines, and practices for documenting disabilities and establishing appropriate accommodations for students may vary from district to district. Educators who want to locate and provide

appropriate information for students as they progress to postsecondary education often do not know the information that is required. The guide is intended to improve the consistency and quality of documentation statewide, and deal with documentation issues across all areas of disability.

Currently there are no federal standards on documentation of disability at the postsecondary level.

Documentation requirements and practices are determined by individual postsecondary education institutions. This guide may be used to support the development and implementation of institutional policies.

II. Summary of Applicable Laws

There are three principal federal laws which affect individuals with disabilities transitioning from high school to post-secondary environments of work and/or education. In addition, there are state statutes which have an impact on this group.

The **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** is the federal special education law. Initially passed in 1975, it places an affirmative obligation on school districts to locate, identify, and serve children with disabilities from age 3 through 21 or high school graduation. IDEA provides federal funding to schools to provide services to children with disabilities.

IDEA applies only to individuals who meet the criteria for one or more specific conditions or impairments and who, because of the impairment, require special education and related services. Special education is specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of an individual with a disability. Identification of eligibility is made by a group of people including the parents or adult pupil, special education teacher(s), regular education teacher(s) and others with knowledge of the individual. There are procedural safeguards to protect the rights of these persons and ensure school compliance with the obligations established by IDEA.

School districts are required to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to each child with a disability. FAPE is defined by an individualized education program (IEP), which must be reviewed and revised at least annually. The IEP contains measurable annual goals, with short term objectives and benchmarks, a statement of the special education and related services to be provided to the child, and beginning no later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student turns age 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team, statements relating to transition to life after high school.

South Dakota law incorporates the provisions of IDEA in its Administrative Rules of South Dakota (ARSD) at 24:05. State law mirrors federal law. IDEA and state special education law are enforced by the South Dakota Department of Education.

The **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (§504)** differ significantly from IDEA. They are civil rights legislation. The focus of each is to prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. Section 504 applies to entities that receive federal funds, including high schools, colleges, and universities. While the basic prohibition against discrimination on the basis of disability is the same under the ADA and §504, the ADA has a broader coverage. It is not limited to only those organizations and institutions that receive federal funds.

Unlike the IDEA, the ADA and §504 do not provide funding for accommodations and services. Some individuals in public school may not be eligible under IDEA but may be protected by §504 and the ADA.

Section 504 and the ADA prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. In the words of §504: “No otherwise qualified individual with a disability...shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” An individual with a disability is broadly defined as an individual who “(i) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person’s major life activities; (ii) has a record of such impairment; or (iii) is regarded as having such an impairment.”

Major life activities means “functions such as caring for one’s self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.” Generally, the major life activity must relate to access, or participation in, the program or activity for which accommodations are sought. In the educational environment, the major life activity most considered is learning. The individual’s impairment typically must affect learning in such situations.

Title II of the ADA (which is the title that covers state and local governments) states: “A qualified individual is a person with a disability who meets the essential eligibility requirements for the program or activity offered by a public entity. The essential eligibility requirements will depend on the type of service or activity involved.”

There is *not* an obligation under ADA and §504 for post-secondary institutes to actively seek out individuals with disabilities. There *is* an obligation to ensure that programs and services of the school, college, or university are accessible to the individual with a disability. This can be an issue of providing physical accessibility or providing aids and services to enable the individual to benefit from the program.

The individual with a disability is required to make the Disability Services office at the postsecondary institute aware of the existence of a disability. When the Disability Services coordinator becomes aware that an individual has a disability, they determine the accommodations that will be provided. The Disability Services coordinator will usually request documentation supporting the current existence of a disability and its impact on the individual. The student is responsible for providing the needed documentation.

When an individual with a disability disagrees with the sufficiency or appropriateness of the accommodations provided, there are procedures within the postsecondary institutes and through external enforcement to appeal the decisions of the institution. Enforcement of §504 is done by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) of the U.S. Department of Education. The ADA is enforced by the U.S. Department of Justice.

III. Guiding Principles for Disability Documentation

The following guiding principles are intended to provide a framework to assist educational professionals and students in gathering sufficient disability documentation to establish eligibility for disability services at any South Dakota postsecondary institution.

Background

An individual is covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act when the individual has an impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. In an academic setting, the disorder must substantially limit a student's ability to participate equally in activities associated with learning and/or demonstration of specific skills or knowledge. These activities may include but are not limited to reading, writing, note-taking, listening, seeing, test-taking, performing manual/motor-based skills, class attendance, or participation in laboratory activities.

Unlike the K-12 system, postsecondary institutions do not have an affirmative duty to identify students with disabilities. Rather, students are responsible for disclosing the presence of a disability, providing adequate disability documentation to the institution, and requesting accommodations in a timely manner. They also are responsible for abiding by the accommodation procedures of the specific institution in which they are enrolled.

The purpose of disability-related accommodations also changes in a postsecondary setting. The educational institution becomes responsible for providing equal access to all the institutions, programs and services, rather than meeting an obligation to provide a free and appropriate education (FAPE). Accommodations are customized for each student to the extent that the specific impact of the disability is appropriately accommodated. Postsecondary disability service providers are responsible for assessing eligibility for services that provide equal access to educational activities. This assessment has three components: disability documentation, accommodation history, and an intake process with the disability services office.

Disability Documentation

Students must provide written documentation that establishes that a disability *currently* exists and substantially limits one or more basic life activities. Disability documentation shall:

- D. Adequately verify the nature and extent of the disability in accordance with current professional standards and techniques.
- E. Be prepared by an appropriately licensed clinical or educational professional(s) familiar with the history and functional implications of the impairment. Reports must be on letterhead, typed, dated and signed.
- F. Provide evidence of current impairment as well as a historical record of impairment when appropriate. This information may be gleaned from the student academic record, their IEP or 504 document, and must contain the latest evaluation data, including a psychological and other relevant evaluation data reports. If the student is a qualified SSI recipient, this information will also be helpful supporting documentation.

The student or legal guardian must contact their home school district and submit a written request that a copy of all this information be forwarded to the postsecondary institute from which they are requesting services. (See Appendix document “C” for sample student letter, or document “D” for sample letter from special education director outlining history of student evaluation results.)

- 1) Clearly link the functional limitation(s) to the individual student's specific accommodation request(s). The report shall explain and document via formal and informal assessment how the requested accommodation mitigates the impact of the individual’s disability on the specific task or activity (e.g., how extended time on an exam accommodates the impact of attention deficit disorder; how a learning disability interferes with note-taking skills such that a classroom note-taker is needed.) Additionally, the report should consider the impact of the disability and the need for the requested accommodation in a postsecondary educational setting. This information is provided to each student upon graduation in the “Summary of Performance” document. (See Appendix Document “E” for sample Summary of Performance document.)

Associate the evidence from the student’s assessment to each specific accommodation need. Because accommodations are individually determined, a generic list of accommodations that may or may not be appropriate for the individual student should be avoided.

- 2) When a student has multiple disorders, sufficient information confirming the presence of **each** disorder is needed as well as any relevant information regarding how the disorders types may interact to warrant the requested accommodation.

In summary, students should have the following documentation to share with the Disability Services office:

- a. IEP or 504 form
- b. Psychological evaluation report
- c. Other relevant evaluation data reports
- d. SSI recipient information, if applicable
- e. Summary of Performance document
- f. Information about any additional or co-existing disabilities

Accommodation History

The student’s record of accommodation plays an important role in determining eligibility for services beyond high school. Many people use the terms “modifications” and “accommodations” interchangeably. However, it is important to note that these two terms have significant differences, especially when pertaining to accessing postsecondary services.

A **modification** is a change in the content or what is learned or tested which is necessary to provide access for a student with a disability to participate and demonstrate what he/she knows and can do. A modification *fundamentally alters* the standard or expectations.

An **accommodation** is a change in how the content is learned or tested, but does NOT fundamentally alter or lower the standard or expectations. It is “leveling the playing field”.

An accommodation history provides helpful information about those services and accommodations that have positively affected the student’s education. Many services provided in high school can continue to be provided in college. These accommodations typically include extended test time, audio presentation of reading materials, sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, adaptive computer technology, etc.

Because the educational goals and objectives of IDEA differ from the ADA and §Section 504, students may also receive accommodations in high school that are not appropriate or cannot be provided through disability services in college settings (e.g., open-book exams, clarification of test questions, modified assignments). Knowing prior to enrollment that an accommodation will not be maintained can assist students in developing alternative and additional skills needed to be successful in college. Conversely, when a student requests an accommodation in a postsecondary setting but has not received that accommodation in high school, the supporting documentation needs to be especially clear in substantiating the need.

Intake Process with Disability Services

Information from the student regarding the substantial limitation in a major life activity is typically gathered during a meeting with disability services staff in the year prior to enrollment. The student is responsible for arranging this meeting to begin their intake process. The purpose of the meeting is to review the areas in which the student feels the disability or disabilities have created interference and to learn about the student’s opinions regarding the accommodations that have proved necessary and beneficial in high school. It is also an opportunity for students to gather information about campus policies and procedures regarding disability services (tip: obtain and keep the college catalog). In addition, the intake process immediately affords an opportunity for students to take responsibility for and ownership of their educational experience, a critical component in managing a disability at the postsecondary level.

Postsecondary service providers may be invited to participate in transition planning meetings while the student is still in high school in order to share information about available services and facilitate a coordinated transition.

Students are encouraged to contact postsecondary institutions as early as ninth grade to learn more about admission requirements, disability services and the array of educational opportunities available to them as individuals with disabilities.

IV. Elements of Proper Documentation of the Disability

Along with the previous section on the Guiding Principles of Documentation, the following elements of proper documentation are provided to assist school personnel and students in planning for the disability documentation required to be eligible for disability services in postsecondary institutions. The student's IEP or 504 Plan is considered helpful to establish a history of disability, but sometimes is not sufficient to document a disability or to determine the appropriate academic accommodations at the postsecondary level. Students may need to seek a current assessment from practitioners in their area of disability. Students are advised to contact the disability services office at the postsecondary institution of their choice in order to determine specific disability documentation requirements.

The elements most common to proper documentation are described by disability category, e.g., Learning Disability, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Vision Loss/Blind/Low Vision, etc. For all categories, documentation requires evidence to support each accommodation request.

Documentation submitted must:

- 1) Be appropriate to verify eligibility according to the requirements of the institution the student plans to attend and the requirements of relevant laws.
- 2) Demonstrate the current substantial impact on one or more major life activities
- 3) Provide current evidence to support the request for accommodations, academic adjustments and or auxiliary aids

When students are planning on attending postsecondary institutions it is recommended they:

- 1) Check with individual postsecondary institutions for specific requirements per disability category for required documentation
- 2) Arrange to get updated psycho-educational testing done, if needed, before requesting accommodations at the post-secondary level
- 3) Keep an on-going portfolio of educational and medical records. (See Appendix "B" document for Types of Records Parents Should Keep.)

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Practitioners Who Can Provide a Diagnosis: Certified School Psychologists, Licensed Psychologists, Licensed Clinical Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Licensed Professional Counselor-Mental Health (LPC-MH), and other appropriately trained medical doctors.

Recency of Documentation: ADHD is a condition that can manifest itself differently as people age. Therefore, it is generally recommended that a current evaluation be conducted that includes the items listed below. Students are advised to check with the post-secondary institution that they plan to attend in order to determine the required date of documentation.

Contents of Documentation:

- A specific diagnosis that conforms to the current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association for Attention Deficit Disorder, with or without hyperactivity. Symptoms of AD/HD that were present in childhood and the current symptoms that have been present for at least the past six months and that impair functioning in two or more settings (e.g., school, work, home) must be identified.

 - Current functional limitations on major life activities resulting from the Attention Disorder. These may include but are not limited to:
 1. Cognitive functioning
 2. Academic skill levels
 3. Behavioral functioning
 4. Learning
 5. Social functioning

 - Evidence to support the functional limitations statements made in #2. This may include but is not limited to:
 1. Aptitude/ Cognitive ability: Assessed using a standardized test such as the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – Fourth Edition or a similar instrument
 2. Academic Achievement: Tests of Reading, Writing and Math Skills measured by standardized and comprehensive individual achievement tests such as the Woodcock-Johnson Third Edition, the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test – II or other similar tests
 3. Standardized rating scales designed to measure attention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity such as the Connors 3, or other similar measures
 4. Clinical observations/interview
 5. Teacher observations
- 4) Recommended Accommodations. All accommodations should be directly related to functional limitations listed in #2. The rationale for each recommendation should be contained in #3 above.

5) Recommendations for other supports, strategies or services that may benefit the individual in a higher education environment. This includes suggestions for the use of assistive technology, how the use of medications may alleviate symptoms of the attention disorder as well as any other recommended interventions such as counseling services.

6) Other pertinent diagnoses or recommendations for other evaluations that may be needed.

Pervasive Developmental Disorders (includes Autism Spectrum Disorders, Asperger's Disorders, and others)

Practitioners Who Can Provide a Diagnosis: Licensed Psychologists, Licensed Clinical Psychologists, Psychiatrists, relevantly trained medical doctors, or a school based team trained and experienced in the diagnosis and educational evaluation of persons with autism.

Recency of Documentation: If documentation of an Autism Spectrum Disorder by a recommended practitioner has been established during the time that the student attended K-12 school, that diagnosis will generally be sufficient. However, a description of the current functional limitations of the disorder should be provided.

Contents of Documentation:

- 1) A specific diagnosis that conforms to the current DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders). A criteria for Autism, Asperger’s Syndrome, or Pervasive Developmental Disorder – Not Otherwise Specified.
- 2) Current functional limitations on major life activities resulting from the Autism spectrum disorder. These may include but are not limited to:
 1. A diagnostic instrument specifically developed for the evaluation of students with autism such as the ADOS (Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule) or a similar instrument
 - Communication or Language Skills
 - Social Interaction
 - Restricted, repetitive and/or stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests or activities
 - Sensory functioning, especially sensitivity to environmental conditions that may be present in the educational setting
 - Motor planning
 - 3) Evidence to support the functional limitations statements made in #2. This may include but is not limited to:
 1. Aptitude/ Cognitive ability: Assessed using a standardized test such as the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale –Fourth Edition or a similar instrument
 2. Academic skill levels, especially if student has received accommodations for academic skill levels in the past assessed using individually administered, standardized measures
 3. Standardized tests of language skills
 4. Clinical observations/Interview
 5. Teacher observations
 6. Research based checklists of characteristics related to autism spectrum disorder
 - 4) Recommended Accommodations. All accommodations should be directly related to functional limitations listed in #2. The rationale for each recommendation should be contained in #3 above.
 - 5) Recommendations for other supports, strategies or services that may benefit the individual in a higher education environment. This includes suggestions for the use of assistive technology, how the use of medications may alleviate symptoms of the autism spectrum disorder as well as any other recommended interventions such as counseling services or occupational therapy.

- Other pertinent diagnoses or recommendations for other evaluations that may be needed.

Cognitive Disability/Mental Retardation

Practitioners Who Can Provide a Diagnosis: Certified School Psychologists, Licensed Psychologists, Licensed Clinical Psychologists, or other relevantly trained professionals.

Recency of Documentation: If a diagnosis of Cognitive Disability by a recognized practitioner has been well established during the time that the student attended K-12 school, that diagnosis is generally sufficient. However, current academic achievement data, adaptive skills and a description of the current functional limitations of the diagnosis should be provided.

Contents of Documentation:

- 1) A specific diagnosis that conforms to the current DSM criteria for Mental Retardation.
- 2) Current functional limitations on major life activities resulting from the Cognitive Disability. These may include but are not limited to:
 - Cognitive development
 - Receptive and expressive language
 - Academic skills
 - Adaptive and/or self-care skills
 - Motor skills
 - Social functioning
- 3) Evidence to support the functional limitations statements made in #2. This may include but is not limited to:

1. Aptitude/ Cognitive ability: Assessed using a standardized test such as the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – Fourth Edition or a similar instrument
2. Academic Achievement: Tests of Reading, Writing and Math Skills Measured by standardized and comprehensive individual achievement tests such as the Woodcock-Johnson Third Edition, the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test – II or other similar tests
3. Adaptive Functioning: Measured by standardized checklists such as the Adaptive Behavior Assessment System or similar test
4. Standardized tests of expressive and receptive language skills
5. Teacher observation
6. Clinical observation/interview

4) Recommended Accommodations. All accommodations should be directly related to functional limitations listed in #2. The rationale for each recommendation should be contained in #3 above.

5) Recommendations for other supports, strategies or services that may benefit the individual in a higher education environment including suggestions about how specific effects of the disability may be accommodated through the use of assistive technology.

6) Other pertinent diagnoses or recommendations for other evaluations that may be needed.

Specific Learning Disability

Practitioners Who Can Provide a Diagnosis: Certified School Psychologists, Licensed Psychologists, Licensed Clinical Psychologists, and other relevantly trained professionals.

Recency of Documentation: There is significant variation in post-secondary requirements for the documentation of learning disabilities. Some institutions will require recent intellectual testing with an adult-normed standardized test. Others will accept historical information if intellectual ability was well-documented during the K-12 years. In all cases, information regarding academic achievement and information processing skills needs to be current in order to establish appropriate academic accommodations at the postsecondary level.

Contents of Documentation:

1) A diagnosis of Specific Learning Disability that conforms or reflects the elements to the current DSM criteria. The diagnosis must address exclusionary factors such as status as an English Language Learner or insufficient instructional opportunities. Refer to the documentation requirements of each institution of higher education for additional details or their websites on pages 20-21.

2) Current functional limitations resulting from the Specific Learning Disability. These may include but are not limited to:

1. Cognitive ability
2. Academic skill development
3. Receptive or Expressive language skills

3) Evidence to support the functional limitations statements made in #2. This may include but is not limited to:

1. Aptitude/ Cognitive ability: Assessed using a standardized test such as the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – Fourth Edition or similar instrument.
2. Academic Achievement: Tests of reading, writing and math skills measured by standardized and comprehensive individual achievement tests such as the Woodcock-Johnson Third Edition, the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test – II or other similar tests
3. Standardized tests of expressive and receptive language skills
4. Teacher observation
5. Clinical observation/interview

4) Recommended Accommodations. All accommodations should be directly related to functional limitations listed in #2. The rationale for each recommendation should be contained in #3 above.

5) Recommendations for other supports, strategies or services that may benefit the individual in a higher education environment, including suggestions about how specific effects of the disability may be accommodated through the use of assistive technology.

6) Other pertinent diagnoses or recommendations for other evaluations that may be needed.

Emotionally Disturbed /Severe Emotional Disturbance

Please Note----Severe Emotional Disturbance, known in South Dakota (PK-12) as Emotionally Disturbed, does not require a mental health diagnosis at the PK-12 level. In post- secondary, the student may have a specific mental disorder as listed in the current Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders in order

to be eligible for accommodations. Eligibility documentation under IDEA may not always reflect required diagnosis under the DSM.

Practitioners Who Can Provide a Diagnosis: Licensed Psychologists, Licensed Clinical Psychologists, Licensed Professional Counselor-Mental Health, Psychiatrists and other relevantly trained medical personnel.

Recency of Documentation: Because Psychological Disabilities may manifest themselves differently as people age, it is recommended that a diagnosis and description of functional limitations be made that describes the current impact of the disability.

Contents of Documentation:

- 1) A specific diagnosis that conforms to current DSM criteria for a specific psychological disorder. The diagnosis should also list the specific symptoms and severity of symptoms that are currently present.
- 2) Current functional limitations resulting from the specific psychological disorder. These may include but are not limited to:
 - Cognitive functioning
 - Behavioral functioning
 - Ability to learn
 - Social functioning
- 3) Evidence to support the functional limitations statements made in #2. This may include but is not limited to:
 1. Teacher observation
 2. Clinical observation/interview
 3. Standardized checklists or scales of emotional functioning
- 4) Recommended Accommodations. All accommodations should be directly related to functional limitations listed in #2. The rationale for each recommendation should be contained in #3 above.
- 5) Recommendations for other supports, strategies or services that may benefit the individual in a higher education environment. This includes suggestions for the use of assistive technology, how the use of medications may alleviate symptoms of the psychological disorder as well as any other recommended interventions such as counseling services.
- 6) Other pertinent diagnoses or recommendations for other evaluations that may be needed.

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY

Practitioners Who Can Provide a Diagnosis: Licensed Psychologists, Neuropsychologists or medical doctors with expertise in the area of Traumatic Brain Injury.

Recency of Documentation: If residual effects of the Traumatic Brain Injury are stable, then the original diagnosis along with recent documentation of the current effects of the TBI is needed.

Contents of Documentation:

- 1) A specific diagnosis of Traumatic Brain Injury.
- 2) Functional limitations on major life activities as a result of the brain injury. These may include, but are not limited to:
 - Cognitive ability
 - Memory
 - Attention
 - Emotional/behavioral functioning
 - Motor ability
 - Sensory impairments
- 3) Evidence to support the functional limitations statements made in #2. This may include but is not limited to:
 1. Aptitude/Cognitive Ability: Assessed utilizing a standardized test such as the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – Fourth Edition or a similar instrument
 2. Academic Achievement: Tests of reading, writing and math skills measured by standardized and comprehensive individual achievement tests such as the Woodcock-Johnson Third Edition, the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test – II or other similar tests
 3. Tests of Information Processing including attention, memory, executive functioning
 4. Receptive and Expressive Language: Assessed using standardized measures of receptive and expressive language ability
 5. Teacher observation
 6. Clinical observation/interview
 7. Standardized checklists or scales of emotional functioning
- 4) Recommended Accommodations. All accommodations should be directly related to functional limitations listed in #2. The rationale for each recommendation should be contained in #3 above.
- 5) Recommendations for other supports, strategies or services that may benefit the individual in a higher education environment including suggestions about how specific effects of the disability may be accommodated through the use of assistive technology.
- 6) Other pertinent diagnoses or recommendations for other evaluations that may be needed.

PHYSICAL DISABILITY/OTHER MEDICAL CONDITION

Practitioner Who Can Provide a Diagnosis: Licensed Physicians with expertise in the area of disability, (i.e. Neurologist, Orthopedist, Psychiatrist)

Recency of Documentation: If the physical disability or other medical condition is stable, then the original diagnosis along with recent documentation of the current impact of the condition is needed. If physical

condition is unstable, it is best to provide documentation that is as close as possible to the date that accommodations are requested, usually within the last six months.

Contents of Documentation:

- 1) A specific medical diagnosis.
- 2) Functional limitations on major life activities as a result of the physical or medical condition.
These may include but are not limited to:
 1. Limitations on functional activity such as walking, sitting, reaching, etc., should be as detailed as possible.
 2. Fatigue
 3. Ability to physically attend classes
 4. Cognitive impact due to medical treatment
- 3) Evidence to support the functional limitations statements made in #2. This may include but is not limited to:
 1. Teacher observation
 2. Clinical observation/interview
 3. Physical Therapy or Occupational Therapy Evaluation or Report
 4. School Nurse Report
- 4) Recommended Accommodations. All accommodations should be directly related to functional limitations listed in #2. The rationale for each recommendation should be contained in #3 above.
- 5) Recommendations for other supports, strategies or services that may benefit the individual in a higher education environment. This includes suggestions for the use of adaptive equipment and assistive technology. Also discuss how the use of medications may affect impairments or functional abilities and how any side effects from medication may impact the student's ability to perform adequately in the post-secondary setting.
- 6) Other pertinent diagnoses or recommendations for other evaluations that may be needed. This should also include any anticipated changes in the student's condition.

HEARING LOSS/DEAF/HARD OF HEARING

Practitioners Who Can Provide a Diagnosis: Licensed Audiologists, and similarly trained medical professionals.

Recency of Documentation: If hearing is stable, a statement to that effect and the most recent documentation is usually sufficient. If hearing is not stable, documentation should be as close as possible to the date that accommodations are requested, usually within the last six months.

Contents of Documentation:

- VI. A specific designation as deaf or hard of hearing.
- VII. Functional limitations on major life activities as a result of being deaf or hard of hearing. These may include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Communication
 - 2. Receptive and/or Expressive language skills
 - 3. Academic skill development
 - 3) Evidence to support the functional limitations statements made in #2. This may include but is not limited to:
 - 1. Audiological results
 - 2. Age of onset
 - 3. Aptitude/Cognitive Ability: Assessed using a standardized test such as the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – Fourth Edition or a similar instrument
 - 4. Academic Achievement: Tests of reading, writing and math skills measured by standardized and comprehensive individual achievement tests such as the Woodcock-Johnson Third Edition, the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test – II or other similar tests
 - 5. Receptive and Expressive Language: Assessed using standardized measures of receptive and expressive language ability
 - 6. Clinical observation/interview
 - 7. Teacher observation
 - 4) Recommended Accommodations. All accommodations should be directly related to functional limitations listed in #2. The rationale for each recommendation should be contained in #3 above.
 - 5) Recommendations for other supports, strategies or services that may benefit the individual in a higher education environment, including suggestions about how assistive technology may be used.
 - 6) Other pertinent diagnoses or recommendations for other evaluations that may be needed.

VISION LOSS/BLIND/LOW VISION

Practitioners Who Can Make the Diagnosis: Optometrists, Ophthalmologists, Vision Specialists, or other relevantly trained professionals.

Recency of Documentation: If vision is stable, a statement to that effect and the most recent documentation is usually sufficient. If vision is not stable, documentation should be as close as possible to the date that accommodations are requested, usually within the last six months.

Contents of Documentation:

- A specific designation as Blind or Low Vision
- Functional limitations on major life activities as a result of being Blind or having Low Vision. These may include but are not limited to:
 - Impact on ability to utilize standard educational materials.
 - Orientation and mobility
 - Academic achievement

3) Evidence to support the functional limitations statements made in #2. This may include but is not limited to:

1. Results of vision testing
2. Age of onset
3. Aptitude/Cognitive ability: Assessed using a standardized test such as the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – Fourth Edition or a similar instrument
4. Academic Achievement: Tests of reading, writing and math skills measured by standardized and comprehensive individual achievement tests such as the Woodcock-Johnson Third Edition, the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test – II or other similar tests
5. Clinical observation/interview
6. Teacher observation

4) Recommended Accommodations. All accommodations should be directly related to functional limitations listed in #2. The rationale for each recommendation should be contained in #3 above.

5) Recommendations for other supports, strategies or services that may benefit the individual in a higher education environment, including suggestions about how specific effects of the disability may be accommodated through use of assistive technology.

6) Other pertinent diagnoses or recommendations for other evaluations that may be needed.

➤ WEBSITES FOR DISABILITY DOCUMENTATION INFORMATION AT SOUTH DAKOTA POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTES

South Dakota has six public colleges or universities and four technical institutes. Together, the South Dakota Board of Education, Department of Education and local school board govern the technical institutes. The South Dakota Board of Regents governs the college and university system.

Many colleges and universities have information about disability services and required documentation on their websites. The following web addresses show the location for available information for each of the universities, technical institutes, private colleges, and Native American tribal institutions in South Dakota.

State Universities of South Dakota

- Black Hills State University <http://www.bhsu.edu>
- Dakota State University <http://www.dsu.edu>
- Northern State University <http://www.northern.edu>
- South Dakota School of Mines & Technology <http://www.sdsmt.edu>
- South Dakota State University <http://www.sdstate.edu>
- University of South Dakota <http://www.usd.edu>

South Dakota Technical Institutes

- Lake Area Technical Institute <http://www.lati.tec.sd.us>
- Mitchell Technical Institute <http://www.mitchelltech.com>
- Southeast Technical Institute <http://www.southeasttech.com>
- Western Dakota Technical Institute <http://www.westerndakotech.org>

South Dakota Private Colleges

- Augustana College www.augie.edu
- Colorado Technical University www.sf.coloradotech.edu

Dakota Wesleyan College	www.dwu.edu
Kilian Community College	www.kilian.edu
Mount Marty College	www.mtmc.edu
National American University – RC	www.rapid.national.edu
National American University - SF	www.national.edu/SiouxFallscampus
Presentation College	www.presentation.edu
University of Sioux Falls	www.usiouxfalls.edu

South Dakota Native American Tribal Institutions

Lower Brule Community College	www.lbcc.cc
Oglala Lakota College	www.olc.edu
Sinte Gleska University	www.sintegleska.edu
Sisseton-Wahpeton College	www.swc.tc

South Dakota Public Higher Education Centers

Capital University Center	www.cucpierre.com
Higher Education Center-West River	www.bhsu.edu/education/hec
University Center (formerly USDSU)	www.sduniversitycenter.org

• RESOURCE WEBSITES

AHEAD-Association on Higher Education
<http://www.ahead.org>

American Psychological Association

www.apa.org

Educational Testing Service (ETS)

<http://www.ets.org>

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
(EEOC)

<http://eeoc.gov>

DBTAC Rocky Mountain ADA Center

<http://www.adainformation.org/>

HEATH Resource Center

<http://www.heath.gwu.edu/>

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

<http://janweb.icdi.wvu.edu>

National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs

<http://www.naasln.org/>

National Secondary Technical Assistance Center

www.nsttac.org

National Center for Secondary Education and Transition

<http://www.ncset.org/>

Office of Civil Rights, edpubs document on *Postsecondary Students with Disabilities*

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

South Dakota Board of Regents

www.sdbor.edu

South Dakota Department of Education

www.doe.sd.gov

South Dakota Division of Rehabilitation Services

www.dhs.sd.gov/drs/

South Dakota Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired

www.dhs.sd.gov/sbvi/

US Department of Education, Office of Disability Employment Policy

www.dol.gov/odep

US Government Disability Information
www.disabilityinfo.gov

US Office for Civil Rights
<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCR>

South Dakota Assistive Technology Program, DakotaLink
<http://www.dakotalink.tie.net>

VII. Appendices

A. Copy of South Dakota High School Exit Survey

SPP Template – Part B (3)

South Dakota
State

**2006/2007 Post School Status of Special Education
Graduates, SD Department of Education Indicator
#14**

(Appendix A)

Note: Teacher will complete this prior to student's exit from High School and send information to secured DOE/SEP website, Pierre, S.D.

- 1. Graduate's First Name: _____
- 2. Middle Name (optional): _____
- 3. Last Name: _____
- 4. SIMS # _____

Note: Include the student's name whether they graduated from high school with a diploma, certificate of completion, aged out, dropped out or exited in an optional manner.

- 5. Address: _____

- 6. Birth Date: (Month/Day/Year) ____/____/____
- 7. Telephone #: _____ 8. Cell # _____ 9. e-mail _____
- 10. School District: _____ 11. High School: _____
- 12. Exit Status: (1) Regular Diploma (2) Aged out (3) Certificate of Completion (Not offered in SD)
 (4) Graduated with other Diploma [GED] (5) Dropped out
 (6) Other _____

(NOTE: Students meeting graduation requirements should be marked "diploma." Students exiting without a diploma at age 21 should be marked "aged out.")

- 13. Gender: (1) Male (2) Female
- 14. Race/Ethnicity: (Select one)

SPP Template – Part B (3)

South Dakota
State

<input type="checkbox"/>	(1)	Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>	(5)	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
<input type="checkbox"/>	(2)	Black/African American	<input type="checkbox"/>	(6)	White
<input type="checkbox"/>	(3)	Hispanic/Latino American	<input type="checkbox"/>	(7)	Two or more races
<input type="checkbox"/>	(4)	American Indian/Native Alaskan	<input type="checkbox"/>	(8)	Not disclosed

15. Disability: (Refer to list below & write in the disability status/code.) _____

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 01 – Emotional/behavioral disability | 07 – Multiple disabilities | 12 – Communication disorders |
| 03 – Orthopedic impairments | 08 – Deafness | 13 – Autism |
| 04 – Health impairments | 09 – Hearing impairments | 14 – Traumatic brain injury |
| 05 – Specific learning disabilities | 10 – Visual impairments | |
| 06 – Mental retardation | 11 – Deaf-Blindness | |

From the Transition Plan in the final IEP, please obtain answers to #16 and #17.

16. Anticipated post school outcome(s): (Check all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	(1)	University/4-year college	<input type="checkbox"/>	(5)	Supported employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	(9)	Left blank
<input type="checkbox"/>	(2)	Community/2-year college	<input type="checkbox"/>	(6)	Military	<input type="checkbox"/>	(10)	Not applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	(3)	Vocational/technical college	<input type="checkbox"/>	(7)	Supported living	<input type="checkbox"/>	(11)	Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	(4)	Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	(8)	Independent living			

17. Which of the following linkages with adult services were recommended for the student at graduation? (Check all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	(1)	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	<input type="checkbox"/>	(5)	Mental health
<input type="checkbox"/>	(2)	Division of Developmental Disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	(6)	Adjustment Training Center
<input type="checkbox"/>	(3)	Disabled Student Services (college)	<input type="checkbox"/>	(7)	Not applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>	(4)	Social Security (SSI/SSDI)	<input type="checkbox"/>	(8)	Other: _____

18. Did this student take the most recent statewide assessment (during junior year—or if student dropped out before junior year, during eighth grade)? Read each line 13a to 13e and enter one of the following codes:

(1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know

(13a) Regular assessment with no accommodations

(13b) Regular assessment with accommodation

(13c) Alternate assessment against grade level achievement standards (Not available in SD for 06/07)

- (13d) Alternate assessment against alternate achievement standards
- (13e) Alternate assessment against modified achievement standards **(Not available in SD for 06/07)**

19. Was this student identified as an English Language Learner (ELL) during the student's last year of school?

- (1) Yes (2) No (3) Don't know

20. During high school, did this student participate in any of the following:

- Project Skills,**
- Youth Leadership Forum,**
- Catch the Wave,**
- Self-advocacy training**

21. In the last year of high school, does/did the student work in any of the following? (check each option that applies)

- (15a) Volunteer
- (15b) Work experience/work study
- (15c) Competitive employment
- (15d) Don't know

22. How many year(s) of math classes did this student complete during high school?

- (1) One (2) Two (3) Three (4) Four

23. Did this student complete at least one semester of Algebra?

- (1) Yes (2) No

23b. Which Algebra was taken:

- (a) Algebra with non-disabled peers
- (b) Modified algebra separate from non-disabled peers.

23c. What grade did the student receive in Algebra?

- (1) A (2) B (3) C (4) D (4) F

CONTACT INFORMATION AFTER LEAVING HIGH SCHOOL

Family member name: _____
Address: _____
Home Phone: _____
Cell Phone: _____
E-mail: _____

Family member name: _____
Address: _____
Home Phone: _____
Cell Phone: _____
E-mail: _____

Best Friend name: _____
Address: _____
Home Phone: _____
Cell Phone: _____
E-mail: _____

➤ **Types of Records Parents Should Keep**

- V. A copy of the I.E.P. and other official service plans (504, IPE, etc)
- VI. Medical records related to the disability (or ability to learn)
- VII. Evaluation reports and results (medical and educational)
- VIII. A copy of high school transcripts, report cards and progress reports
- IX. Standardized test scores or any results from postsecondary admission exams (Assessment of Skills for Successful Entry and Transfer (ASSET), Computer-Adaptive Placement Assessment and Support System (Compass), Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), and American College Testing (ACT)).
- X. Samples or evidence of assistive technology usage (Dragon Naturally Speaking, Kurzweil, taped textbooks, electronic dictionaries)
- XI. Evidence of participation with any outside agencies relating to receiving support services (DRS, DDD, etc)
- XII. Learning styles inventory
- XIII. Work/employment history
- XIV. Resume/Letters of Recommendation
- XV. List of school/community activities and/or student awards

A portfolio is a collection of work samples that provides a clear picture of a student's skills and accomplishments. A Transition Portfolio not only includes the student's accomplishments and competencies, but it also contains the needed material that can be used if students are planning on continuing their education at a postsecondary institution. The "FILE" (Folder of Information and Life Experiences) recordkeeping system contains 10 color-coded folders that help you sort and arrange information in the above categories. The FILE is available to all South Dakota families who have a child with a disability. To obtain your copy, call South Dakota Parent Connection at 605-361-3171.

Another available resource for planning for postsecondary education is this website:
www.tslp.org

**➤ Example of a Letter From a High School
Graduate Requesting Documenting Disability
History & Functional Limitations from a School
District**

SUBJECT: DOCUMENTATION OF DISABILITY

This letter is a request to document my history and functional limitation related to my involvement within the LD program offered in special education at _____ public schools. I participated in the LD program from second grade until I graduated in 1999. I need to document clearly that I had a diagnosed disability which resulted in functional limitations and the need for accommodations.

I am a third year student enrolled at _____ and have an overall grade point of 3.36 and am majoring in elementary education/special education. I am required to take the Pre Professionals Skills Test (PPST) in order to be admitted into the school of education and to continue taking my courses within my major area of emphasis.

When I was in high school I did receive extended time in taking tests, in some classes where I received double time, due to my slow reading speed, I also had exams and directions read to me and used a computer for writing (spell check etc), all of which related to my learning disability. Please include any evaluation dates and test results that took place over time to demonstrate disability and need for accommodation throughout my enrollment within Public Schools.

I have attached the current Praxis registration bulletin for your information. On page 49 is the ETS documentation - Criteria and Verification Statement for your completion. Thank you in advance for assisting me with this process. I am learning first hand how difficult it can be to be an effective teacher, I am grateful to those teachers from _____ that served as effective models for what teaching excellence is all about. Thanks again for the help.

Sincerely,

Enclosure (1)

**➤ Example of Letter from Director of Special
Education
Outlining History of Evaluation Results**

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is being written on behalf of _____ was first identified as having a learning disability on February 10, 1989 while in second grade. Specific areas of concern were in reading, decoding, and spelling, as demonstrated by her performance on the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test, Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-educational Battery, The Boder Tests for Identifying Children with Specific Language Disability.

Upon re-evaluation on February 25, 1992 in fifth grade, _____ was again determined to have a learning disability in need of special education. The areas of concern were reading (phonetics) and spelling. The assessment tools used to document the learning disability were the Woodcock-Johnson Revised: Achievement Tests, Test of Written Spelling and Test of Written Language.

A second re-evaluation was conducted on May 22, 1995. Again, _____ was determined to have a learning disability in need of special education. The areas of concern were reading (Word Identification) and spelling. _____ lacked structural, visual analysis and word attack skills necessary to decode and spell many words. The tests used to document the learning disability were the Woodcock Johnson Test of Achievement and The Wechsler Individual Achievement Test.

A final re-evaluation was conducted on May 28, 1998 when _____ was in eleventh grade. She continued to exhibit delays in reading, writing, and spelling. Tests used to document the learning disability were California Achievement Test-Reading and Gray Oral Reading Test.

As you can see by the summary of evaluations and re-evaluations, _____ has been identified as having a learning disability in reading and writing since second grade. She was involved in special education programming from the time of original identification through graduation in 1999. Throughout her school years in _____, received several accommodations due to her learning disability. These were:

➤ Oral Tests

- Extended time on tests-up to double time
- Time extensions on lengthy written assignments
- Word processor with spell check for written assignments and essay type exams
- Books on tape
- Proofreaders and note takers
- Tape recorder

All of these were beneficial and allowed _____ to perform at a level which was more consistent with her ability which is in the average to above average range. Without these accommodations, her learning disability interferes with her ability to function-read and write.

Copies of any or all of the test scores are available from me. I would be more than happy to send copies to you. I would also be very happy to discuss this with you further in attempt to ensure that _____ is given the testing accommodations she is entitled to. Please contact me at _____ if you have questions or would like more information.

Sincerely,

Director of Special Education

E. Summary of Performance Example

Part 1: Student Information (optional):

Student Name Gerald Jensen Date of Birth 3/4/87 Gender M Race White
Permanent Address 20222 Bear Butte Valley Road, Sturgis, SD 57785
E-mail GerJen01@stumidco.net Permanent Phone # 347-9999 Cell Phone 555-2121
Contact Person/Relationship Jens Jensen / Grandfather Contact's Phone # 555-9911
Disability SLD Reading and Writing Manner of Exit HS Diploma Date of Graduation/Exit 5/18/2006
District/School Meade/Brown HS Staff Tom Transition Phone # 347-2686 Date 11/15/2005

Part 2: Student's Postsecondary Goal(s) (optional):

Employment: Gerald will become a Diesel Mechanic
Education: Gerald will attend Western Dakota Technical Institute's 2 Year Diesel Program
Training: Gerald will obtain a Commercial Drivers License to operate 18-wheelers
Independent Living (Where appropriate): N/A

Part 3: Summary of Performance (required): (Based on prior assessment, tied to Part 2 as much as possible)

A. ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT - For each applicable content area, include a brief Present Level of Performance (grade level, strengths, needs), and then indicate any essential accommodations, modifications, or assistive technology utilized in high school.

Reading – Gerald's recent achievement testing showed that he is reading at approximately the 7th grade level. Gerald's comprehension is stronger than his decoding skills. Gerald's test performance in Social Studies and English coursework has improved greatly when tests are read to him and when he has more time to complete the tests. Gerald has used Books on Tape in American Lit and the Kurzweil in American History. He reads slowly, and teachers report that these technologies have helped him to improve speed and comprehension.

Math – Gerald tested at grade level on his most recent achievement battery. He has completed Algebra I and Geometry, earning low B's, without any modifications or accommodations. He tends to do best on computation problems, and he does sometimes struggle with multiple-step story problems.

Writing – Gerald's recent assessments show that he is functioning at about an 8th grade level. His spelling and content are relative strengths, while his mechanics, punctuation, & handwriting are need areas. Gerald has learned to utilize spelling and grammar correction features in Microsoft Word. He enjoys working with computers and has started using the computer for more of his written assignments.

Learning Styles/Other – Gerald seems to learn best when he hears things or is shown examples.

B. FUNCTIONAL PERFORMANCE - For each applicable area, include a brief Present Level of Performance (strengths and needs), & other pertinent information that may help future service providers.

General Ability and Problem Solving – Gerald has a full-scale IQ score in the average range. His Industrial Tech instructors report that he seems to have a “knack” for troubleshooting and fixing things.

Attention and Organization – Gerald has become better at using an assignment notebook. He always turns his work in on time.

Communication – Gerald has started asking for clarification of written instructions. He easily converses with instructors and peers. He listens well in class, and retains what he hears.

Social Skills and Behavior – Gerald is well-liked by school staff and peers. He is generally polite and was captain of the Rodeo team.

Independent Living Skills – Gerald drives, prepares his own meals; manages a checking account, payments on his truck, and insurance.

Self-Advocacy Skills – Gerald struggles to admit that he has a Reading and Writing learning disabilities. Last spring, his welding instructor thought that Gerald was being insubordinate, when the real issue was that Gerald misunderstood some written instructions.

Career/Vocational – Gerald has held various part-time jobs since he was 14. He completed an unpaid internship at the City’s Mechanical shop last spring and worked full-time at an Oil Change shop this summer.

Any Additional Concerns – Gerald had perfect attendance last semester. He did not qualify for Vocational Rehabilitation.

Part 4: Recommendations to Assist the Student in Meeting Postsecondary Goals (required):

Employment:

1. Gerald should qualify for some financial aid, but the school counselor says he may have to work part-time while attending technical school to make ends meet.
2. Another “mechanic-related” job, while Gerald studies Diesel Mechanics, may be beneficial. Gerald should be careful not to work too many hours while attending technical school.
3. Gerald should talk with the Diesel Instructor at Western Dakota about part-time job leads for students.

Education:

1. Gerald should meet with the Disability Coordinator at Western Dakota Technical Institute as soon as possible to request accommodations, assistive technology, and possibly tutoring. Books on Tape, Kurzweil, and extra time have been critical to Gerald’s academic success.
2. Gerald should do fine in the “Mechanics” coursework, but he may struggle with some of the core courses. The Psychology and English Composition courses will likely be very challenging. Gerald may want to look into taking some of his core courses during the summer to reduce his course load during the year.
3. Gerald should plan to maintain regular contact, possibly weekly, with the Disability Coordinator and improve his self-advocacy skills on a continuing basis.

Training:

Gerald should continue studying for the CDL written exam and confirm with his uncle that he can use one of his semi trucks for the driving portion of the exam. He may want to take the 5-day CDL prep course this summer.

Independent Living: N/A

Part 5: Student Input (optional):

➤ **What supports or accommodations have helped you to succeed in school? (aids, adaptive equipment, other services)**

Extra time helps. It seems like I am always the last person to finish assignments. Sometimes I get frustrated with tests when I don't understand the questions. Oral tests, Kurzweil program, and Naturally Speaking have all seemed to help. Having tests read to me has made the difference between failing and passing some of my classes. This lets me show what I know instead of showing that I don't read test questions very well – I already know that!

➤ **What supports or accommodations do you feel you will need to continue for you to achieve your postsecondary goals?**

Extra time on writing assignments and having tests read to me are the main ones.

➤ **If you believe that you will need services, supports, programs, and/or accommodations:**

Are you linked with the appropriate post-school supports or program?

Not yet. I have my testing that show I have learning disabilities, but I haven't turned it in to WDTI yet.

Will you need help to obtain any needed post-school services, supports, program, and/or accommodation?

Yes, my teacher said that I need to find out who can help me at the Technical Institute.