



Welcome to New Trier! About thirty years ago, an essay for parents of kids with special needs was published called “Welcome to Holland.” Many of you have probably read it or heard of it. It had an important purpose: to help parents begin to accept and understand the different world that they had just entered.

Now it’s 2018, and you have been a part of this world for many years. We created this document to make the years ahead of your parenting hopefully easier, and to specifically help you understand and plan for your child’s experience at New Trier and the years after that.

This project is a team effort between New Trier ELS parents and teachers. We've compiled our best advice here. However, please understand this document is just a guide, and some topics may require parents to seek legal or financial advice. Parents are expected to take full accountability for the parent driven activities.

We’ve created an Annual Check List of activities to be completed each year and then a check list by Age/School Year. This Age/School Year Check List is divided between tasks that are school-driven and those that are parent-driven, but know that the goal is for parents and teachers to work together. This is a “living” document, and we encourage you to provide your personal feedback and any modifications/edits to the content of this work. We have made our best attempts at providing relevant, current and comprehensive information, but hope parents and staff can collaborate together to keep this guideline updated and relevant in the years ahead.

Enjoy and Happy Reading!

## Adult Planning Guidelines/Timeframe

### Annual ELS Check List

- ❑ Review School Calendar and ELS Calendar. Make particular note of final exam schedules and late start/early dismissals that might require special childcare arrangements. In addition, make note of social events (such as dances or other special events) that may involve advanced planning with the educational team for your child's successful participation in these activities.
- ❑ Attend the ELS back to school BBQ (usually held in September) to learn about happenings in the ELS program and to prepare for the school year ahead.
- ❑ Prior to start of school (or summer school if relevant), discuss with your child's educational team any mobility and/or safety concerns as it pertains to your child's classroom and campus experience. This is particularly relevant as your student starts on the Freshman Campus, their subsequent move to the Winnetka Campus, and their eventual graduation into the Transition Program.
- ❑ Discuss transportation needs with the educational team to and from school (including after school programs) and pick up and drop off procedures.
- ❑ Explore integration opportunities into sports teams, clubs, Special Olympics, performing and creative arts.
- ❑ Explore recreational and leisure opportunities for both after-school and summer enrichment. Get on waiting lists if applicable. Many summer camp programs have limited enrollment and require registration in early winter.
- ❑ Complete annual required New Trier Forms including:
  - Emergency Contact List
  - Sports' Teams Forms
  - Special Olympic Medical Form (requires an annual physical)
  - Medication Forms
- ❑ If interested, connect with both general education and special education Parent Groups and/or social media Facebook groups as well as PELS, NSSED, IPADD Unite and others.
- ❑ On an ongoing basis, review the ELS Parent Handbook and ELS parent website for topical information.
- ❑ *Consider applying for the New Trier Township Grant Application*
- ❑ Be mindful about RSVPing to events your child participates in. It is important to always submit an attendance response to things like Special Olympics tournaments, High Five concerts and ELS activities so that appropriate and safe accommodations can be arranged for all participants.

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## Review School Calendar and ELS Calendars.

The ELS Calendar and School calendar are posted on the New Trier Website. Please review monthly as these are subject to change.

### ALL SCHOOL CALENDER

<http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/Calendars/School Year Calendars and Schedules/>

### ELS

<http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/ELSProgram/>

Please note that the ELS and transition programs follow the same calendar as other students. The one exception occurs during finals. Since students in the ELS program do not often take finals, they instead receive time in class that is comparable to the amount of time that other students spend taking finals.

In reviewing the school calendar and ELS calendars please make note of these special dates:

➤ Early Dismissal/Late Start

Periodically, there are early dismissal or late start dates for the New Trier students. The ELS class follows the same schedule. This likely will mean a modification of the daily schedule for the student.

➤ Standardized testing days:

During standardized testing days, the school calendar may be modified, typically involving an early dismissal for ELS students. Many ELS students do not take the typical standardized testing. Rather, they will take a modified standardized test that is given on a different day during the regular school day.

➤ Finals

During Finals period, the school calendar is modified. There may be early dismissal, late start, or no school for the ELS student. As many of the ELS student's academic classes are not in the general education environment, they often do not take finals and their schedule is modified during finals. New Trier makes every effort to ensure that the ELS students spend a total amount of time in class during finals that is comparable to their peers.

## ATTEND ELS BACK TO SCHOOL BBQ

This BBQ is usually held in the first few weeks of school and all ELS parents are encouraged to attend. Some parents bring their student (however no childcare is provided). An email invite is sent to all parents in the program at the start of the school year. This is a great opportunity to meet and network with other parents and introduce yourself to some of the members in the departments.

## **DISCUSS MOBILITY AND SAFETY CONCERNS**

Review with your child's educational team any mobility and/or safety concerns you might have with regards to your child entering/leaving or navigating the building. Things to discuss may include:

- Drop off and Pick Up: can your child walk independently in and out of the building for class and activities (for example, can you drop off your child for Special Olympics or should you walk in with them?)
- Might your child wander from the building?
- Should you introduce your child to the front desk security staff?
- Does your child use a motor or mobility device that might make certain areas of the school more challenging to manage?
- Discuss teachers and building staff the easiest ways for your child to get from one class to another? Is your child allowed to use the elevator or should they use the stairs?
- Are there be any sensory triggers in the building to avoid or manage?
- Does your child have balance or depth perception issues that might make parts of the school more difficult to maneuver through than others?

These are just a few questions to consider. Arranging for a walkthrough of the building prior to the start of school can help make the transition to the new school year both successful and safe for your child.

## **DISCUSS TRANSPORTATION NEEDS**

In planning for your child's transportation, it is recommended that you reach out to your case manager to identify how your child will get to school. Options include:

- Taking the regular New School buses (many freshman students do this and some upper classman as well).
- Utilize Special Education Transportation providers (see list below)
- Parent or Caregiver drive child to school

For parents taking the regular school bus, please sign up on the New Trier Website. A number of ELS Students take the regular school bus to the Northfield campus. DEADLINE for registration is usually the first week of July.

[http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/Student\\_Services/Schedules\\_and\\_Services/Transportation/Transportation/](http://www.newtrier.k12.il.us/Student_Services/Schedules_and_Services/Transportation/Transportation/)

For Parents using the Special Education transportation companies, there are five options for transportation for students in the ELS program (see list below). Your student is put on a route based on what is the most efficient and best for their individual needs. Unfortunately, and historically, we need to all be prepared for some problems with transportation, specifically at

the beginning of the year, on a late start or half day schedule or any other change to the school schedule.

The five transportation providers used by the district are:

- Alltown 847-674-0090
- 303 Taxi 847-368-8918
- Citicare 847-509-2281
- Safeway 847-599-1079

Parents should reach out to the transportation company PRIOR to the start of school, to discuss pick up and drop off times, # of students on route and where you are in route, special seating and safety concerns, weekly schedule in terms of days your child will need a ride, driver contact number and emergency contact.

You can call the transportation company anytime. Additionally, if you have a problem with your student's transportation here are the people to call:

From 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Regina Howard 847-784-2204

From 4:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Main Kiosk 847-784-2291

If you are unable to reach the person listed, contact someone on this list:

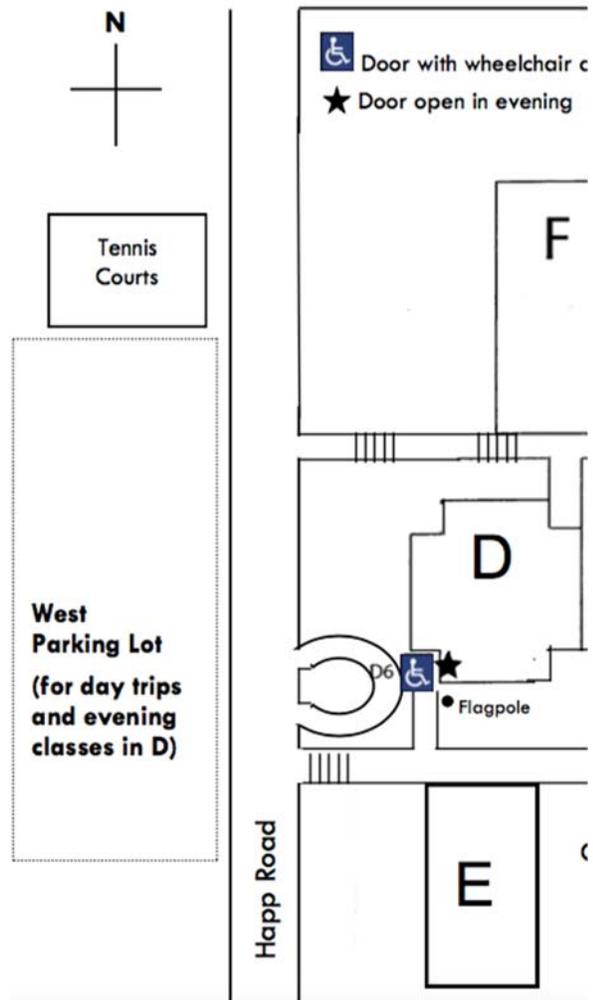
Sean Clemenz 847-784-6842 (CALL FIRST)

Megan Zajac 847-784-7667 (for Winnetka campus students only)

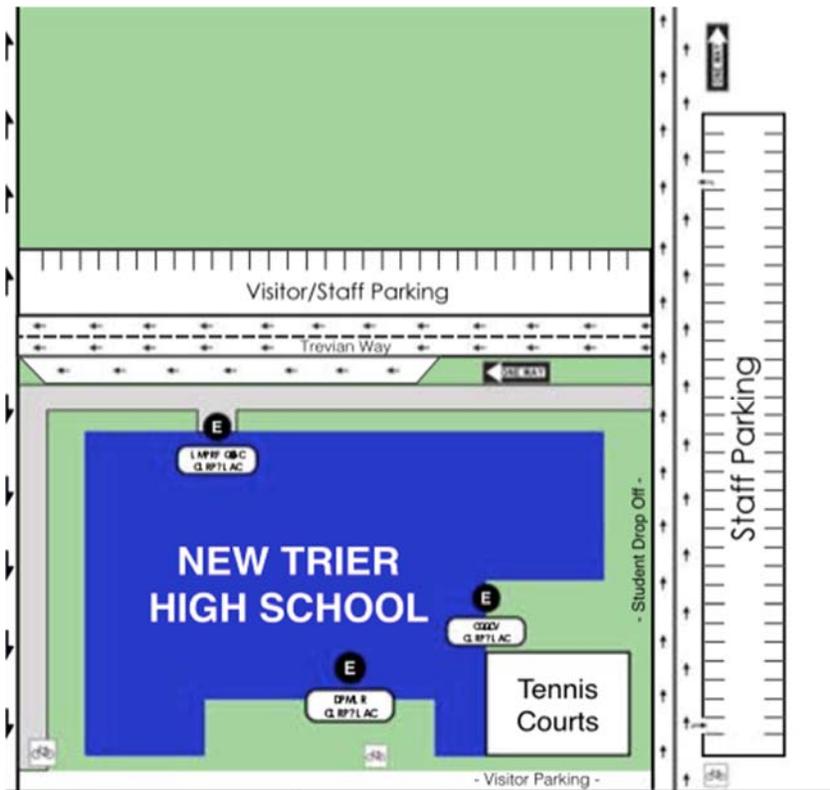
Dtr of Special Education 847-784-2205

For parents that elect to drive their child, there are specific drop off and pick up locations at Northfield and Winnetka. Staff will be present the first few days of school to help students navigate to the class room.

For Northfield, the pickup and drop location is in the D Circle (see diagram below).



For Winnetka, the pick up and drop off is located at the back of campus off Trevian Way (see map below, marked E on Trevian Way).



## Integration into New Trier Extra-Curricular activities:

New Trier has a host of extra-curricular activities. There are a number of programs that ELS Students participate in and find really enjoyable. If you find an opportunity you think your student would enjoy, please contact your case manager.

Below is a list of activities that parents have found successful:

- Art Club
- Strikers Bowling
- Dance Emotion
- Sign Language
- New Trier Swimming
- New Trier Track and Field
- New Trier Cross Country
- Cooking Club
- Club Israel
- Northfield Dance Ensemble
- Cheerleading
- Manager/Helper for a Sport Team

New Trier will try their best to find staff for all these opportunities. Often the IA might come

from another class given availability and start dates. Please be patient with this.

In addition to these school sponsored clubs/sports teams, New Trier Special Olympics program is for all students in the ELS program. **The** head Coach is Kay Pothast, the NTHS PESO/Adapted PE teacher. The athletes are also supported by other New Trier staff and student coaches.

Special Olympics sports are volleyball (fall), basketball (winter) and track and field (spring). Practice is every Wednesday from 6 to 7 PM in the Winnetka Campus gym. Parents drop off and pick up, promptly, at the tennis court building entrance.

There are a few basketball tournaments held each year with other high schools in the area. Students who participate in track and field may also go downstate to the Illinois State Special Olympics meet in June. This is an overnight event for our students, expenses are largely covered by the ELS club fundraiser and ELS peer mentors go to support our students

## **Recreational and Leisure Activities**

The following is a list of recreational and after school programs that many ELS students have participated in. We encourage parents to research these and other options as after school programming is a critical component of any child's high school experience.

These organizations below have programs available for a fee. Please see each website and contact the agency's staff for specific questions. Most wish to meet and interview the student and parent to assess the student's needs and capabilities to assess what supports the student needs to be able to participate.

Arts of Life- <https://artsoflife.org>

Center for Enriched Living- [www.centerforenrichedliving.org](http://www.centerforenrichedliving.org)

Center for Independent Futures- [www.independentfutures.com](http://www.independentfutures.com)

ELA- [www.nssra.org/ela](http://www.nssra.org/ela)

JCC- <https://www.jccchicago.org>

JCFS- <https://www.jcfs.org/>

Lamb's Farm- [www.lambsfarm.org/](http://www.lambsfarm.org/)

Misericordia- [www.misericordia.com/](http://www.misericordia.com/)

NSSRA - [www.nssra.org/](http://www.nssra.org/)

OUR PLACE- <https://www.ourplaceofnewtrier.org/>

Special Gifts Theatre- [specialgiftstheatre.org/](http://specialgiftstheatre.org/)

TotalLink2 Community - [www.totallink2.org](http://www.totallink2.org)

YMCA-Northbrook HAWKS program- [www.nsymca.org/special-needs/h-a-w-k-s](http://www.nsymca.org/special-needs/h-a-w-k-s)

The following is a listing of overnight camps for ELS students:

Camp HOPE- [www.camphopeillinois.org](http://www.camphopeillinois.org)

CampFirefly - <http://www.icfs.org/our-services/children-adolescents/recreation-social-opportunities/camp-firefly>

Camp Red Leaf – <https://jcys.org/camp-red-leaf/>

Camp Duncan - <https://www.ymcachicago.org/duncan/programs/summer-overnight-camp>

Camp SOAR - <https://www.childrensresearchtriangle.org/camp-soar/>

## **Complete Annual Required Forms**

All annual required forms are listed on the New Trier ELS Website. Also, your teacher will typically send a photo release form and a field trip form. You should also complete any forms necessary for medications to be administered at school.

## **General Education and Special Education Parent Groups and Facebook groups**

In addition to this annual guide, we want you to be aware that there are Facebook pages where you can also get additional information and guidance from other parents.

Those pages are listed below:

NTHS Special Education Parent Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=nths%20special%20education%20parent%20group>

NTHS ELS Parent Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=nths%20els%20parent%20group>

NTHS Transition Parent Group

There is also a ELS parent group the meets on a regular basis with the New Trier ELS teachers and the ELS Coordinator (currently Sean Clemenz). If you are interested in joining this group, please email Sean Clemenz.

## Adult Planning Guidelines/Timeframe

### **Before Freshman Year at New Trier (or Age 14):**

#### **School Coordinated Activities**

- ❑ Complete the pre-high school New Trier transition assessments.
- ❑ Meet your child's educational team and understand the role each member plays during the New Trier Articulation Meeting.
- ❑ Discuss with educational team your child's options for summer programming.
- ❑ Discuss the advisory system. Specifically review role of advisor, supportive peer placement, and successful integration strategies.
- ❑ Begin a dialogue around a *post high* school plan for your child.

#### **Parent Coordinated Activities**

- ❑ Start a high school paperwork or electronic file.
- ❑ Consider attending both General Education and ELS Parent transition to New Trier meetings.
- ❑ Consider your child attending the advisory kickoff in summer to have them meet with Advisor, advisory peers and student helper.
- ❑ Consider signing up for a Parent ELS mentor.

## Adult Planning Guidelines/Timeframe

### **Freshman Year at New Trier (or Age 15):**

#### **School Coordinated Activities**

- Work with your child's educational team to begin to develop a vocational plan and identify possible work opportunities onsite at the Freshman campus.
- Schedule Transition Planning Meeting prior to annual IEP to review the transition assessment prepared at entry to New Trier.
- Develop IEP goals in conjunction with your child's educational team balancing academics, vocational training and daily life skills.
- Prior to end of the school year, look for communication from your new case manager who will identify your Winnetka Campus team.
- Work with child's educational team to finalize possible vocational placement to start in fall of sophomore year based on results of transition assessments.
- Schedule a transition meeting with your current case manager and new Winnetka campus case manager to share information about your child.
- Complete MAPS as part of the 3 Year Re-evaluation process (where appropriate).

#### **Parent Coordinated Activities**

- Consider a Special Needs Trust and/or ABLE account in order to protect assets saved in your child's name and ensure eligibility for SSI and Medicaid.
- Review banking and financial planning to ensure no money is being saved in student's name in preparation for SSI application when student turns 18.
- Complete or update PUNS (Prioritization for the Urgency of Needed Services).
- Consider and apply for respite care.
- Attend parent informational meetings available at New Trier and through NSSED regarding transition topics.
- Consider signing up for the weekly NSSED parent email that highlights upcoming parent educational sessions.*
- Attend the Welcome to Winnetka Campus presentation for ELS parents.
- Schedule home visit with Winnetka Advisor (this typically occurs over summer prior to Sophomore year).

## Adult Planning Guidelines/Timeframe

### **Sophomore Year at New Trier (or Age 16):**

#### **School Coordinated Activities**

- ❑ Work with your child's educational team (and vocational coordinator) to further develop your student's vocational plan and identify work opportunities onsite at the Winnetka Campus (or offsite if applicable).
- ❑ Discuss classes and related services available at the Winnetka campus with your child's educational team.
- ❑ Schedule Transition Planning Meeting prior to annual IEP to review the transition assessment prepared and updated after Freshman Year.
- ❑ Evaluate and revise IEP goals in conjunction with your child's educational team balancing academics, vocational training, daily life skills and freshman year experience.
- ❑ Meet with the Transition Coordinator to review this Adult Planning Guideline document and discuss timeframe for making necessary linkages for adult services.
- ❑ Complete MAPS as part of the 3 Year Re-evaluation process (where appropriate).

#### **Parent Coordinated Activities**

- ❑ Obtain State ID, Driver's License and/or TSA precheck card.
- ❑ Review estate plan to evaluate eligibility for governmental benefits including special needs trust and/or ABLE accounts.
- ❑ Begin to evaluate guardianship and Power of Attorney (prior to your child turning age 17 years of age)
- ❑ Update PUNS (Prioritization for the Urgency of Needed Services).
- ❑ Explore and begin touring post high school residential and day programs and get on waiting lists, if necessary.
- ❑ Complete referral process for the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), if appropriate.
- ❑ Attend parent informational workshops at New Trier and thru NSSED on transition to adulthood topics.

## Adult Planning Guidelines/Timeframe

### Junior year at New Trier (or Age 17):

#### School Coordinated Activities

- Work with your child's educational team (including vocational coordinator) to develop your student's vocational plan. Review the student work performance evaluation, identify goals and evaluate work opportunities in the community based on this evaluation.
- Schedule Transition Planning Meeting (if necessary) prior to Annual IEP to review/update your child's transition assessments.
- Reevaluate IEP goals in conjunction with your child's educational team making updates based on vocational training experience, daily life skills, sophomore year experience, post high school placement and balancing academics.
- Meet with the Transition Coordinator to review this Adult Planning Guideline document and review status of eligibility for adult services.
- Complete MAPS as part of the 3 Year Re-evaluation process (where appropriate).

#### Parent Coordinated Activities

- Complete Guardianship and/or Power of Attorney for financial and medical decisions (when your child is 18 years of age).
- Update PUNS (Prioritization for the Urgency of Needed Services).
- Update waiting list of residential and day programming and any necessary recreational activities.
- Evaluate post-high school education option and visit schools, if necessary. Consider attending Choices, BEST or Options Fairs.
- Complete referral process for the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) if appropriate.
- Prepare student for voter registration (if 18 years of age), if they are intending to vote.
- Attend parent informational workshops at New Trier and through NSSED on transition topics.
- Discuss with your child's educational team the timing to complete IQ testing, if necessary relating to application for SSI and adult services.

## Adult Planning Guidelines/Timeframe

### Senior Year at New Trier (or Age 18):

#### School Coordinated Activities

- Work with your child's educational team (and vocational coordinator) to further develop your student's vocational plan. Review the student work performance evaluation and identify goals and work opportunities based on this evaluation.
- Schedule Transition Planning Meeting prior to annual IEP to make relevant updates to your child's transition assessments.
- Reevaluate IEP goals in conjunction with your child's educational team making updates based on vocational training experience, daily life skills, junior year experience, post high school placement.
- Meet with the Transition Coordinator to review this Adult Planning Guideline document and ensure all adult services referrals are complete.
- Complete MAPS (if not done during New Trier experience).
- Discuss post graduation plans with your child's education team and plan for transition program, if applicable.
- Prior to end of year, meet with your current case manager and transition case manager to begin transition process.

#### Parent Coordinated Activities

- Apply for SSI and Medicaid when your child is 18 years of age.
- Set up Joint Bank Account to hold and track SSI payments. Begin to track SSI spending.
- Apply to any post-high school educational programs (if necessary). Complete any school visits as necessary as well.
- Plan for Graduation-the process is coordinated by advisor with support from your case manager. Discuss with your case manager and advisor plans for graduation practice, ceremony, graduation party and school schedule for seniors.
- After obtaining SSI consider applying for Medicaid (if appropriate).
- Re-evaluate how you answer PUNS (Prioritization for the Urgency of Needed Services) questions (reference Bridges document)
- Share guardianship papers with school, doctors, NSSRA, etc.
- Register your student to vote (if appropriate).
- Register male students for the draft regardless of disability.
- Attend parent informational workshops at New Trier and through NSSED on transition topics.
- Attend Welcome to the Transition Program presentation-you will have the opportunity to meet the transition staff and tour the transition space.

## Adult Planning Guidelines/Timeframe

### Age 19-22--Transition Services:

#### School Coordinated Activities

- Work with your child's transitional team to begin to plan for a systematic phasing out of school supports and phase in adult services.
- Work with your child's educational team (and vocational coordinator) to update your student's vocational plan. Review the student work performance evaluation and identify goals and work opportunities based on this evaluation.
- Revise IEP goals with focus on transition program. Discuss options to continue academics at a local community college (if appropriate).
- Schedule Transition Planning Meeting prior to annual IEP to make relevant updates to your child's transition plan.
- At beginning of last year of transition, begin transition to adult programs. Complete necessary paperwork for transition and develop overall strategy for transition.

#### Parent Coordinated Activities

- Continue to monitor waiting list for day programming and residential services.
- Express urgency of situation to CAU and adjust answers in annual PUNS update.
- If you have been pulled by PUNS - evaluate housing options.
- Address transportation needs and explore options such as RTA reduced fare card, PACE Door to Door or other transportation options.
- Complete annual guardianship report (for recertification).
- If your child is receiving SSI, track spending and submit annual SSI Report.
- 3-6 months prior to reaching Age 22, finalize day programming schedule/plan. Begin to develop a transition plan and start transition to post 22 services.
- Reconsider post-high school educational programs options (if necessary).