

**To: Special Education Director Addressed,**

**House Bill 617, passed by the Texas Legislature summer of 2013, will require the ARD Committee to provide information to parents on a new TEA Transition and Employment Guide, effective 2014-2015 school year. This guide is being developed by a stakeholder group comprised of representatives from TEA, ESC 11, LEAs, and HHS agencies. The new electronic Transition and Employment Guide will be located on the TEA website the Fall 2014 and each district will need to put the guide on their district website in the near future. Your ESC may have already provided you information on HB 617. Complete text of House Bill 617 is included at the end of this email.**

**Below is the text of House Bill 617 (TEC §29.0112)**

**TEC §29.0112. TRANSITION AND EMPLOYMENT GUIDE.**

- (a) The agency, with assistance from the Health and Human Services Commission, shall develop a transition and employment guide for students enrolled in special education programs and their parents to provide information on statewide services and programs that assist in the transition to life outside the public school system. The agency may contract with a private entity to prepare the guide.
  - (b) The transition and employment guide must contain information specific to this state regarding:
    - (1) transition services;
    - (2) employment and supported employment services;
    - (3) social security programs;
    - (4) community and long-term services and support;
    - (5) postsecondary educational programs and services;
    - (6) information sharing with health and human services agencies and providers;
    - (7) guardianship and alternatives to guardianship;
    - (8) self-advocacy, person-directed planning, and self-determination; and
    - (9) contact information for all relevant state agencies.
  - (c) The transition and employment guide must be produced in an electronic format and posted on the agency's website in a manner that permits the guide to be easily identified and accessed.
  - (d) The agency must update the transition and employment guide posted on the agency's website at least once every two years.
  - (e) A school district shall:**
    - (1) post the transition and employment guide on the district's website if the district maintains a website; and
    - (2) provide written information and, if necessary, assistance to a parent regarding how to access the electronic version of the guide at:**
      - (A) the first meeting of the student's admission, review, and dismissal committee at which transition is discussed; or
      - (B) the first committee meeting that occurs after the date the guide becomes available, if a student has already had an admission, review, and dismissal committee meeting discussing transition.
- The Texas Education Agency, with assistance from the Health and Human Services Commission, shall complete development of the guide required by Section 29.0112, Education Code, as added by this Act, **not later than September 1, 2014**. A school district shall comply with Section 29.0112(e), Education Code, as added by this Act, beginning on the date the guide is available.