



FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Basic Rights: Transition Planning



INFORMING, EDUCATING, EMPOWERING FAMILIES

617-236-7210 | www.fcsn.org | fcsninfo@fcsn.org

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FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Federation for Children with Special Needs promotes quality education, parent participation and access to quality health care services for all children, especially those with disabilities.



Workshop contents were developed under a grant from the US Department of Education. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of US Department of Education; you should not assume endorsement by the federal government.



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The **Parent Training and Information Center** is a project of the Federation.

It provides free information, support, technical assistance and affordable workshops to families who have children with disabilities and the professionals who work with them.

PTiC

LiNK CENTER
FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



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Workshop Objectives

1. Transition and the law
 - Summarize the legal rights to transition services/Importance of Transition
2. School-based Planning
 - Utilize the transition planning process to identify student's vision
 - Participate in developing a transition plan with the IEP team
3. Graduation and Adult Services
 - Understand Age of Majority
 - Outline potential services and supports needed after graduation



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A Guiding Principle

“The purpose of IDEA is to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free and appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services **designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment and independent living...**”

20 USC § 1400(d)(1)(A)



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A Legal Basis for Transition Planning

IDEA 2004

Beginning in 1990, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) required transition services for all children with disabilities- 20 USC §1400 (d)(1)(A)

M.G.L. c.71B – MA Special Education Law

M.G.L. c.688 – “Turning 22” Law

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Amended in 1992 and 1998)

Creates the framework for a nationwide service system intended to support the transition from school to work - 29 USC §1701

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA)



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Who is Eligible for Transition Services?

In Massachusetts, students

- ✓ between the ages of 14-22
(or younger if determined appropriate
by the IEP Team)
- ✓ who receive special
education services (IEP)
- ✓ of all disability types



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What is Transition Planning?

Transition is about *Planning for Life after* high school,
and the IEP team should consider:

- Academic and Non-Academic courses
- Employment and Training opportunities
- Independent and Community Living



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Academic and Non-Academic Courses

- Students in the first 4 years of high school *should* pursue an academic course load to be able to graduate with a regular high school diploma.
- Students should use electives to pursue vocational interests such cooking, technology, etc.
- Not every student will complete the district's local requirements in 4 years.

TIP: read your local high school handbook for information on district requirements for graduation.

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html>



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Employment and Training

For students ages 14-22, the IEP team should discuss employment objectives:

- Talk about work – students should understand what knowledge, skills, and training is needed for employment.
- Learn about Pre-ETS opportunities through MRC.
- Students should consider internships and volunteering.
- Soft skills, interviewing, applications, resume should be worked on while in school.

TIP: work on self-determination and disability disclosure early!

<https://www.onetcenter.org/tools.html>

https://fcsn.org/linkcenter/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2020/06/DESE_Brochure_Pre-ETS.pdf



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Independent and Community Living

- Students should work on social skills development in school.
- Learn to independently access community resources – library, YMCA, Independent Living Center, etc.
- Financial literacy – debit card!
- Understanding healthcare needs – doctor, prescriptions, daily exercise, etc.
- Transportation – T, bus, Lyft/Uber
- Recreational opportunities – social life!
- Safety skills – in the community and online.

TIP: Understand your social media footprint.

<https://www.lifecoursetools.com/lifecourselibrary/foundational-tools/>



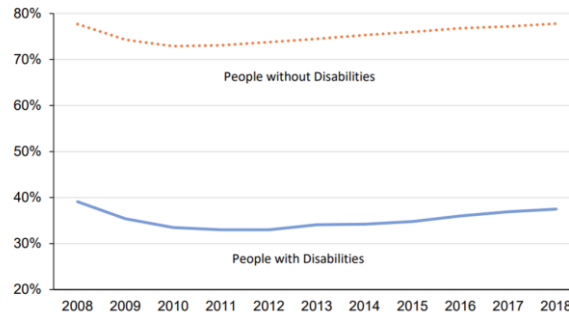
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Why is Transition Important?

MA 4-year Graduation Rate			
	All Students	Students with IEPs	Gap
2016	87.5%	71.8%	- 15.7%
2015	87.3%	69.9%	-17.4%
2014	86.1%	69.1%	-17.0%
2013	85.0%	67.8%	-17.2%
2012	84.7%	68.6%	-16.1%

Figure 5. Employment to Population Ratio



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Timelines are Valuable Planning Tools

What can parents do to prepare for their child's transition?

"The road leading to a successful transition from childhood to adulthood should begin much earlier than the teenage years. It starts when children learn about themselves, their strengths and weaknesses and, as doing, begin to value themselves. It ends when, as adults, these same children can take control over choices and decisions that impact their lives and take responsibility for their actions. This is called Self-Determination."

Age 13, 14 & 15:

- Talk about the value of work and teach behaviors that develop employment potential.
- Provide opportunities to see people at work in different settings.
- Give relationships and knowledge priority, including friendships with peers without disabilities. The relationships can help build bridges to potential jobs, volunteer opportunities, and a range of community activities. Relationships also help us grow and learn about ourselves and the world around us.
- Allow as much independence as possible, assign responsibility for certain chores to help build a positive work ethic.
- Teach money management skills, along with shopping experiences and banking skills.
- Promote appropriate behavior at home and in social situations.
- Provide opportunities to make choices and decisions, to explore and take risks, and to learn from experiences of success and failure.
- Invest in good grooming skills and emphasize the importance of personal hygiene.
- Think about volunteer job opportunities in the community, paper routes, or other ways to develop job skills.
- Attend parent workshops on Transition to become informed about the process of Transition Planning.
- Help your child to become a self-advocate.
- What is required to happen while students are still in special education? Find out all about Massachusetts law regarding transition goals and transition services.



Develop a partnership with the school system and become an active participant in the development of your child's IEP. Participate in the development of the Transition Planning Form and make sure the WASHQ secondary goals are reflected in the IEP.

Develop annual IEP goals that support the student's WASHQ secondary goals. Encourage your school options to conduct appropriate informal and formal transition assessments.

Help your child to understand his/her disability, when to ask and when to be self-advocate. Together with your child, create a vision of their life after leaving school at or age 22 (open-ended planning).

Age 16 & 17:

Be sure your child's IEP addresses all the areas where skills are needed to make the biggest difference in your child's ultimate independence.

First job experience ought to be considered if your child is not already working. Think about how your child will participate in IEP meetings in a meaningful way.

Develop a transition portfolio of your child's interests, activities and skills experiences to help them make their own and support active participation in their IEP development.

Encourage self-advocacy and self-advocacy skills. Continue to have transition assessments done to determine preferences, interests and abilities.

Encourage independence in all areas of life such as self-care, activities, money management, and travel in the community. Talk about the value of work, teach and support behaviors that develop employment potential.

Help your child to think about and envision his/her future. Attend transition-related workshops, fairs, conventions, seminars, webinars, etc.

Encourage relationships and nurture friendships. Explore volunteering and work experiences, and connections to community-based activities.

Develop a long-term plan (2 years) to cover educational, vocational, community experiences, and independent living skills. Find out what a 48B referral is.

If your child is expecting to meet all graduation requirements at the age of 18 and continue special education services ensure that a 48B referral is made if they are in need of continued services as an adult.

If your child leaves school before age 22, make sure all transition goals are met. Apply for services from the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC). Every school in Massachusetts has an MRC. Counselors assigned will see help with career and vocational development.

If you are planning to apply for Social Security Insurance (SSI), get information about eligibility. Students who have parents receiving \$2,000 are not eligible for SSI benefits. Consult an attorney to financial planning about a special needs trust or other arrangement that will protect eligibility for benefits. Check the eligibility of the child's ABA, 48B, allow individual to vote up to \$100,000 and does not affect benefits.

Investigate the need for guardianship and other options for legal protection. Guardianship is a legal procedure requiring a clinical evaluation and a petition to the probate court. Not all individuals need to have a guardian, and the process does not need to be perfect. There is no guarantee of attorney, health care proxy, conservatorship, and informed decision making.

Investigate Adult Family Care (AFC) or Massachusetts Program that provides a family setting to caregivers (including family members, as long as assistance is provided with daily care and care is not a paid position).

Have interest surveys and vocational assessments done to determine interests and abilities.

Age 18:

- Apply for Children's Health. If 18 eligible, an individual will automatically be eligible for Medicaid. If not eligible to 18, apply separately to the Division of Medical Assistance for Medicaid.
- Help your child actively participate in his/her IEP meeting. He/she should be part of planning their learning and the goals.
- Help your child actively participate in his/her IEP meeting.
- Make sure emphasis on IEP on post-school goals that will make a big difference in the life of your child.
- Understand age of majority. At age 18, all people are presumed to be legally competent to make all life decisions.
- Register voter for Election Issues.
- Apply for eligibility for adult services. If you have not already done so. These include Department of Developmental Services, Department of Mental Health, Mass. Commission for the Blind, and Mass. Rehabilitation Commission. If your child has a diagnosis of Syndrome or Prader-Willi syndrome, they do not need have a diagnosis of an intellectual disability to receive services from DSD.
- Apply for Adult Family Care (AFC).
- Have your child register to vote.
- Make sure your child has some work experience.

Continue to consider transition assessment to determine current skill levels, interests and current skill development needs.

Invite a representative from a human service agency (e.g., Therapist, Coordinator from DSD or MRC to attend your child's IEP meeting).

Network with other families who have been through the transition process.

Age 20 & 21:

- By age 20 for 2 years prior to transitioning assessment to determine current skill levels, interests and current skill development needs.
- Individual Transition Plan (ITP) meeting. No later than 9 months prior to graduation (usually around the student's 21st birthday), the Chapter 48B school from the human service agency convenes the IEP meeting where the plan is developed. The student, family, school team, and any involved adult service agencies need to think about the programs and support needed during the year, 12 years prior to the student leaving school. The Chapter 48B school is responsible for writing the IEP and submitting it to the Transition Advisory Committee (TAC), which must approve, modify or reject the IEP. The TAC decision can be appealed to the student's parent.
- Use different day programs and residential programs, if determined the assessment will be completed that provides services and supports to the student. Consider placement for your child, or consider options such as self-advocacy your child services or attending Agency 48B Check, a nonemployment model.
- Try to ensure your child has had either an after-school job or volunteer job with pay.
- Make sure your child has BAA work experience in the community with paid leadership.
- Find an adult primary physician and dentist.

Age 21:

- 3-6 months before leaving school, the student/family should call DSD (or other adult agency) and offer to use it as a service coordinator. He/she should be informed and a beginning to develop your child's adult services.

Age 22:

- Transition from school to adult services should be complete. Adult services are not an entitlement. Adult services are based on availability and are subject to funding by the legislature.
- Continue to attend family meetings, trainings, go serves to learn about new and existing services.



See: <https://fcsn.org/linkcenter/getting-started/transition-timelines-and-guides/>



QUESTIONS?



Transition Planning is Driven by the Student's Vision

What do you want to be when you grow up?

Where are you going to live?

What do you like to do for fun?



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Transition Assessments Inform Post-Secondary Goals

The IEP must include

“...appropriate measurable post-secondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment and where appropriate, independent living skills; ...”

[20 U.S.C. §1414 (d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII)]



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Sample Questions that Drive Assessment:



- Can my student learn to drive?
- Can he work more than 4 hours during an average work day?
- Can she write an 5 paragraph essay for a college application?
- Can she navigate on the bus to the gym independently using her phone?
- Can he work in a group?
- Can she follow multi-step directions?

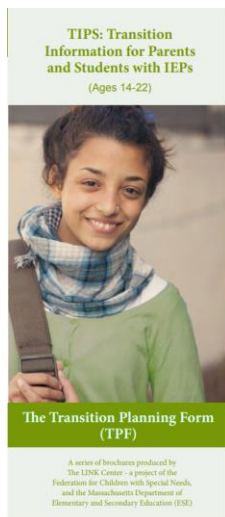


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How to Prepare to Discuss Transition at an IEP Meeting



1. Review the Transition Planning Form.
2. Discuss with your student – **their** interests, further education, work options or community experiences.
3. Talk to student about how they will participate.
4. Make a list of questions.
5. Ask about school transition assessments.
6. Learn about graduation requirements.



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Transition Planning Form (TPF)

The Team should discuss and complete the TPF **before** completing the IEP Form.

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/28MR/28m9.pdf>

1. **Post-Secondary Vision** considers the student's preferences, interests and the desired outcomes for education/training, employment and adult living.
2. **Disability Related Needs** addresses disability-related skills that require IEP goals and/or related services.
3. **Action Plan** outlines how student can develop skills to be prepared both academically and functionally to meet their vision for the future and who will support them.



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Transition in the IEP

- | | |
|-------|--|
| IEP 1 | Vision Statement |
| IEP 2 | PLEP A - General Curriculum
academic accommodations and specialized instruction |
| IEP 3 | PLEP B - Other Educational Needs
Extra curriculum activities, Social/Emotional needs, Assistive Technology, Travel Training, Behavior, Nonacademic activities, Vocational Skill development |
| IEP 4 | Measurable Annual Goals
Should align with student's post - secondary outcomes and disability related needs |



**IEP is the legal document;
nothing on TPF is mandated to occur.**

TPF is a planning tool



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Additional Transition Issues to be considered by an IEP team

IEP 5 Additional Information

- the **anticipated graduation date**;
- the discussion of transfer of rights at least one year before age of majority;
- a statement of interagency responsibilities or needed linkages; and
- a recommendation for Chapter 688 Referral.
- other relevant IEP information ...



Summary of Performance - law requires that "the public agency provide a summary of academic and functional performance upon exit. DESE is working on new SOP form.

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/secondary-transition/student-performance-sum.pdf>



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Parent's Role in Transition Planning

- Provide opportunities to help student develop skills needed to become independent
- Assist student in developing a vision of what student wants to do in life
- Ask and Listen!



EXAMPLES:

- visit places in the community where student could volunteer
- talk about different jobs and careers at home
- encourage participation in extra-curricular activities
- practice soft skills with youth

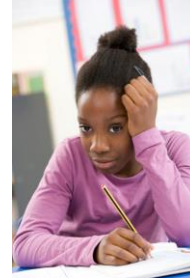


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Student's Role in Transition Planning

- Participate in IEP Meeting at age 14 or earlier
- Develop their own vision statement to share at the IEP meeting
- Identify their strengths, preferences and interests
- Take courses to prepare them for postsecondary goals
- Identify career options that match their interests and strengths/skills
- Set goals, aim high – sustain motivation



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Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy

Making choices and decisions based on own preferences and interests is self-determination.

Self-advocacy is giving a voice to those choices. These skills need to be taught and practiced

- in school
- at home, and
- in the community

Need opportunity to problem-solve, make mistakes and advocate for oneself.

<https://www.wearemass.org/>

Massachusetts Advocates Standing Strong – new website



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Incorporate Health Independence into IEP/Transition Plan

Health Care Transition Readiness Assessment:

For students and families to complete as part of transition planning:

<https://www.gottransition.org/resource/?tra-iep-english>

Organizational Skills

- Planning for appointments
- Medication refills.
- Scheduling appointments

Self-Advocacy Skills

- Can describe their disability
- Can they explain how their disability will affect how they participate at work or school

Self-Management Skills

- Identify questions to ask doctor
- Can manage medicine.
- Aware of when they need help

Transportation Skills

- How do they get to providers—is training indicated?

<http://www.gottransition.org/providers/index.cfm>



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QUESTIONS?



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Transition During COVID-19

- IEPs were still in place/Student may have had a Special Education Learning Plan for IEP services
- Families should have had discussions about COVID compensatory services
- Many Community-based placements were closed
- Transition skill building can happen in a remote environment
- MCAS/Updates on Competency Determination - <https://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/graduation.html>



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Anticipated Graduation Date

- Graduation = when student receives state standard diploma OR turns age 22.
- To earn a state standard diploma, student must
 - Meet Competency Determination (Pass all 3 MCAS tests) AND
 - Meet all local requirements
- All students allowed to participate in high school graduation ceremonies and activities. M.G.L. c.71B §16



IEP & TPF Form
both include the:
*Anticipated Date of
Graduation*



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Age of Majority – Transfer of Rights

At age 18, a student is presumed to have the capacity to make informed legal, financial and healthcare decisions, including signing their own IEP.

http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/11_1.html

Age 18 Checklist

http://autismhousingpathways.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Turning18checklist_12-20.pdf

At 18, youth can...



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Chapter 688 Referral

Massachusetts “Turning 22 law” enacted in 1984 to address transition planning needs of students with significant disabilities who will need adult services. (one referral per student)

- Unable to work more than 20 hours per week w/out supports
- Two year planning process
- School makes the referral to Adult Human Service Agency
- State Agency develops an Individualized Transition Plan (ITP)

Chapter 688 is NOT:

Continuation of Special Education
Adult Eligibility Determination
Entitlement to adult services



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Adult and Community Agencies

Adult service agencies and community providers can have a role in transition planning and can offer services that complement the transition services that the school provides.

- State agencies include:
 - Department of Developmental Services (DDS)
 - Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC)
 - Department of Mental Health (DMH)
 - And others
- Community agencies include:
 - Arc (Regional offices)
 - Easterseals Massachusetts
 - Partners for Youth with Disabilities (PYD)

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/adult-services>



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Supported Decision-Making and Guardianship

What are your student's strengths and what supports to they need to live as independently as possible?

Options of Supports from Least to Most Restrictive:

- Joint/Custodial Bank Accounts
- Trusts
- Representative Payee
- Durable Power of Attorney for Property
- Health Care Proxy
- Conservatorship
- Guardianship

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

11 Regional MA
Independent
Living Centers
[https://www.mass.gov/
independent-living-
centers](https://www.mass.gov/independent-living-centers)



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A Continuum of Options



There is not one
right pathway and
with acquisition
of skills,
an individual can
move into new
opportunities.



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When you have a conflict ...

Procedural Safeguards and “Due Process” Rights

Procedural Violations & Enforcement Issues

PRS
Problem
Resolution System
781-338-3700

OCR*
Office for
Civil Rights
1-800-421-3481

**if civil rights violation*

Voluntary Alternative Dispute Resolution

**Facilitated IEP
Meeting**
781 397-4750

Mediation
781 397-4750

Due Process

**BSEA
Hearing**
781 397-4750

**Resolution
Meeting**



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Stay Informed about Transition



FCSN's Transition website/brochures

www.fcsn.org/linkcenter

<https://fcsn.org/linkcenter/transition-resources/brochures/>

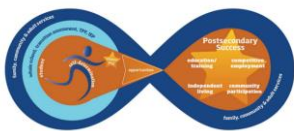
FCSNTransition Listserv – a free Google group

fcsntransition@googlegroups.com

Statewide Facebook Group –

“Massachusetts Transition to Adulthood”

Massachusetts Student-Driven Secondary Transition Model



DESE Secondary Transition website

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/secondary-transition/>

DESE Technical Assistance SPED Advisories:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/?section=tech>



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Planning a Life Conference

Two days of information, learning, networking and resources for families, educators and professionals.

Topics include:

- Creating a Vision
- Understanding the Law
- Transition Planning Form
- Transition Based IEP Goals
- Transition Assessments
- Employment: Let's Talk about Work!
- Next Steps: Connecting to Adult Supports and Services
- Community connections
- Family Involvement
- Graduation Issues: Diploma, MCAS, and more!!!



Fee based - Registration is required as space is limited.

<http://fcsn.org/linkcenter/pal>



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Parent Training & Information Center

Information Center

FREE info about
Special Education Rights
<https://fcsn.org/information-center-2/>
617-236-7210
Mon-Fri 10am-3pm,
Evening hours by appt.
*Language Line available for
multiple languages*

Outreach

The PTIC provides special
education training, information
and support to families
who speak:

**Spanish, Portuguese,
Haitian and Chinese**

Workshops

FREE to participants
- Understanding the IEP
- Discipline & Suspension
- Effective Communication
and MORE!
<https://fcsn.org/pti/workshops/>

Parent Consultant Training Institute

An in-depth training for parents
and professionals in a tuition-
based program.
[http://fcsn.org/ptic/parent-
consultant-training](http://fcsn.org/ptic/parent-consultant-training)



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QUESTIONS?



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2022 Visions of Community Conference

Our annual Visions of Community (VOC) conference will be held virtually on March 19, 2022.



Please follow us on our social media and on our website for more details.



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How You Can Help Support Us!

Please use the last few minutes of our time and complete the workshop evaluation survey that has been copied into the chat.



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