



8.23 Bridges to Community Readiness – Post High Program

Draft 2

Date of Last Change:

Authorized By: Utah State Board of Education
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1. **Purpose**

- 1.1. This policy establishes the purpose, structure, and operational expectations for the Bridges to Community Readiness (BCR) Post High Program at the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB) – School for the Blind.
- 1.2. The Post High Program is an education-focused launchpad designed for students who have completed high school with an alternate diploma or certificate of completion. Students who have graduated with a standard diploma, may apply for participation in this program. These students require intensive, individualized instruction to close critical skill gaps, specifically related to their vision loss, before transitioning to adulthood.
- 1.3. The BCR Post High Program prepares students for their next step; college, technical education, workforce, or community life, through a blend of:
 - 1.3.1. Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) instruction
 - 1.3.2. Reading and numeracy intervention
 - 1.3.3. Community-based instruction
 - 1.3.4. Individualized coaching
 - 1.3.5. Competency-based skill development
- 1.4. This program is **NOT** an extension of high school and does not replicate high-school coursework. It is a designated transition program rooted in personalized, competency-based learning (PCBL) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

2. **Definitions**

- 2.1. Bridges to Community Readiness (BCR) – USDB’s post-high programming aligned to preparing students with vision impairments for adulthood through ECC, academic intervention, and individualized transition pathways.

- 2.2. Post High Program – A structured, education-based transition program (typically 1–3 years) that fills skill gaps in ECC, life-ready academics, and employability skills.
- 2.3. Personalized, Competency-Based Learning (PCBL) – A Utah State Board of Education–aligned model where students progress by demonstrating mastery of skills through authentic tasks, receive flexible instruction, and build agency over their learning.
- 2.4. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) – An instructional framework ensuring accessibility, flexible engagement, and multiple means of representation and action for all learners.
- 2.5. Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) – The specialized set of skills students with visual impairments need for independence, including compensatory access, O&M, sensory efficiency, assistive technology, social interaction, recreation, career education, and independent living.
- 2.6. Pathway Model – A flexible Bridges structure offering a variety of personalized pathway options (such as orientation & mobility, assistive technology, personalized support, and residential life) that act as building blocks for student success, empowering informed choices and growth rather than serving as fixed tracking systems.
- 2.7. Intensive Vision Services – Instruction totaling 120–180 minutes per day focused on ECC and vision-access needs, as outlined in the [Entrance Guidance Packet](#).
- 2.8. Next Step Plan – A futures-oriented transition plan developed and refined during the Post High experience that prepares students for life after Bridges.
- 2.9. Alternate Diploma as defined by Board rule R277-705
- 2.10. Standard Diploma as defined by Board rule R277-700

3. **Eligibility and Entrance Criteria**

- 3.1. Entrance considerations for the Post High Program include:
 - 3.1.1. An IEP team determined that USDB is the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for the student.
 - 3.1.2. Graduation with an alternate diploma.
 - 3.1.3. A demonstrated need for intensive instruction to achieve ECC competency.
 - 3.1.4. Vision-related needs constitute the primary educational barrier to accessing curriculum or meeting transition goals.
 - 3.1.5. Required service level consistent with 120–180 minutes/day of vision services.

- 3.1.6. Student voluntary participation and readiness for a coaching-based learning environment.
- 3.2. Additional readiness factors include:
 - 3.2.1. Ability to follow schedules and complete tasks with minimal/moderate support.
 - 3.2.2. Ability to live in a communal or semi-independent setting (if participating in residential life).
 - 3.2.3. Safety, mental health readiness, and independence in personal self-care routines.
- 4. **Program Overview**
 - 4.1. BCR is an education-based, person-centered transition program, not a care-based or custodial program.
 - 4.2. Program length varies according to student need, not to exceed the age of 22.
 - 4.3. Students engage in individualized, meaningful experiences that elevate agency, independence, and real-world skill application across all ECC domains.
 - 4.4. The Post High Program includes:
 - 4.4.1. Community-based instruction
 - 4.4.2. Coaching and mentoring
 - 4.4.3. Targeted interventions in ECC, reading, and numeracy
 - 4.4.4. Social-emotional development
 - 4.4.5. Workplace readiness and prevocational experiences
 - 4.4.6. Pathway-based selection of academic, vocational, or college-prep options and orientation & mobility, assistive technology, and personalized support.
 - 4.5. The program supports students in developing the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed for their chosen adult life path.
- 5. **Instructional Framework (PCBL + UDL)**
 - 5.1. BCR implements research-based, competency-focused instruction grounded in:
 - 5.1.1. Personalized learning
 - 5.1.2. Demonstrated mastery
 - 5.1.3. Authentic, real-world tasks
 - 5.1.4. Universal access principles
 - 5.2. Instruction integrates UDL by providing:
 - 5.2.1. Multiple ways to engage
 - 5.2.2. Multiple ways to access content
 - 5.2.3. Multiple ways to demonstrate learning

- 5.3. Students are active decision-makers in their pathway, schedule, and demonstration of competency, supported by ongoing coaching and feedback.

6. **Pathway Model**

- 6.1. The BCR Pathway Model provides flexible, interconnected pathway blocks that students may select, combine, or adjust as their goals evolve:
 - 6.1.1. Dual Enrollment (college, technical programs)
 - 6.1.2. Vocational Training (on/off campus)
 - 6.1.3. College Readiness
 - 6.1.4. College Aspiring
 - 6.1.5. Orientation & Mobility
 - 6.1.6. Personalized Support
 - 6.1.7. Residential Life (Living situation for life after Bridges)
- 6.2. Pathways are not tracking systems; they are tools for building a personalized main pathway aligned to postsecondary goals.
- 6.3. Faculty provide regular data, feedback, and coaching to help students adjust pathways as they progress.
- 6.4. Students personalize their learning tailored to their unique learning profiles, preferences, and post-secondary goals through pathway options.

7. **Core Program Components**

- 7.1. Seminar Courses – All students participate in seminar-model courses promoting reflection, discussion, coaching, and increasing independence.
- 7.2. ECC Instruction – Targeted instruction across all ECC domains, guided by the ECC Competency Inventory.
- 7.3. Academic Interventions – Structured reading and numeracy interventions for students requiring foundational skill development.
- 7.4. Independent Living Skills – Daily living, home care, personal finance, meal preparation, and community participation.
- 7.5. Orientation & Mobility – Travel skills, route planning, intersection analysis, transportation options, and safety.
- 7.6. Assistive Technology – Tech access tools, screen readers/magnifiers, productivity platforms, digital literacy, and personal device management.
- 7.7. Employability Instruction – Workplace behaviors, career exploration, scheduling, team roles, and work-based learning.

- 7.8. Community-Based Instruction – Real-world application of ECC and academic skills in community environments.
8. **The BCR Experience: Program Flow**
 - 8.1. IEP Meetings
 - 8.2. Futures Meetings – Collaborative goal-setting to identify ECC, academic, and personal skill gaps; determine program length; and design individualized pathways.
 - 8.3. Custom Pathways – Student-selected combination of pathway blocks aligned with goals.
 - 8.4. Progress Tracking – Regular measurement of competency using USDB rubrics, data-informed coaching, and pathway adjustments.
 - 8.5. Next Steps Planning – Preparation for transition to college, employment, technical training, or adult service agencies, with an emphasis on independence and self-advocacy.
 - 8.6. USBE Post Secondary guidelines
9. **Residential Life (If Applicable)**
 - 9.1. Residential Life provides structured practice in:
 - 9.1.1. Shared living
 - 9.1.2. Adaptive living skills
 - 9.1.3. Social interaction
 - 9.1.4. Recreation and leisure
 - 9.1.5. Independent daily routines
 - 9.2. Students must demonstrate safety, emotional readiness, and ability to follow structured routines, as outlined in the [Entrance Guidance Packet](#)'s Readiness Factors.
10. **Roles and Responsibilities**
 - 10.1. USDB Staff Shall:
 - 10.1.1. Provide intensive, ECC-aligned instruction
 - 10.1.2. Implement PCBL and UDL-aligned teaching
 - 10.1.3. Collect and analyze competency data
 - 10.1.4. Coach students toward independence
 - 10.1.5. Support progress monitoring and Next Step planning
 - 10.2. Students Shall:
 - 10.2.1. Actively engage in learning, coaching, and reflections
 - 10.2.2. Participate in Futures Meetings and pathway decisions
 - 10.2.3. Take increasing responsibility for daily routines and independence
 - 10.3. Families/Guardians Shall:
 - 10.3.1. Engage in communication and transition planning

10.3.2. Support generalization of skills at home and in the community

11. **Transition and Exit Procedures**

~~11.1. Students exit the program when they demonstrate readiness for their Next Step Plan, as indicated by:~~

~~11.1.1. ECG Competency progression~~

~~11.1.2. Pathway skill achievement~~

~~11.1.3. Independence indicators~~

~~11.1.4. Team recommendations~~

~~11.2. Post high exit destinations may include:~~

~~11.2.1. College or technical education~~

~~11.2.2. Inclusive postsecondary programs~~

~~11.2.3. Competitive or supported employment~~

~~11.2.4. District post-high programs~~

~~11.2.5. Adult service agencies~~

~~11.3. An exit meeting will formalize the Next Step Plan and ensure a coordinated handoff.~~

11.4. Exit Pathways

11.4.1. There are two primary pathways for leaving Bridges:

11.4.1.1. Student-Initiated Exit

11.4.1.2. School-Initiated Removal

11.4.2. Exit or removal may occur for both IEP and non-IEP students, following the procedures outlined below.

11.5. Student-Initiated Exit Procedures

11.5.1. Non-IEP Students

11.5.1.1. When a non-IEP student chooses to leave Bridges, the student shall meet with the Transition Coordinator to discuss departure plans, available resources, and post-Bridges options.

11.5.1.2. The student may select one of the following options:

11.5.1.2.1. Immediate Departure – The student exits Bridges without transition planning support or a formal Next Step Plan.

11.5.1.2.2. Planned Transition – The student selects an exit date and participates in transition planning, including development of a Next Step Plan.

11.5.1.3. Students selecting a Planned Transition shall receive individualized support from the transition team to prepare for post-Bridges education, employment, or community living.

- 11.5.1.4. Students shall complete and submit a Bridges Community Readiness Exit Plan form to the Transition Coordinator prior to departure.
- 11.5.2. IEP Students
 - 11.5.2.1. When an IEP student initiates an exit, the IEP team shall convene to review the request and ensure alignment with the student's Individualized Education Program and transition goals.
 - 11.5.2.2. Exit decisions for IEP students shall follow IDEA requirements, including documentation in the IEP and Prior Written Notice when applicable.
- 11.6. School-Initiated Removal Procedures
 - 11.6.1. General Authority
 - 11.6.1.1. Bridges may initiate removal when continued enrollment is no longer the most appropriate placement to meet a student's educational, behavioral, mental health, or transition needs.
 - 11.6.1.2. Removal decisions shall be student-centered, data-driven, and focused on identifying the most appropriate next placement or service system.
- 11.7. Removal of IEP Students
 - 11.7.1. Authority and Legal Framework
 - 11.7.1.1. Removal of an IEP student shall be determined by the IEP team in accordance with IDEA, Section 504, and Utah State Board of Education rules.
 - 11.7.1.2. All decisions shall prioritize access to FAPE, least restrictive environment (LRE), and student well-being.
 - 11.7.2. Common Reasons for Removal
 - 11.7.2.1. Removal may be considered when one or more of the following conditions are present:
 - 11.7.2.1.1. Disability-Specific Needs Met – The student has achieved IEP goals and can be served effectively in a less restrictive environment, including the home LEA post-high program.
 - 11.7.2.1.2. Behavioral or Mental Health Concerns – The student's needs exceed the program's capacity or compromise safety despite documented interventions and supports.
 - 11.7.2.1.3. Transition to Home LEA – The IEP team determines that transition to the home LEA better

supports long-term community integration, employment, or postsecondary planning.

11.7.3. Removal Process

- 11.7.3.1. Comprehensive Review – The IEP team reviews progress, IEP goals, behavioral/mental health data, interventions, and current needs.
- 11.7.3.2. Parent and Student Involvement – Parents and students participate in all discussions and receive written notice of proposed changes.
- 11.7.3.3. IEP Team Meeting – The team reviews data, explores alternatives, and considers additional supports prior to removal.
- 11.7.3.4. Decision and Documentation – Decisions are documented through Prior Written Notice and IEP updates.
- 11.7.3.5. Transition Planning – The team coordinates records transfer, referrals, orientation, and service connections with the receiving program or agency.
- 11.7.3.6. Procedural Safeguards – Parents are informed of their rights to mediation, due process, and appeal.

11.8. Removal of Non-IEP Students

11.8.1. Common Reasons for Removal

- 11.8.1.1. Removal may be initiated when:
 - 11.8.1.1.1. The student’s disability-specific needs have been adequately addressed and Bridges no longer provides unique educational benefit.
 - 11.8.1.1.2. Behavioral or mental health needs exceed program capacity or compromise safety despite reasonable supports.
 - 11.8.1.1.3. The student would benefit more from adult service agencies, vocational programs, or specialized adult supports beyond the scope of Bridges.

11.8.2. Removal Process

- 11.8.2.1. Review and Documentation – Staff review progress, needs, interventions, and relevant data.
- 11.8.2.2. Notification and Meeting – The student and parent/guardian (if applicable) receive written notice and are invited to meet with the Transition Team.
- 11.8.2.3. Decision and Transition Planning – If removal is confirmed, a transition plan is developed including

- referrals, records transfer, and connection to next placement.
 - 11.8.2.4. All decisions shall emphasize transparency, dignity, and future success.
 - 11.9. Bridges Community Readiness Exit Plan
 - 11.9.1. All students exiting through a Planned Transition shall complete an Exit Plan that includes:
 - 11.9.1.1. Student name
 - 11.9.1.2. Selected exit option
 - 11.9.1.3. Exit or tentative exit date
 - 11.9.1.4. Permission for family notification
 - 11.9.1.5. Identification of next placement or service pathway
 - 11.9.2. The Transition Coordinator shall coordinate development of the Exit Plan and ensure documentation is maintained in the student record.
 - 11.10. Exit Roles and Responsibilities
 - 11.10.1. Transition Coordinator – Facilitates exit meetings, supports planning, coordinates records transfer, and serves as primary contact for exit procedures.
 - 11.10.2. IEP Team – Makes removal decisions for IEP students and ensures compliance with IDEA.
 - 11.10.3. Program Staff – Document interventions, monitor progress, and support transition planning.
 - 11.10.4. Students and Families – Participate actively in planning and decision-making.
 - 12. **Program Review and Continuous Improvement**
 - 12.1. Program refinements will be communicated to families, LEAs, USDB staff, and partner agencies.
 - 12.2. An annual Post High Educational Benefit Review (PH-EBR) will be conducted to evaluate whether a student’s educational experiences and supports are producing meaningful progress toward their goals.