



8.23 Bridges to Community Readiness – Post-High Program

Draft 3

Date of Last Change:
Authorized By: Utah State Board of Education

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.
 - 1.2.1. Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be prioritized for this program.
 - 1.2.2. Students who have graduated with a standard diploma, may apply for participation in this program
- 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. Orientation and Mobility-Specialized training that teaches individuals who are blind or visually impaired to navigate their environments safely, confidently, and independently.
- 2.6. Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) – The specialized set of skills students with visual impairments need for independence, including compensatory access, Orientation & Mobility (O&M), sensory efficiency, assistive technology, social interaction, recreation, career education, and independent living.
- 2.7. Pathway Model – A flexible Bridges structure offering a variety of personalized pathway options (such as O&M 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.
- 2.8. Intensive Vision Services – Instruction totaling 120–180 minutes per day focused on ECC and vision-access needs, as outlined in the Entrance Guidance Packet.
- 2.9. Next Step Plan – A futures-oriented transition plan developed and refined during the Post-High experience that prepares students for life after Bridges.
- 2.10. Alternate Diploma as defined by Board rule R277-705
- 2.11. 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 post-high school secondary 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-high school 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-~~High School~~ ~~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. ECC 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~~ Placement Change
- 11.4.1.3. Exit or placement change 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. Students eligible for an IEP ~~IEP Students~~
 - 11.5.2.1. When an ~~student eligible for an IEP~~ ~~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 ~~students eligible for an IEP~~ ~~IEP students~~ shall follow IDEA requirements, including documentation in the IEP and Prior Written Notice when applicable.
- 11.6. School-Initiated ~~Removal~~ Placement Change Procedures
 - 11.6.1. General Authority
 - 11.6.1.1. Bridges may initiate placement change 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~~ Placement change decisions shall be student-centered, data-driven, and focused on identifying the most appropriate next placement or service system.
 - ~~Removal~~ Placement change of students eligible for an IEP ~~IEP Students~~
 - 11.6.2. Authority and Legal Framework
 - 11.6.2.1. ~~Removal~~ Placement change of a student eligible for an IEP ~~IEP student~~ shall be determined by the IEP team in accordance with IDEA, Section 504, and Utah State Board of Education rules.
 - 11.6.2.2. All decisions shall prioritize access to FAPE, least restrictive environment (LRE), and student well-being.
 - 11.6.3. Common Reasons for ~~Removal~~ Placement Change
 - 11.6.4. ~~Removal~~ Placement Change may be considered when one or more of the following conditions are present:

- 11.6.4.1.1. 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.
- 11.6.4.1.2. Behavioral or Mental Health Concerns – The student’s needs exceed the program’s capacity or compromise safety despite documented interventions and supports.
- 11.6.4.1.3. Transition to Home LEA – The IEP team determines that transition to the home LEA better supports long-term community integration, employment, or post-high school ~~secondary~~ planning.
- 11.6.5. ~~Removal~~ Placement Change Process
 - 11.6.5.1. Comprehensive Review – The IEP team reviews progress, IEP goals, behavioral/mental health data, interventions, and current needs.
 - 11.6.5.2. Parent and Student Involvement – Parents and students participate in all discussions and receive written notice of proposed changes.
 - 11.6.5.3. IEP Team Meeting – The team reviews data, explores alternatives, and considers additional supports prior to ~~Removal~~ Placement Change Decision and Documentation – Decisions are documented through Prior Written Notice and IEP updates.
 - 11.6.5.4. Transition Planning – The team coordinates records transfer, referrals, orientation, and service connections with the receiving program or agency.
 - 11.6.5.5. Procedural Safeguards – Parents are informed of their rights to mediation, due process, and appeal.
- 11.7. ~~Removal~~ Placement Change of Non-IEP Students
 - 11.7.1. Common Reasons for ~~Removal~~ Placement Change may be initiated when:
 - 11.7.1.1.1. The student’s disability-specific needs have been adequately addressed and Bridges no longer provides unique educational benefit.
 - 11.7.1.1.2. Behavioral or mental health needs exceed program capacity or compromise safety despite reasonable supports.
 - 11.7.1.1.3. The student would benefit more from adult service agencies, vocational programs, or

specialized adult supports beyond the scope of Bridges.

11.7.2. Removal Placement Change Process

11.7.2.1. Review and Documentation – Staff review progress, needs, interventions, and relevant data.

11.7.2.2. Notification and Meeting – The student and parent/guardian (if applicable) receive written notice and are invited to meet with the Transition Team.

11.7.2.3. Decision and Transition Planning – If ~~removal~~ placement change is confirmed, a transition plan is developed including referrals, records transfer, and connection to next placement.

11.7.2.4. All decisions shall emphasize transparency, dignity, and future success.

11.8. Bridges Community Readiness Exit Plan

11.8.1. All students exiting through a Planned Transition shall complete an Exit Plan that includes:

11.8.1.1. Student name

11.8.1.2. Selected exit option

11.8.1.3. Exit or tentative exit date

11.8.1.4. Permission for family notification, if applicable

11.8.1.5. Identification of next placement or service pathway

11.8.2. The Transition Coordinator shall coordinate development of the Exit Plan and ensure documentation is maintained in the student record.

11.9. Exit Roles and Responsibilities

11.9.1. Transition Coordinator – Facilitates exit meetings, supports planning, coordinates records transfer, and serves as primary contact for exit procedures.

11.9.2. IEP Team – Makes ~~removal~~ placement change decisions for students eligible for an IEP ~~IEP students~~ and ensures compliance with IDEA.

11.9.3. Program Staff – Document interventions, monitor progress, and support transition planning.

11.9.4. Students and Families – If applicable, 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.