



Winston *Transitions*

General Program:

Winston *Transitions* is a highly individualized program for students ages 17 to 21 with learning differences. *Transitions* provides an extension to the Winston Preparatory School educational experience when appropriate by precisely identifying and matching each student's needs. This core element of all Winston Prep programs is further enhanced by rich internship/work-study experiences (which sometimes lead to employment), the development of independent living skills, and functional personal goal setting. Overall, Winston *Transitions* is designed to continue to build academic skills while developing life and employability skills, so that the students can realize individually meaningful and active participation in education, work, and life as they emerge into adulthood.

Through the Winston Innovation Lab initiatives, we have been able to identify the factors that contribute to success after high school and the qualities necessary to achieve them. Specifically, they are resilience, social responsibility, self-advocacy, self-regulation, self-reflection, communication/social skills, problem-solving, and management and organization. Key to a student's development of these qualities is their and the community's understanding of them, specific individualized goals related to this development, and activities that strengthen these qualities embedded throughout each WPS students' program.

Who WT Serves:

The *Transitions* student community is comprised of a diverse group of learners with unique patterns of strengths and weaknesses. This includes, but is not limited to, students that fall within the neuropsychological paradigm of learning and learning disorders such as, language processing, nonverbal processing, and executive functions as well as complexities that can be fully understood only by working with them on an individual basis. To assess whether this program is appropriate and needed for any one student we must assess them in a manner in keeping with Winston Prep's core Continuous Feedback System of individualized and responsive program design.

WT Goals:

The Winston *Transitions* program is individually tailored to meet specific academic, cognitive, social-emotional, independent living, and employment goals. Academic and Cognitive goals may include strengthening basic or higher level academic skills while challenging cognitive abilities, encouraging academic risk-taking, critical thinking skills, cultivating intrinsic motivation, and developing executive function skills. An emphasis is placed on developing independence and social-emotional skills. Goals address increasing students' social-emotional health and wellness; developing resilience; increasing self-advocacy, self-reflection and self-awareness; encouraging and strengthening independent living skills, and identifying and developing support systems. Finally, an overarching goal of the *Transitions* program is to strengthen the students' likelihood of gaining and retaining employment as well as pursuing appropriate academic goals (including college when appropriate). Goals in the employment realm may include identifying possible professions, providing opportunities for experience in different work environments, furthering training in a specific field,

identifying appropriate next steps (college, technical school, employment), and developing the qualities necessary to retain employment.

How WT Meets Goals:

The academic and cognitive components of Winston *Transitions* target students' greatest areas of need, specifically those that are hindering their academic independence. Academic independence varies greatly for each Winston *Transitions* student and, as such, each academic program is specifically tailored to meet the individual goals of the student. For example, academic independence may mean building the basic mathematics skills needed to balance a checkbook for one student but solidifying foundational knowledge of algebra in preparation for a college-level math course for another. Our program is highly individualized to accommodate this broad range of abilities and needs. While students are working on reaching their academic independence the Winston *Transitions* program simultaneously targets the gaining and retaining of employment, as well as the acquisition of the additional social and personal skills that afford students the chance to live independently. Our *Transitions* Team works closely with students in a very personalized and individual way through our small groupings, comprehensive academic coursework, internship experiences, social-emotional development, and Winston's unique one-to-one Focus program. Additionally, a strong emphasis is placed on a practical application approach and project-based learning within the core course opportunities of Literacy, Writing, Math, Health and Wellness, and Professional Studies. All of the activities reflect and respond to the essential skills needed for success as an emerging young adult.

Each student in the program is assigned a hand-selected internship tailored to his or her needs and interests (when applicable). These internships provide authentic hands-on workplace experience with performance evaluations and assessment completion that allow for meaningful and specific feedback, all leading to the development of transferable skills. Furthermore, within the daily academic course work students focus on developing and strengthening employability skills through our Professional Studies course.

While the academic, cognitive and employment components of the program are essential, it is the social-emotional development that completes Winston *Transitions* students journey toward independence. Throughout a student's time at Winston *Transitions*, they are provided opportunities to develop and demonstrate interpersonal communication skills, manage conflict, enhance active-listening skills, build collaborative relationships that emphasize trust and respect and work cooperatively. In addition, a full-time Clinical Social Worker and other mental health professionals provide targeted group and individual activities to foster development primarily through Winston's one-to-one Focus program.

Winston *Transitions* may be appropriate for any student who has not yet achieved the requisite, and individually appropriate, academic and social independence to succeed in academics, work, and independent living. Please contact, John Civita, Head of School at (jcivita@winstonprep.edu), to begin to assess with us whether or not this program is the correct next step in your student's education.