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INTRODUCTION
Established in 1990, the Oregon Youth Transition Program (YTP) is a collaborative partnership between the office of Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), and the University of Oregon (UO). The purpose of YTP is to prepare youth with disabilities for employment or career-related postsecondary education or training. What began as a three-year federal grant to seven schools has spread to a majority of Oregon high schools. To date, approximately 30,000 youth have received services from YTP, and that number continues to grow.

YTP has two distinct but interconnected goals:

- to improve post-school transition outcomes for youth with disabilities by preparing them for employment or career-related post-secondary education/training and
- to increase capacity and create systems change in schools and other agencies that serve students with disabilities as they transition from school to work.

These goals work together to enable YTP teams to work with students and together achieve positive post-school employment, training, and education outcomes.

YTP is more than a good idea. As a transition program, YTP is a “predictor of post-school success,” as affirmed by high-quality research (Test et al. 2009) conducted in Oregon by the originators of YTP. Essential program characteristics have been established to help sites develop, implement, and evaluate the components of a transition program (Rowe, et al. 2014). These essential program characteristics form the foundation of YTP. To ensure that YTP is flexible enough to accommodate the diversity of youth, families, schools, and districts across Oregon, we created the Essential Features of YTP. Located at the end of each chapter of this manual, the essential features serve as guideposts — if the essential features are being implemented, then YTP is being implemented.

YTP has received national and international recognition. In 2010, it received the Best Practices Award from the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs. In 2013, the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities recognized YTP as a Best Practice, and a study by the Zero Project examining the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities named YTP as the only Innovative Project to address transition.

The purpose of this YTP Procedures Manual is to provide a structure for YTP program development, maintenance, and evaluation. It is the starting point for new sites and staff. This manual is also a resource to help existing sites and staff to navigate constantly changing transition initiatives. We update the YTP website (https://ytp.uoregon.edu/) frequently with resources and references that extend this manual.

The intended audience for this manual is the local teams at YTP sites, including experienced staff at established sites who support YTP directly or indirectly (e.g., school
administrators, vocational rehabilitation staff in branch offices), the staff at new sites, new staff at any site, and anyone considering applying to be a YTP site. We have organized the manual into eight chapters and appendices:

*IDEA Transition Planning* provides a brief introduction to transition planning for all students who receive services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and places YTP services within the context of IDEA transition services.

*Program Management* outlines the process for setting up a new YTP site and handling ongoing management.

*Screening, Referral, and Eligibility* outlines the process for identifying students who are eligible or potentially eligible for YTP and the process for referring them for vocational rehabilitation (VR) services.

*YTP Services* outlines transition planning and services specific to YTP.

*Instruction* briefly describes models for providing instruction within YTP.

*Job Development, Employment, and Job Coaching* provides strategies and procedures for obtaining competitive integrated employment outcomes for YTP participants.

*Final Job Placement and Follow-up* outlines general procedures for preparing a student for their final job placement and then monitoring their transition into the community.

*Program Performance and Outcomes* describes mechanisms for evaluating and improving YTP outcomes.

The *Appendices* contain various resources (e.g., a job description for a transition specialist).

As you read the YTP Procedures Manual, keep in mind that a YTP site’s successful implementation requires the active collaboration and involvement of the entire YTP team — VR counselors, special and general education colleagues, and administrators.
Chapter 1: IDEA TRANSITION SERVICES
Introduction to IDEA Transition Services

Transition planning is good practice for all students, whether they receive services for an identified disability or not. Transition services are a required part of the high school experience for students who receive services for a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Understanding the transition services that schools are mandated to provide is important to distinguish between mandated school services and YTP enhancement services.

The first purpose of IDEA (2004) is:

to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free 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; (emphasis added 34 CFR §300.1(a)).

To achieve that purpose, IDEA 2004 requires that all students who have an individualized education plan (IEP) receive transition services starting no later than the IEP for the school year in which they turn 16. Transition services can be provided as specially designed instruction or as a related service to youth who receive special education services. To understand how YTP provides transition services, we briefly describe the IDEA transition planning process required for all students with disabilities. YTP is a service above and beyond the IDEA transition services provided to all youth moving from high school to community living. YTP offers pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) for all students potentially eligible for vocational rehabilitation (VR). Pre-ETS cover five specific areas of service that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires be available to all students potentially eligible for VR.

Transition Planning Requirements

**IDEA 2004 Requirement**

§300.320 Transition services. (b) Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually, thereafter, the IEP must include—

1. Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and

2. The transition services (including course of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals.

Transition refers to the movement from high school to adult life. In this chapter, we describe the key provisions of the transition component of an IEP. Because transition planning is an IDEA mandate, we include excerpts from the relevant sections (§) of IDEA for reference.
Transition planning is a process that brings students together with those individuals (e.g., family members, educators, and service providers) directly involved in helping them prepare to enter a post-school environment. Transition services are designed to ensure that students acquire the skills and receive the services they need to move from high school to adult life as seamlessly as possible.

Purpose of Transition Planning

The purpose of a transition-focused IEP is to prepare students for further education, employment, and independent living. The transition planning process should begin with the IEP for the school year in which a student turns 16. The IEP must include measurable secondary goals in education, including training, employment and — when appropriate — independent living. Transition planning can start at a younger age, as determined by the IEP team (e.g., for a child at risk of dropping out of school). The IEP must have a statement of transition services — multi-year strategies/activities to help a student prepare for postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and community participation. Transition services are then updated at the annual IEP meetings.

Documenting IDEA Services in the IEP

Transition services must be documented in the IEP. Documentation ensures that the student, parents, and school staff all understand what transition services will be provided. The IEP Team decides where transition services are documented in the IEP.

**IDEA 2004 Requirement**

**CFR§ 300.43 Transition services** (a) Transition services means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability—

*Coordinated* means the activities have a purpose and a goal. They are selected with a plan in mind to accomplish a specific, postsecondary goal in education, employment, or independent living.
IDEA 2004 Requirements

CFR § 300.43 A coordinated set of activities—
(a) Is designed to be within a results oriented process that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation; (2) Is based on the individual child’s needs, taking into account the child’s strengths, preferences, and interests; and includes—
   (i) Instruction;
   (ii) Related services;
   (iii) Community experiences;
   (iv) The development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives; and
   (v) If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.
(b) Is based on the individual child’s needs, taking into account the child’s strengths, preferences, and interests; and includes:
   (a) instruction,
   (b) related services,
   (c) community experiences,
   (d) development of employment objectives and other
   (e) post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate,
   (f) acquisition of daily living skills and
   (g) provision of a functional vocational evaluation.

Thus, to help students achieve their postsecondary goals in employment, further education, training, and independent living, students receive a coordinated set of activities that includes one or more of the following:

- **Instruction** — being taught, coached, or trained in specific academic, functional, and behavior skills (e.g., reading a bus schedule, calculating taxes, learning about careers in an awareness course, learning time-management strategies, and learning self-advocacy).
- **Related services** — receiving the supportive services required to help a student with a disability benefit from special education (e.g., obtaining a driving evaluation, obtaining sources of support for coping with difficult life situations, identifying potential post-school providers of recreation therapy).
- **Community experiences** — participating in activities, paired with instruction, that occur outside the school setting (e.g., visiting college campuses and meeting with student support services, learning to eat on campus, touring apartments for rent, visiting and investigating the youth volunteer program at the library, visiting the community theater group to learn how to participate, shopping in the community.
for food and clothes, finding the local bike repair shop).

- **Development of employment objectives** — activities and skills that support employment (e.g., participating in the high school career fair to learn about careers; enrolling in a Career and Technical Education program, entry-level career program, or exploring summer employment options; opening a bank account and learning to manage finances, set a budget, and pay bills).

- **Development of other post-school adult living objectives** — activities adults typically engage in (e.g., registering to vote and learning about the election process, learning to manage personal health, touring various adult housing options with living supports).

- **Acquisition of daily living skills** — activities that one does daily to care for oneself (e.g., feeding, clothing, and cleaning oneself; maintaining a home; developing emergency procedures for use at home; managing a daily schedule).

- **Provision of a functional vocational evaluation** — providing an assessment to learn about job or career interests, aptitudes, and skills. Information is typically gathered through situational assessments, observations, or formal measures (e.g., providing job shadowing opportunities in the community, developing a vocational profile based on functional information).

That coordinated set of activities is student-specific and occurs within a “results-oriented process.” The focus is on the student’s outcomes, not the process. In other words, the student must achieve an observable result (e.g., postsecondary goals for education/training, employment, and independent living), not just move through a process or have a compliant IEP and graduate from high school. The central question in a results-oriented approach is: *What has the student learned or achieved?* The focus of the IEP is on ensuring that the student acquires both the academic skills (e.g., reading, math, and writing) and functional skills (e.g., social skills, communication, and organization) they need to reach their postsecondary goals. Special educators or case managers are responsible for IDEA transition planning.

**Documenting YTP services in the IEP.** YTP services can be documented on the transition page of the IEP, under related services, or in the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance section of the IEP.

**Eight Key Provisions for Transition Planning**

Here, we briefly describe eight key provisions of transition planning for all youth who receive special education services. These eight provisions lay the groundwork for a student’s movement from high school to the community. Remember: all transition planning should be a collaboration of the youth, family, educators, and service providers. Good transition planning is never done in isolation.
1. **Student Invited to the IEP Meeting**

**IDEA 2004 Requirements**

§ 300.321 IEP Team. (b) *Transition services participants.*

(1) ...the public agency must invite a student with a disability to attend the student’s IEP Team meeting if a purpose of the meeting will be the consideration of the postsecondary goals for the student and transition services needed to assist the student in reaching those goals.

(2) If the student does not attend the IEP Team meeting, the public agency must take other steps to ensure that the student’s preferences and interests are considered.

The IEP Team must actively invite the student to participate in developing the IEP. By identifying the student’s preferences, interests, needs, and strengths (PINS), the IEP Team will learn what the student wants to do after completing school (e.g., further education, employment, military, etc.). This process includes learning how a student wants to live (e.g., independent living, apartment, group home, etc.) and participate in the community (e.g., transportation, recreation, etc.) after high school. Below are ways to meet this requirement:

- **Invite the student** to attend the IEP meeting. This is a mandatory compliance standard for the transition component of the IEP.
- **Ask the student** to share the list of PINS they developed earlier; before the meeting, help the student create a script or note cards to use during the meeting.
- **Ask the student** to describe their post-school goals and what they have learned and done in the past year to help achieve those goals.
- **Ask the student** what they need to learn in the coming year to reach their goals.

**Resources**

Below are three evidence-based practices shown to be effective in helping youth participate in their IEP meetings. The first two resources are free. You can search for these resources on the internet to learn more.

**Self-Directed IEP.** The Self-Directed IEP lesson package is divided into four instructional units, including student led meetings and reporting interests, skills, and options. It is a multimedia package designed to teach students the skills they need to manage their own IEP meetings. See Martin, Marshall, Maxson, & Jerman (1996) for more information.

**Whose Future Is It Anyway?** “Whose Future is it Anyway?” is a student-directed
transition planning curriculum designed to help students learn to be more involved in the IEP process.

**Self-Advocacy Strategy.** The Self-Advocacy Strategy is a motivation and self-determination strategy designed to prepare students to participate in education or transition planning meetings.

2. **Agency Participation**

**IDEA 2004 Requirement**

§ 300.321 IEP Team. (3) To the extent appropriate, with the consent of the parents or a child who has reached the age of majority, in implementing the requirements of paragraph (b)(1) of this section, the public agency [school district] must invite a representative of any participating agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services.

When the purpose of the IEP meeting is to consider transition services for the student, the school district must invite a representative of any other agency (e.g., VR, mental health, community college, brokerages) likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services. If an agency representative does not attend the IEP meeting, the IEP team should document their input.

If the participating agency fails to provide the agreed-upon transition services contained in the IEP in a timely manner, the district must hold an IEP meeting to identify alternative ways to meet the transition objectives. This does not mean that the school district must provide the precise services written in the IEP. It means the IEP team must discuss the services in question to decide whether another agency or private company could provide or pay for the services or identify another strategy that would meet the objectives.

3. **Transition Services**

A student’s transition services are part of a long-range plan to use the last two or three years of high school to prepare for adult life immediately following high school. They should focus on improving the academic and functional achievements of the student with disabilities to facilitate their movement from school to post-school activities such as postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and community participation.

At least one transition service should be listed in the IEP in association with each measurable postsecondary goal; see Table 1.1 for examples. As explained above, the transition service areas are instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, the acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.
The provision of transition services is intended to create a seamless movement from high school to adulthood, so that a student’s last day of high school looks like the first day of the rest of their life. As the student nears the end of high school, in-school services decrease, and community services provided by adult agencies increase (Figure 1.1).

4. **Age-Appropriate Transition Assessments**

Age-appropriate transition assessments are part of the ongoing process of collecting information about a student’s PINS related to the demands of the environments in which they will work, learn, live, and play. Assessment data serve as the common thread in the transition process and form the basis for defining the goals and services included in the IEP. Many age-appropriate transition assessments are available. Some are free, like *Whose Future is it Anyway?*, and others are available for a nominal price. Some are formal, such as the *Brigance Life Skills Inventory*, and others are informal, like those in the *Transition Planning Inventory*. Overall, four areas should be assessed: academic, adaptive behavior, vocational, and social-emotional. Table 1.2 lists several different types of transition assessments.

---

### Table 1.1 Examples of Transition Services Associated with Postsecondary Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Postsecondary Goal</th>
<th>Example Transition Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Postsecondary Education</strong></td>
<td>After high school, Darius will enroll in a 4-year college or university to study biology. Darius will contact the Disabilities Resource Office at three colleges of his choice and learn what services they offer students with his disability and how he will access those services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment</strong></td>
<td>After high school, Susan will work half-time at a computer repair shop. Susan will complete two different job shadows related to her interest in working on computers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Living</strong></td>
<td>After high school, Angela will live with roommates in an apartment. Angela will learn to take public transportation to and from her home and place of employment and the community college.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from O’Leary (2010)
Table 1.2 Types of Transition Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transition Assessments</th>
<th>Formal</th>
<th>Informal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement Tests</td>
<td>Career Planning Resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aptitude Tests</td>
<td>Curriculum-Based Assessments</td>
<td>Observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Assessments</td>
<td></td>
<td>On the Job or Training Evaluations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Maturity or Readiness Tests</td>
<td></td>
<td>School Performance Measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community College Placement Tests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence Tests</td>
<td></td>
<td>Student Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest and Work Values Inventories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality or Preference Tests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Determination Assessments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Transition Planning Inventory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-Related Temperament Scales</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Resources**

Below are two resources for locating age-appropriate transition assessments:

- Yearly, the Oregon Department of Education updates and publishes Oregon’s Transition Handbook, which contains descriptions of many formal and informal assessments. The Transition Network Facilitators (TNFs) in each region of the state have a Transition Assessment Resource Kit containing assessments that can be borrowed. If you are unsure who the TNF is for your region, ask your YTP Technical Assistance Provider. Visit the ODE website for more information.

- The Transition Assessment Toolkit describes transition assessments, provides sample instruments and links to other sources of information, and contains a transition assessment timeline. To download it for free, visit the National Transition Technical Assistance Center: The Collaborative’s (NTACT:C) website (https://transitionta.org).

5. **Measurable Postsecondary Goals**

Measurable postsecondary goals (Figure 1.2) are important components of transition services for students with disabilities. Based on the results from the student’s age-appropriate transition assessments and PINS, the postsecondary goals let the IEP team know what the student wants to do after high school. Postsecondary goals must focus on what will occur after high school and be related to education, training, employment, and independent living.
**Figure 1.2 Rules for Writing Appropriate, Measurable Postsecondary Goals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rules for Writing Appropriate Measurable Postsecondary Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Focus must be on postsecondary education/training, employment; and where appropriate, independent living skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activity must occur <strong>AFTER</strong> graduation, and be clearly stated that the goal will occur after graduation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Goals must be measurable, observable, and/or countable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The expectation, or behavior, must be explicit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Goals must be based on age-appropriate transition assessments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Goals must identify an outcome, not a process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Examples of postsecondary goals:**

- After high school, David will work full-time at Whole Foods.
- After graduating from high school, Juan will attend Chemeketa Community College part time to study Emergency Medical Services.
- After high school, Dawn will live in an apartment with roommates.

**6. Course of Study**

A student’s course of study must be updated annually and should list classes and activities that directly relate to and support the postsecondary goals. It is **not** a list of the courses required to obtain a diploma. Figure 1.3 illustrates the requirements for a course of study, which are listed below:

- The course of study is a multi-year description of coursework and activities from the student’s current year to the anticipated exit year and is designed to help the student achieve their desired post-school goals.
- The course of study must be reviewed annually to ensure that the student is given access to suitable courses, did not drop a course, and passed all courses.
- The course of study must be aligned with the postsecondary goals.
Table 1.3 Course of Study: Personal Exercise Trainer

Employment Goal: The student will obtain the training needed to become a personal exercise trainer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freshman Courses for Graduation</th>
<th>Freshman Transition Course of Study</th>
<th>Sophomore Courses for Graduation</th>
<th>Sophomore Transition Course of Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English 9</td>
<td>Career Education</td>
<td>English 10</td>
<td>Health/Physical Ed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td></td>
<td>World History</td>
<td>Speech/Public Speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Science</td>
<td></td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algebra</td>
<td></td>
<td>Spanish 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/Physical Ed.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Algebra II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Courses for Graduation</td>
<td>Junior Transition Course of Study</td>
<td>Senior Courses for Graduation</td>
<td>Senior Transition Course of Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 11</td>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>English 12</td>
<td>Weightlifting/Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US History</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Community Work Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Geometry</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The course of study is developed as part of the transition-focused IEP and is discussed annually. Figure 1.4 depicts the transition IEP process, which starts when students turn 16 or earlier, if determined appropriate by the IEP team, and continues until they leave high school. Using results from age-appropriate transition assessments to determine the student’s PINS and present level of academic achievement and functional performance, the IEP team, including the student as a member, develops postsecondary goals. The IEP team develops a statement of the goals and the transition services needed.
**Secondary Transition IEP Process**

Transition services begin no later than the first IEP to be in effect when the student turns 16, earlier if determined appropriate by the IEP team.

**District conducts age-appropriate transition assessments.**

---

**Transition IEP Team**

- **The student must be invited.** If student doesn’t attend, the district must take steps to ensure the student’s preferences and interests are considered.

- **Other required members of the IEP team:**
  - Parents
  - Regular Ed Teacher
  - Special Ed Teacher
  - School District Rep
  - Individual who can interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results

- **Agency Representative**
  With parent/adult student consent, a representative of any participating agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services must be invited to the meeting.

---

**Transition IEP Content**

- **Results of age-appropriate transition assessments**
- **Student’s preferences, needs, & interests.**

- **Based on the age-appropriate transition assessments.**
- **Related to training, education, employment and, where appropriate, independent living skills.**

- **Academic and functional goals. Statement of how the annual goals will be measured.**

- **Course of Study:** Services needed to help the student reach their post-secondary goals.

---

**Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance**

- **Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals**

- **Statement of measurable annual goals**

- **Transition services**

---

**Annual**
7. Transfer of Rights at Age of Majority

Under IDEA, the right to make educational decisions transfers to the student at the age of majority. In Oregon, that transfer of rights occurs when a student (a) reaches the age of majority (18 years), (b) gets married, or (c) becomes legally emancipated, whichever comes first. The IEP Team must plan for and assist the student and their parents in understanding and preparing for the transfer of rights, keeping in mind two critical timepoints. The first, an IEP content requirement, occurs at least one year before the student reaches the age of majority. The second, a procedural safeguard requirement, occurs when the student reaches the age of majority.

**IEP Content Requirement:** At least one year before the student turns 18 years old, the district must notify the student and their parent(s) that rights will transfer at the age of majority. This notice must be provided and documented on the IEP that will be in effect when the student turns 17. A copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards must be given to the student at that time.

**Procedural Safeguard Requirement:** When the student turns 18 years old, the district must provide written notice of the rights transfer to the student and parent(s); districts may not wait until the next scheduled IEP meeting to provide that notice.

Once a student reaches the age of majority, they can make education and employment decisions, including whether they want YTP or other services. When a student reaches the age of majority, it is essential to consider when and how a parent or other family member may be involved. Every situation is different. It is crucial to know and understand each student’s family situation. Ideally, planning with the student’s and their family is best, but that is not always possible.

8. Summary of Performance

IDEA 2004 requires a summary of performance (SOP) for some students exiting special education services. The SOP is a document that contains (a) a summary of the student’s academic achievement and functional performance; (b) the student’s postsecondary goals; and (c) recommendations to help the student meet their postsecondary goals.

Students who graduate secondary school with a regular diploma or leave school due to exceeding the age of eligibility for a free appropriate public education (i.e., end of the school year in which they turn 21 years old) must receive an SOP. The SOP must be completed in the last year of high school; however, it may be started at any time and may be provided to the student before they leave high school.
Chapter 2: PROGRAM MANAGEMENT
Introduction

The Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Innovation Act of 2004 (IDEA) emphasize the need for schools and vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies to collaborate in planning and delivering services for students with disabilities as they transition from school to the community. Together these Acts have the potential to help school and VR staff provide assessment, determine eligibility, and plan joint services in an efficient and timely manner. These Acts are intended to ensure that no break in services occurs between school programs and VR services. Systematic efforts must be made to address barriers that have historically discouraged school and VR staff from working together effectively to move from legislative mandates to new and better services.

The Youth Transition Program (YTP) addresses those systemic barriers by building a collaborative service delivery model for students in transition. The structure of YTP allows school and VR staff to collaboratively improve the delivery of services and increase their capacity to serve students in transition. This chapter lays out the structure for these collaborative efforts. The procedures recommended here are intended to accomplish two major goals:

1. To develop an efficient and effective Core YTP team that uses team members’ strengths and encourages exemplary case management for students.
2. To infuse the new pattern of service created by YTP into schools and facilitate systems change.

The first program management goal is an organizational goal to provide structured procedures that enable school and VR staff to work as an efficient team throughout the YTP process. The steps toward this goal help the Core YTP team members define their roles and responsibilities, manage paperwork, and develop procedures for documenting their efforts as a team.

The Core YTP team members each play a role in building a strong YTP program. The transition specialist (TS) works closely with special education teachers to identify students who will benefit from YTP services. The TS then works with the VR counselor (VRC) to decide when and if it is appropriate to officially bring a student into VR. It is vital that the administrator understand the terms of the YTP Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) and support the TS in fulfilling the goals of the IGA.

The second goal of program management is a marketing goal to make YTP more than just an add-on program by creating true system change. These steps provide collaboration strategies to infuse YTP into the school and community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core YTP Team:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Transition Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Special Education Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Administrator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To accomplish these goals, YTP should become part of the existing school structure and influence the delivery of services for all students. All YTP sites:

- should focus on collaborations between schools and VR.
- should mirror the special education population of the school.

**Collaborating** means working together to achieve a shared goal. Collaboration in YTP is important because both agencies — schools and VR — have services that will help a student exit high school and achieve their employment goals in the community. The TS’s and VRC’s roles are to figure out how to access and provide those services to help students. This requires that TSs and VRCs communicate frequently. Collaboration can be done by meeting at least monthly at the school, the VR office, in video conferences, or even at a coffee shop. It is also helpful to provide frequent updates on students through email or other systems of documentation.

Mirroring the special education population is important for building a strong and equitable YTP. It means that YTP participants reflect the same diversity in disability category, gender, and race/ethnicity as the school or district’s special education population overall. Mirroring the population is about creating an equitable program and ensuring that YTP is not overlooking portions of the special education population. The concept of mirroring the population is depicted in Figures 2.1–2.3. School demographics vary around the state. Whenever possible, school or district high school special education data should be used to assess whether students are being served equitably by YTP.

Figure 2.1 shows a breakdown of special education students by disability category for the whole state of Oregon. Notice that some categories are so small that they register as 0%. This does not mean that there are no students in those categories, just that there are so few that they do not show up in the statistics. The numbers in paratheses reflect the special education disability eligibility codes used on IEPs.
**Figure 2.1: Disability-based Diversity of Students in Oregon (2019–2020 School Year Data)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autism Spectrum Disorder</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>(82)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication Disorder</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>(50)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Disturbance</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>(60)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing Impairment</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>(20)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Disability</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>(10)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthopedic Impairment</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>(70)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Health Impairments</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>(80)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Learning Disability</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>(90)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 504 Plan</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Impairment</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>(40)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traumatic Brain Injury</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>(74)*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Codes Based on Special Education Disability Eligibility
Figure 2.2 shows a breakdown of special education students by race for the whole state of Oregon. It is important that YTP programs equitably provide services and reflect the racial diversity of their schools.

**Figure 2.2: Racial Diversity of Students with Disabilities in Oregon (2019–2020 School Year Data)**

Oregon High School Students experiencing disabilities on IEP or 504 Plan through Age 21

- White (64.3%)
- Hispanic (22.5%)
- Asian (2%)
- Black (2.9%)
- Native American/Alaska Native (1.7%)
- Multi Racial (6.1%)

Figure 2.3 shows a statewide breakdown of special education students by gender. Notice that fewer female students with disabilities are served than male students. If YTP served 50% female and 50% male students, it would be equal, but not equitable.

**Figure 2.3: Gender Diversity of Students with Disabilities in Oregon (2019–2020 School Year Data)**

Gender diversity of students with disabilities in Oregon

- Female (37.4%)
- Non-Binary (0.2%)
- Male (62.2%)
TABLE 2.1: Essential Features of Program Management

1. **YTP STAFF ROLES:**
   YTP staff have clearly developed roles and responsibilities that capitalize on individual team members’ strengths and interests.

2. **SCHOOL/VR/FAMILY COLLABORATION:**
   YTP and VR staff meet regularly to review student progress, program benchmarks, and the coordinated delivery of services. The team communicates regularly with the family regarding student participation and ways to support the student in YTP.

3. **COORDINATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS:**
   A process exists for coordinating YTP with existing school and community programs to deliver transition services. The family clearly understands the roles of the agencies and programs supporting their young adult.

4. **MARKETING/PUBLIC RELATIONS:**
   YTP staff create opportunities to market the program and thereby integrate YTP services into the school and community more effectively. Families are included as an integral part of the community of practice.
Procedures for YTP Program Management

This section describes the procedures associated with organizing and marketing YTP. The procedures described in each area have been developed, field-tested, and revised by school and VR staff at sites across Oregon since 1990. The steps and recommendations presented throughout the YTP Procedures Manual are best practices.

Organizing a YTP Site

Whether you are establishing your first YTP site or entering the 20th year, you must focus on the organizational goal: *develop an efficient and effective YTP team that uses team members’ strengths and encourages exemplary case management of students.* This organizational goal is accomplished through four basic steps:

1. Identify the Core YTP team.
2. Develop roles and responsibilities for each team member.
3. Meet regularly as a team and create a format for documenting supervision and collaboration among team members.
4. Develop strategies for collecting student information and tracking student progress.

**Step 1: Identify the Core YTP Team**

The Core YTP team consists of (a) TSs, (b) VRCs, (c) special education teachers, and (d) administrators. Extended YTP team members can include general educators, service providers (e.g., occupational or physical therapists or a job coach), and other agency representatives (e.g., Developmental Disability Services, private employment agencies) depending on the needs of a particular student.

Another essential member of any YTP team is the technical assistance provider (TAP) from the University of Oregon. The TAP assigned to the YTP site is there to help navigate and negotiate all aspects of YTP — from program development to monitoring benchmarks. The TAP will assist sites in accessing the YTP website and database and act as a liaison between agencies as needed.

**Step 2: Develop Roles and Responsibilities**

The Core YTP team plays a key role in helping students focus and succeed during and after high school, as well as carrying out the YTP IGA requirements. The following roles and responsibilities are starting points for developing the Core YTP team:

**Transition Specialists**

- Identify high school students eligible for admission to the YTP program.
- Enhance IDEA transition services that special education teachers provide for students.
• Deliver or coordinate Pre-ETS to potentially eligible students.
• Collaborate closely with the VRC to identify and help students apply for VR services.
• Collect data and enter it into tracking systems (e.g., YTP database, Pre-ETS database).
• Partner with the local community by building relationships with businesses and community members to develop work-based learning experiences and jobs for students.

**Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors**

• Work closely with TSs to identify, enroll, and support the student with their employment/career goals.
• Identify other needed supports in the community and assist with access to services.
• Engage with core team members to write the individualized plans for employment.
• Attend IEP meetings in person or by video or phone conference, as appropriate.
• Evaluate and determine eligibility.
• Provide or arrange funding for necessary VR services that are not the responsibility of the school district.
• Help to coordinate, provide, or arrange for Pre-ETS.

**Special Education Teachers**

• Manage special education student cases.
• Write the IEP as a member of the IEP team, including specific post-secondary goals and the course of study.
• Deliver academic and functional skill instruction to prepare the student for transition.
• Guide the student as a member of the IEP/YTP team.
• Support the student’s employment and adult living objectives by providing instruction aligned with their postsecondary goals.
• Invite the TS, VRC, and other agency representatives to attend IEP meetings.

**YTP Administrators**

• Set the vision and understanding for how transition services are provided and how YTP enhances those services.
• Assist in developing the YTP IGA proposal and ensure its implementation.
• Collaborate with the VRC and school staff to interview applicants for the YTP TS position.
• Support and supervise the TS in the schools and community.
• Assist in educating faculty and staff about the roles and responsibilities of all YTP Core team members.

**YTP Core Team**

YTP originated as a systems change initiative, meaning that the original intent was to change how systems operate. For this reason, it is crucial to start with an understanding of the two systems governing YTP — the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Administration (i.e., VR) and schools (Educational Service Districts and school districts). Although the YTP pattern of services provides an effective vehicle for collaboration between schools and VR, trust and cooperation must drive that vehicle.

Building trust and developing teamwork takes time. It is important to recognize and remember that different federal laws, regulations, and reporting requirements govern the education and VR systems. Team members must understand and respect the inherent differences in the agencies they represent and coordinate their efforts in the best interests of each student and family. Taking the time to learn the other agency’s goals and what they can and cannot do contributes to building trust and teamwork at the local site. Below are four ways teams can become familiar with the two systems governing YTP.

1) The IGA is a formal contract developed every two years between the local school district and VR that outlines the responsibilities and specific activities and duties of the district-level YTP, VR services, and the TS. Request a copy of the current IGA from the district administrator overseeing YTP. As a team, review the roles and responsibilities of both agencies.

2) As a team, review the Shared Mutual Objectives between the school district and VR. Learn the separate responsibilities of each system. Identify commonalities and places where the systems can share responsibilities. Historically, the two shared mutual objectives under the YTP IGA listed below are points of joint responsibility between the school district and VR:

   a) To arrange for the provision of the following Pre-ETS activities:
      1. Job exploration counseling,
      2. Work-based learning experiences,
      3. Counseling on postsecondary education and transition services,
      4. Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and skills needed to develop independent learning,
      5. Instruction in self-advocacy.

   b) All students who are potentially eligible for VR services, without regard to the type of disability, are eligible for Pre-ETS. Applying for VR services is not a requirement before the delivery of Pre-ETS, and the delivery of Pre-ETS activities need not result in an application for VR services.
3) Provide individualized, enhanced, vocational transition activities and services to students with disabilities. At a minimum, this shall include the provision of Core YTP Activities to YTP caseload students.

4) Attend joint meetings, training events, and conferences as a team. These events provide space for teams to learn and collaborate. When the whole team attends, they receive the same information and can then take that information and work together to improve their program.

The formal roles and job descriptions are starting points. Specific components of the program will logically be assigned to either school or VR staff. Nevertheless, team members can share responsibilities in many ways to serve YTP students effectively.

- Identify the critical activities that must be accomplished (e.g., screening and referral to VR, job development, public relations activities) and then decide who will be responsible for each activity.
- Hold a team brainstorming session to identify the important activities that need to be accomplished and assign clear responsibilities for each team member.

Consider the strengths and interests of each team member as you assign responsibilities. Ideally, each staff member’s role will complement their personal and professional interests and abilities. For example, a TS who is a strong writer could take the lead in developing a marketing brochure for the program. A VRC who operates a weekly job club for adults could take the lead in conducting a weekly job club for students.

- Be flexible. Allow freedom to negotiate changes according to interests and strengths. Build a stronger team by taking the time to learn each team members’ interests and strengths.

Step 3: Meet Regularly as a Core Team

- Meet as a Core YTP team at least quarterly.
- Review site benchmarks and goals to see how many students have achieved competitive integrated employment or are in training or education programs.
- Review program data. The TS should share their progress notes with the VRC. (The TS and VRC should schedule a regular meeting day and time at least monthly. This meeting time might need to be more frequent — perhaps weekly — during the early phases of program implementation.)
- Meet virtually or in person. Regardless of how often you meet, avoid canceling a meeting. Discuss individual student progress, share information, and resolve any program management issues. Come to the meetings prepared with specific issues or concerns for discussion.
- Look at the outcomes being achieved by YTP.
- Briefly discuss each student currently active in the program.
- Give a quick update on what each student is doing (e.g., looking for a job, finishing school, working part-time, etc.) and determine any specific services that the student
needs.

- Schedule meetings with individual YTP students to develop individualized plan for employment goals and track progress.
- Use your YTP database detail report to review each YTP student.

**Step 4: Develop Strategies for Collecting Student Information and Tracking Progress**

Take advantage of the YTP system for program evaluation — collecting student data and documenting program outcomes — in the YTP database. Tracking student participation from application to YTP exit and YTP completion after 12 months of follow-up is a primary responsibility of the TS, with collaboration from the VRC.

Detailed information about collecting and tracking student data is provided in the section on program performance.

**Marketing YTP to School Staff, Community Agencies, and Employers**

Program management aims to infuse the new pattern of service created by YTP into the schools and thereby facilitate systems change. This goal focuses on marketing YTP within schools and communities. Marketing the program enhances services for students by building connections to existing programs and developing strategies to support YTP on an ongoing basis. The ultimate promotion goal is to create a viable transition program for a broad population of students. The promotion component of program management is accomplished through three basic steps:

1. Identify opportunities to coordinate YTP services with existing programs and resources.
2. Create new opportunities that maximize awareness of YTP.
3. Explore options for maintaining and expanding YTP.

**Step 1: Identify Opportunities To Coordinate with School and Community**

**Coordinate and integrate YTP services with existing programs.** The experiences students have in YTP should be integrated into the school and community, not separate from them. Look for and cultivate opportunities to collaborate with existing programs rather than reinventing programs and duplicating resources. Identify and collect information about complementary programs within the school and community. Existing programs provide opportunities to combine resources and create positive experiences for students.

As part of the transition planning process, information about existing resources might have already been identified. During that process, the goal was to gather information to provide services to individual students. Now is the time to think about performing those same activities to accomplish system change. The goal should be to build bridges between programs to increase their capacity to serve all students in transition.
Table 2.2 lists examples of programs that might already exist in your school and community. The TS can work to connect students with similar established programs.

**Table 2.2 Examples of Existing High School and Community-Based Programs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of Existing High School Programs/Activities</th>
<th>Examples of Existing Community-based Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Cooperative Work Experience Programs</td>
<td>• Employment-First Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Career Technical Education Programs</td>
<td>• Transition Network Facilitator Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School-Based Businesses</td>
<td>• Workforce Councils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Life Skills Classes</td>
<td>• Independent Living Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Career Center Activities</td>
<td>• Oregon Youth Conservation Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Career-related Learning Activities</td>
<td>• Community College Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• FFA Clubs</td>
<td>• Chambers of Commerce/Public Service Clubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Internship Programs</td>
<td>• Center on Brain Injury Research and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School Council</td>
<td>• Community Developmental Disabilities Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Transition Learning Center or Resource Room Classes</td>
<td>• Job Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Oregon Parent Training and Information Center</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Share information about **YTP with key stakeholders who serve transition-aged youth in the school and community.** Start by sharing information about YTP with staff from other transition programs. The YTP website ([https://ytp.uoregon.edu/](https://ytp.uoregon.edu/)) contains a multitude of resources to help raise awareness and market the program in schools and communities. Some of those resources are listed below:

- A brochure template to develop a personalized brochure describing YTP,
- Short video clips describing many aspects and benefits of YTP,
- A resource page for employment and other transition services,
- Archived materials from previous trainings.

**Determine opportunities for collaboration/cooperation.** Develop working relationships with existing transition programs by matching what is needed for YTP with other programs’ needs. For example, students need work opportunities, and short-term summer employment programs need workers. Summer presents an opportune time to collaborate with agencies. Many YTP sites refer students for pre-employment classes and paid job training through Youth Conservation Corps summer programs. Some YTP TSs have negotiated informal agreements by which YTP students are placed high on the recruitment list, and in exchange, the TS assists with on-the-job training and monitoring. Both programs benefit from these collaborative arrangements.
Step 2: Create New Opportunities To Maximize Awareness of YTP Services

**Develop a plan to promote YTP.** The YTP team should create a plan to market YTP based on its site’s unique needs and strengths. Consider consulting with the school district’s public relations representative. That person can help you determine who might be an appropriate community connection. Often, the district spokesperson can identify vital organizations. Booking a presentation to the school board, the Chamber of Commerce, or public service clubs will help create new networks and public support for YTP.

**Develop materials to promote YTP.** Materials can include a 1-page brochure or ½ page description that identifies the purposes and goals of YTP. Presentations created in software such as Power Point are also useful. Work with the district print shop to get business cards for the TS.

**Market the program within the school district and community.** Once materials are developed, begin outreach activities within the school and community. Determine team members’ responsibilities for marketing according to their strengths. One team member might be confident and enthusiastic about making face-to-face presentations about YTP. Another might feel more comfortable writing letters of introduction. Remember to market and create awareness within the parent community, as well. Host meet-and-greet events to inform families about the program, and coordinate outreach events with the local or state director charged with supporting parents of students with disabilities.

Step 3: Develop Strategies for Maintaining and Expanding YTP

Occasionally new school administrators, school and VR staff, and community members will need to learn about YTP, its purpose, and how it operates. These are opportunities to infuse new life and ideas into YTP to maintain and expand it. Remember to brag about successes.

**Develop administrative support for YTP.** Administrative support is crucial for ensuring long-term program success, which is why it is important to have an administrator on the YTP Core team. Administrative support within the school and VR systems is also vital. The Core team should provide information and develop relationships with building principals, district administrative staff, and school board members, as well as local VR branch managers and state VR administrators. These are key people who need to be informed about YTP services and student outcomes. With their support and vision, YTP can become a permanent resource for transitioning students.
Chapter 3: SCREENING, REFERRAL, AND ELIGIBILITY
Introduction

The Youth Transition Program (YTP) is one of many services provided by vocational rehabilitation (VR). VR is an eligibility-based program; therefore, YTP is an eligibility-based program. Students must apply for this service and meet specific eligibility criteria to receive YTP and other VR services. This chapter focuses on the screening and referral process that can lead to VR eligibility, which fulfills two important goals:

1. To determine which students are most likely to benefit from VR services to overcome their barriers to employment, and
2. To identify students eligible for VR services.

**Screening** is the informal process of determining whether students might be eligible for YTP services. It involves getting to know students, learning about their disabilities, and identifying their barrier(s) to employment to determine which students to refer to VR.

**Referral** is the formal process of submitting a student’s name and completed packet of basic information to a VR counselor (VRC).

**Eligibility determination** is the formal process by which the VRC decides whether a student meets the criteria to receive VR services.

The role of the transition specialist (TS) in a student’s journey from screening to eligibility is to complete or support the following steps:

**Step 1: Identify** a pool of students potentially eligible for YTP that mirrors the school or site population. Mirroring the population means that YTP participants reflect the diversity of disability category, gender, and race/ethnicity present in the school or district special education population as a whole.

Figure 3.0 General Questions and Considerations for YTP Participation

Figure 3.0 provides a visual example of mirroring the population. The larger circle represents the district’s high school population of students with disabilities. The smaller circle represents how YTP should reflect the same proportional diversity of students.

A potentially eligible student is one who has an IEP, 504 plan, or potentially undocumented disability, such as a mental or physical health condition that does not require a 504 plan or special education but could be a barrier to employment.

An eligible student is one who has a documented disability that is a barrier to employment and has been determined eligible for VR services.
To ensure that YTP is mirroring the school’s student population, consider these questions when screening potential YTP students:

- Does YTP serve students with disabilities proportionally?
- Does YTP serve all genders proportionally?
- Does YTP serve minorities proportionally?

**Step 2: Provide or coordinate** at least one pre-employment transition service (Pre-ETS) before a student applies to VR. Students can receive Pre-ETS without ever applying for VR services. More information on Pre-ETS is provided in Chapter 4: YTP Services.

**Step 3: Collect and review** screening information and disability documentation for identified students.

**Step 4: Connect** eligible and potentially eligible students with VR. Help eligible and potentially eligible students apply for VR services. Schedule an intake meeting.

**Step 5: Assist** the VRC with identifying, locating, and gathering any additional information needed to determine eligibility for VR services.

After the TS has completed (or helped students complete) those five steps, the VRC will determine eligibility. At the end of process, the VRC unilaterally determines whether a student is eligible or ineligible for VR services based on the information provided.

The remainder of this chapter outlines the processes and strategies for screening students, referring students to VR, and completing the eligibility process (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the steps of the YTP screening, referral, and eligibility process. It describes the roles that the transition specialist and VRC play in this process.
Figure 3.1 Overview of the YTP Screening, Referral, and Eligibility Process

Step 1 • Identify a pool of eligible or potentially eligible students for YTP services.

Step 2 • Provide or coordinate at least one Pre-ETS before applying to VR.

Step 3 • Collect and review screening information.

Step 4 • Staff potentially eligible students with VRC.

Step 5 • Intake meeting for student to sign VR application.

Step 6 • VR counselor determines eligibility for VR

Student is eligible and receives YTP services.

Student is ineligible and should be connected to other services.
Screening

*Screening* is an informal process for determining which students might be eligible for YTP services. It involves getting to know students, learning about their disabilities, and identifying their barriers to employment.

**Step 1: Identify a Pool of Students Potentially Eligible for YTP Services**

Figure 3.2 shows how the pool of potentially eligible students starts with all students, including those who do not have an identified disability. The TS can identify potentially eligible students by spending time in classes and getting to know students. Sometimes, a student can have a qualifying disability without having a 504 plan or IEP. The next layer includes the students that the TS has identified as eligible for Pre-ETS. It is important to consider students who receive services from a 504 plan because they are sometimes overlooked. The TS will identify the screening pool for YTP services out of those students eligible for Pre-ETS. These students are potentially eligible and want help finding or keeping a job. From that pool, the students who are interested and ready to apply for VR services might go on to become YTP participants, who are VR clients, entered into the YTP database, and receive one year of follow-up upon leaving YTP.

**Figure 3.2: Pool of Students Potentially Eligible for YTP Services**

- All students in the school
- Eligible for Pre-ETS
  - Has an IEP/504 Plan or is potentially eligible
- Screening Pool for YTP
  - Wants help getting or keeping a job and has a disability
- YTP Participants
Strategies for identifying a pool of students include:

- Asking special education teachers or IEP or 504 case managers to recommend students who meet the considerations listed in Table 3.1,
- Sharing information about YTP at faculty meetings and requesting the names of potentially eligible students,
- Asking the guidance counselor for a list of students who recently dropped out of school,
- Requesting recommendations from the principal of an alternative school,
- Asking students if they are interested in services that could help them get and keep a job or receive training and education.

Recommendations for students who might participate in YTP can thus come from various sources. A recommendation is just a suggestion that a student might be eligible to participate in YTP. Referring a student to YTP is a formal process that requires the student to be found eligible for a VRC’s services.

Table 3.1 lists general things to consider and not consider when determining whether to include a student in the pool for YTP services.

**Table 3.1 General Questions and Considerations for YTP Participation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Things To Consider</th>
<th>Things Not To Consider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the student have a clear desire to work?</td>
<td>A particular age or grade group (e.g., only working with seniors or 17-year-olds).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the student have a barrier to employment that requires VR services because of a diagnosed, documented, or undocumented disability?</td>
<td>The student’s disability category (e.g., only students with a specific learning disability).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the student between the ages of 14 and 22?</td>
<td>The student’s identified diploma options (e.g., only working with students who have a regular or modified diploma).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the student leave school within the next two years (e.g., currently a junior or senior)?</td>
<td>Whether the student has left school (i.e., dropped out). Note: Consult the school administration policies when working with unenrolled students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the student at-risk of dropping out of school?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the student have a support network (family, friends, or school personnel)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Recommendation a student to YTP is not the same as referring a student to YTP or VR. A recommendation is just a suggestion, not a commitment to services.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Things To Consider</th>
<th>Things Not To Consider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Has the student demonstrated a desire for help (e.g., are they involved, and do they follow through with requests)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does the population of YTP students mirror the demographics of the overall special education census for the school or school district?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 2: Provide or Coordinate at Least One Pre-ETS Before Applying to VR**

Pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) are a group of five services required under the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA 2014). In collaboration with local education agencies, VR shall provide or arrange for the provision of Pre-ETS for all eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities. VR-provided enhanced transition services do not reduce the responsibility of local educational agencies under IDEA. Delivery of Pre-ETS activities does not need to result in an application for VR services. However, for a student to qualify for Core YTP services, one Pre-ETS must be delivered before VR intake may occur. Pre-ETS activities can help the TS and school districts recruit and recommend appropriate students for Core YTP activities. The Pre-ETS must be delivered by someone connected with VR (e.g., TS, VRC, technical network facilitator, Pre-ETS coordinator) to be added to the Pre-ETS database.

The five Pre-ETS are:

1. **Job exploration counseling** - a wide variety of professional activities which help individuals with career-related issues. Examples include: Oregon Career Information Systems (CIS); Vocational Interest Inventories; Career Speakers.

2. **Work-based learning experiences** - in school, after school, or internship opportunities to work. These experiences can be paid or unpaid. Examples include: Job Shadowing/Workplace tours; Paid/Non-Paid work experience; School Business Activities.

3. **Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs** - understanding the difference between high school and college, utilizing accommodations, exploring career pathways and levels of education. Examples include: Financial Aid options; Attend College Fairs and Tours; Connect with Disability Resource Centers; Access services from Intellectual Disability (ID)/Developmental Disability (DD) Support Agencies.

4. **Workplace readiness training** — teaching skills that employers commonly expect from most employees. Examples: independent living skills, social/interpersonal skills, mock interviews, resume writing.
5. **Instruction in self-advocacy** — teaching effective communication skills, including how to convey, negotiate, or assert one’s interests and desires. Examples: setting goals, disability disclosure, problem solving.

**Step 3: Collect and Review Screening Information and Disability Documentation**

Once the student pool is identified, the TS can begin screening students to determine which ones are appropriate to refer to VR for YTP services. The screening process helps the TS learn which students want to work, where they want to work, who needs help accomplishing their employment goals, and who is responsive and responsible. These questions are answered by gathering information formally and informally.

Informally, the TS gets to know students by talking to them, observing them around the school (classes, hallways, or other environments), and talking with other school personnel. More formally, the TS reads the IEP or other school records and attends IEP meetings where postsecondary goals are discussed. In those meetings, the TS can educate the IEP team about postsecondary education and employment opportunities for students. These activities provide an opportunity for the TS to learn about students’ preferences, interests, needs, and strengths, as well as their employment goals.

Students who do not meet most of the criteria listed in Things to Consider (Table 3.1, column 1) are screened out of the student pool, even though they might still be eligible for VR. The TS can reconsider those students when they are older or if their situation changes.

Students who do meet the criteria listed in Things to Consider (Table 3.1, column 1) are kept in the student pool. The TS begins compiling a packet of information for each of those students. It might be necessary to conduct screening activities to collect the basic information needed to refer students to VR or make an eligibility determination. Examples of screening activities are:

- Conducting an age-appropriate transition assessment,
- Summarizing previous work experience,
- Exploring occupational interests,
- Conducting transition interviews,
- Participating in Discovery,
- Engaging in other activities that allow the TS and VRC to get to know the students.

---

**Age-Appropriate Transition Assessment**

Ongoing process for collecting data about an individual student’s preferences, needs, strengths, and interests as they relate to the demands of current and future working, educational, living, personal, and social environments.

**Discovery**

Formal exploration process used for students with significant support needs and conducted by VR or developmental disability services.
The information collected during the screening process is shared informally with VRCs to assess whether students are ready to participate in YTP. The TS works with the VRC to decide what information is needed to determine a student’s eligibility. A basic information packet will contain:

- A cover sheet,
- Student history,
- School records (e.g., IEP, transcripts, behavioral file, attendance records),
- Functional limitations checklist,
- Summary of available formal and informal testing information,
- Documentation that the student received at least one pre-ETS before signing the application.

Table 3.2 shows the questions driving eligibility determination, the information the TS should collect to determine eligibility, and possible resources for locating that information. The questions are answered and documented in each individual’s VR file and individualized plan for employment (IPE).

Table 3.2 Questions Driving Eligibility Determination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions Driving Eligibility Determination</th>
<th>Information the Transition Specialist Should Collect</th>
<th>Possible Resources for Locating Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you have consent to involve VR? Has the student or family requested a Pre-ETS?</td>
<td>Signed consent form</td>
<td>Parent/family for youth age 17 or younger; youth themselves when they are age 18 or older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Signed release of information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the student have a diagnosed disability? What assessments were used to determine eligibility for special education?</td>
<td>Educational testing</td>
<td>Student’s special education file</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medical documentation</td>
<td>Student’s special education file, family physician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statewide testing results</td>
<td>Student’s special education file</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work assessment</td>
<td>Progress notes, age-appropriate transition assessment, IEP, student’s special education file</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological testing</td>
<td>Student’s special education file</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions Driving Eligibility Determination</td>
<td>Information the Transition Specialist Should Collect</td>
<td>Possible Resources for Locating Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the disability a significant barrier to employment?</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Speech/language pathologist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does the student’s disability affect their ability to work?</td>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
<td>Teacher interviews about social skills, friendships, taking constructive criticism, ability to work in teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>Physical therapist, occupational therapist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-care</td>
<td>Occupational therapist, teacher interviews about organizational skills, decision making, impulsivity, hygiene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-direction</td>
<td>Teacher interviews about following directions, homework completion, generalizing learned behaviors from one environment to another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work skills</td>
<td>Teacher interviews about use of time, tardiness, absenteeism, initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work tolerance</td>
<td>Student’s special education file regarding length of the school day, absenteeism, relationships to teachers and other authority figures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Does the student require substantial VR services to overcome barriers to employment?

- Strategies or mechanisms that allow the student to overcome the barrier to employment created by their disability.
- Accommodations and barriers identified in the IEP as well as observation and discussions with the student.

All of those activities should be completed before the student is referred to VR for an intake.

Refer to the VR/YTP Notebook on the YTP website for a complete list of activities.

**Step 4: Refer Potentially Eligible Students to VR**

*Referral* is the formal process of submitting a student’s name and completed packets of basic information to a VRC.

Making a referral involves a formal intake meeting with the VRC, student, TS, and (if appropriate) families, along with any other relevant individuals (e.g., a service provider...
from another agency, a caseworker for a student in foster care, etc.). The TS and VRC should work together to determine a time and location convenient for everyone.

At the intake meeting, the VRC:

- Reviews the basic information collected by the TS during the screening process,
- Describes the services that can and cannot be provided to the student through VR,
- Identifies whether additional information is needed to determine eligibility.

If the student is interested in services, they sign an application form formally indicating that they want to become a VR student. That places the student “in application.”

The date on which a student is entered into the YTP database as an official part of the contracted cohort must be the same as the date that student (or their guardian) signed the application for VR. To minimize the referral of ineligible students, the VRC and TS should be in regular communication and agree about what is needed for eligibility.

The eligibility determination will not be made at the intake meeting. The VRC has 60 days to make that decision after reviewing the complete referral packet. Usually, eligibility determination is completed much more quickly than that because the information has already been collected by the TS during the initial screening. However, it might be necessary to conduct additional assessments or collect further information.

The TS should stay in close contact with the VRC to help obtain any additional information that is needed.

Rehabilitation law requires that the determination of eligibility begin with existing data provided by the individuals with a disability or their families or advocates. The VRC can also use information from educational agencies, including any existing testing data completed by school psychologists or other credentialed evaluators, social security information, or reports from physicians. Additional assessments can be requested to determine eligibility if existing data are outdated or unavailable. The TS can help a student get a new evaluation by (a) letting parents and the student know what is needed and where to get the evaluation, (b) scheduling the appointment, and (c) transporting the student to the appointment. The VRC uses the documentation to answer the following questions:

- Does the applicant have a diagnosed disability?
- Is there a significant barrier to employment?
- Does the student require substantial VR services to overcome the barrier?
- If services are provided, will it result in competitive integrated employment?

Step 5: Assist Students with VR Application Process

During this step, the TS helps the student and their family complete the application paperwork, schedule and attend the intake meeting with the VRC, if they are not able to do so independently.
Step 6: Wait for the VRC To Determine Eligibility

*Eligibility determination* is the formal process by which the VRC determines whether a student meets the criteria to receive VR services.

The VR counselor must establish eligibility for VR services based on the information provided. To be eligible for VR in Oregon, a student must:

- have a physical or mental condition that causes a “substantial impediment” to their ability to work,
- be able to benefit from VR services so that they can get a job,
- have received at least one Pre-ETS.

**Eligibility is not a team decision.** Only the VRC can determine whether a student is eligible for VR services. After determining a student’s eligibility for VR services, the VR counselor has 90 days to develop an IPE. The IPE lists all the services provided by VR that the student will receive to help them obtain competitive integrated employment.

**NOTE:** After the IPE has been written is an excellent time to incorporate a coordinated set of transition services into the IEP and align them with the IPE. The school can probably teach the student skills and provide activities and services that will help them get competitive integrated employment, and they should all be indicated in the IEP. The VR process might identify adult services in the IPE that should also be addressed in the educational process and documented in the IEP.
Figure 3.2 YTP Screening, Referral, and Eligibility Processes and Timelines

Student goes through screening and referral

VR intake meeting

Student signs application form for VR

Determine eligibility

Student found *INELIGIBLE* for VR

TS and VRC provide information and referrals to other agencies

Develop IPE

Provide CORE YTP services

VR closes the VR file as a successful rehabilitation

12 months of follow-up

Exit YTP Services

YTP completion

Continue YTP services

Exit YTP services

Continue YTP services

VR closes the VR file as “other”

Student found *ELIGIBLE* for VR

90 days

60 days

90 days

TS and VRC provide information and referrals to other agencies
TABLE 3.3 Essential Features of Screening, Referral, and Eligibility

1. **INFORMED CHOICES ABOUT SERVICES:**
   Possible YTP students and their parents are given information (verbal or written) about YTP and VR so that they can make an informed choice about their participation.

2. **INITIAL SCREENING DECISIONS:**
   Screening information, including school records, information on functional limitations, existing evaluation/assessment data, and work history information, is collected for potential YTP students. This information allows the YTP team (VRC and school staff) to make joint decisions about which students are most likely to benefit from YTP/VR services.

3. **ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION PROCESS:**
   School and VR staff work together to support students and families during the VR eligibility determination process.

4. **ONGOING COLLABORATION:**
   Implementation of the YTP screening and referral process continues to improve services for students in transition by streamlining the school-to-VR referral and eligibility determination processes.

5. **SYSTEM CHANGE:**
   School and VR staff work together to coordinate the IEP and IPE, bringing functional limitation language into the special-education transition IEP process, along with age-appropriate transition assessments, measurable postsecondary goals, and the summary of performance.

6. **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT:**
   Because families are involved in the IEP process, a family vision for the future of the young adult engaged in YTP must be developed. That vision should include work as one of the components. Using IEP discussion starters can facilitate this process. Events such as family information nights and transition fairs enhance families’ ability to see what is possible in the future.
Chapter 4: YOUTH TRANSITION
PROGRAM SERVICES
Introduction

As stipulated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), all students with disabilities must address transition in their IEP when they turn 16 years old or sooner. Students who continue to require services beyond high school often experience a gap in services as they transition to adult services (Figure 4.1). The intent of transition services is to bridge that gap in services between the school and community, and the Youth Transition Program (YTP) is one way to fulfill that intent (Figure 4.2). Some students need additional help and more intensive services than others to meet their postsecondary goals. YTP provides a mechanism for developing collaborative services between the school district and vocational rehabilitation (VR), as one adult service agency; other agencies might also need to be involved to serve particular students. Students are best served when they, their family, the school, and agency representatives are all involved together in planning (Figure 4.3).
To support their transition, YTP participants can receive two types of services: (a) pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS), and (b) Core YTP activities.

Pre-Employment Transition Services

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires VR agencies to set aside at least 15% of their federal funds to provide Pre-ETS to "students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services." In Oregon, some of those funds have been used to increase the statewide YTP budget to include the delivery of Pre-ETS through YTP sites. Providing Pre-ETS to potentially eligible students who request them is within the transition specialist (TS)’s scope of work.

Pre-ETS and IDEA Transition Services

Under IDEA, schools must provide transition services to all students on an IEP. WIOA requires the delivery of the five Pre-ETS described below upon student request. These two separate laws do have some overlap between the services provided to students. For this reason, it is crucial that teachers and the TS understand the differences and similarities.

As described in Chapter 1: IDEA Transition Services, IDEA requires that every student who has an IEP receive transition services, either as specially designated instruction or related services.
Under WIOA, potentially eligible students may request and receive Pre-ETS. To be eligible for Pre-ETS a student must:

- Be between the ages of 14 and 21,
- Be eligible for special education or related services, have a Section 504 plan, or have a documented disability, and
- Be enrolled in secondary school or a postsecondary education program.

The agreement between each YTP site and VR includes the delivery of Pre-ETS. The TS reaches out to potentially eligible students to inform them about Pre-ETS and deliver services, if requested. The TS is also required to provide Pre-ETS when requested. Any formal request made by a student in a YTP school will be given to the technical assistance provider (TAP), who will share it with the TS and provide guidance as needed.

VR policy requires that each student be given information about the Client Assistance Program (CAP) when Pre-ETSs are requested. CAP, provided by Disability Rights Oregon, aims to expand job opportunities and independent living for people with disabilities. They offer advice and tools that can be used to protect and the assert student’s rights and advocacy related to VR services in Oregon. Oregon CAP information can be found on their website. Brochures may be available through your local VR office.

Pre-ETS must be delivered or coordinated by a TS paid under the YTP contract to be recorded in the Pre-ETS database. If the TS works only part-time in their YTP role and has another part-time assignment with the school, services delivered during their non-YTP hours cannot be counted as Pre-ETS and should be considered an IDEA transition service.

**YTP and Pre-ETS**

A TS can become involved in delivering Pre-ETSs in two ways. The first and most common way is by screening and delivering services to the school’s general population of potentially eligible students. The second is through a formal request submitted to the state. If a formal request for a Pre-ETS is submitted for or by a student in a YTP school, that school’s TAP will inform the TS, sharing the information that was submitted in the request. The TS is then required to reach out to the person who submitted the request, touch base with the student, and make a plan for the delivery of the Pre-ETS. It’s good to remember that Pre-ETS are time-limited services that can be accomplished in many ways (in groups, individually, across multiple settings), so the plan to deliver a Pre-ETS can take into account the larger context of the school’s activities and the TS’s schedule. When a formal request for Pre-ETS is received, the services cannot be denied; a plan to deliver the service must be made and communicated with the student and their family. Once the service has been provided, it is documented in the Pre-ETS database.
Pre-ETS are woven throughout a student’s YTP experience. They can help the TS get to know the student. In the early stage, a Pre-ETS:

- Lays the foundation for a student’s future by increasing their general career awareness.
- Prepares the student to develop the soft and specific skills needed to succeed in their chosen career path.
- Serves as an assessment by which the TS can identify students for potential participation in Core YTP services.
- Allows the TS to gauge and work to improve a student’s motivation and willingness to follow through.

Once a student enters VR services and an individualized plan for employment (IPE) is developed, Pre-ETS can be identified as services that help them toward employment in their goal area. Whereas the initial Pre-ETS might have been general, the Core YTP services will focus on the needs of each particular student.

On rare occasions, a student might need additional support after completing the YTP process and year of follow-up services. As long as the youth is still enrolled in school, Pre-ETS can help them should they find themselves in need of support to maintain or change their employment.

The 5 Pre-ETS

WIOA identifies five specific areas of service as Pre-ETS. These descriptions have been adapted from the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center website.

1. **Job Exploration Counseling**

Job exploration counseling or career counseling can include a wide variety of professional activities that help students with career-related issues. Career counseling is offered in various settings, including in groups, individually, in person, and virtually.

Job exploration counseling is intended to foster motivation, consideration of opportunities, and informed decision-making. Specific to youth, real-world activities ensure that students recognize the relevance of a high school and post-school education to their futures, both in college and the workplace. Job exploration counseling activities can be done in conjunction with private, for-profit, public, or non-profit businesses in the community or using web-based resources.

Job exploration counseling can include discussion or information about:

- The student’s vocational interest inventory results,
- The labor market,
- In-demand industries and occupations,
- Non-traditional employment options,
• The administration of vocational interest inventories,
• Career pathways of interest to the student.

Discussion or counseling about the results of those activities can help identify viable career options or solidify careers that students want to explore further.

Other job exploration activities can include:

• **Career Awareness**
  The career awareness phase of career development planning helps students understand how personal work-related values apply to work opportunities. Developing career awareness means gaining knowledge about career paths and job opportunities and the skills and qualifications the student will need to succeed in them.

• **Career Speakers**
  Career speakers provide an overview about a specific job or career area. The speaker typically presents to a class, large group, or small group of students for a short time. Artifacts or photos can be used to enhance the presentation. These sessions are typically informative, motivational, and provide recommendations for additional career exploration activities.

2. **Work-Based Learning Experiences (WBLEs)**

WBLEs can be in-school or after school opportunities or experiences outside the traditional school setting, including internships, and they are provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible.

Work-based learning (WBL) is an educational approach or instructional method that uses a workplace or actual work to provide students with the knowledge and skills they need to connect their school experiences to real-life work activities and future career opportunities. Direct employer or community involvement must be a component of WBL to ensure in-depth student engagement. These opportunities are meant to engage, motivate, and augment the learning process. WBL opportunities can be done in conjunction with private, for-profit, public, or non-profit businesses in the community. In addition, WBL requires in-depth engagement from youth and an evaluation of the work-relevant skills they acquire. Where paid WBLEs are provided, the wages must be no less than minimum wage.

Common WBLEs include:

• **Job shadowing**, a popular on-the-job learning, career development, and leadership development intervention. Job shadowing involves working with employees who have various jobs and something to teach or who can help the person shadowing them learn about new aspects of a job, organization, certain behaviors, or competencies.

• **Career mentorship**, in which a mentor teaches or provides guidance and advice to a less-experienced and often younger person.
- **Career-related competitions**, WBL activities that require students to demonstrate their mastery of career-related skills through presentations or competitions judged by professionals. The presentations are the culmination of students’ efforts over time, often involving teamwork. Career technical student organizations sponsor such competitions in the fields of agriculture, business, health, hospitality, and industrial technology.

- **Informational interviews**, informal conversations with someone working in a career area/job of interest who provides information and advice. They are an effective research tool, along with reading books, exploring the Internet, and examining job descriptions. They are not job interviews, and the objective is not to find job openings. The objective is for the student to be able to ask questions and gain a better understanding of what a career area/job of interest entails.

- **Internships**, temporary positions that emphasize on-the-job training rather than employment and can be paid or unpaid. An internship is an opportunity to develop specific job-related skills before becoming qualified for an actual job.

- **Practicum**, a course of study devoted to practical training in the field, where supervision is provided. It usually applies to a specialized field of study.

- **Service-learning**, an activity that integrates meaningful community service with classroom instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

- **Student-led enterprises** produce goods or services for sale or use by people other than the participating students.

- **Simulated workplace experiences** simulate work environments in any field. Examples include automotive or construction programs in which sustained industry involvement allows students to develop and apply their skills in the context of industry standards and expectations.

- **Work experience** allows students to explore careers and understand the nature of work through first-hand exposure to a workplace. Students may or may not be paid.
  - **Paid work experience** can be general or vocational, focusing respectively on general workplace skills or career preparation activities within a specific industry or career area.
  - **Unpaid work experience** is exploratory, and its intent is to expose students to a variety of occupations and build basic workplace competence.

- **Volunteers** donate their time or efforts for a cause or organization without being paid. It can be a one-time activity or ongoing commitment and should directly or indirectly benefit people outside the family or household or else benefit a cause (although the volunteer usually benefits as well). Most volunteer sites are run by non-profit organizations.

- **Workplace tours/field trips**, a group excursion for first-hand observation of
specific worksites. Students learn about the business, meet employees, ask questions, and observe work in progress.

3. **Counseling About Opportunities for Enrollment in Comprehensive Transition or Postsecondary Educational Programs**

Choosing a career requires a student to explore and plan. It is important that the student connect their present to their future. They need to see how skill development and knowledge relate to future opportunities in postsecondary education (PSE) and employment.

Maximum flexibility in the career decision-making process is important in the early phases of PSE planning. This includes gaining an awareness of a wide range of career pathway options and labor market realities and projections. Many times, a student is unaware of the abundance of opportunities for transition or PSE. When delivering this Pre-ETS, it is important to be aware of the options available.

It is essential that students receive information and guidance on a variety of PSE and training opportunities, such as:

- Community colleges (AA/AS degrees, certificate programs, and classes),
- Universities (public and private),
- Career-pathway-related workshops/training programs,
- Trade/technical schools,
- Military,
- Postsecondary programs at community colleges and universities for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Career clusters are a useful starting place when delivering this Pre-ETS. The U.S. Department of Labor has created clusters of careers to help schools provide instruction and monitor students’ experiences. The 16 broad categories encompass virtually all occupations from entry through professional levels, including those that require varying degrees of education and training, as exemplified by the sample careers within each cluster. A web search for career clusters will produce a wealth of resources.

**Strategies for a Smooth Transition from High School to PSE**

The goal of this Pre-ETS is to help the student connect with postsecondary opportunities that interest them. The role of the TS is to support the student in transitioning from high school to PSE. Some actions a TS can take to support a student in reaching this goal include:

- document academic accommodations,
- advocate for needed accommodations and services,
- identify interests, abilities, talents, needs, learning style preferences, and goals,
- promote the use of executive function skills,
- assist with research into career and PSE options,
• promote participation in PSE preparation classes,
• provide students with PSE resources/services/websites,
• promote the use of self-advocacy skills,
• assist with the application/enrollment process,
• identify financial aid options,
• provide career vocational assessments,
• be familiar with education and vocational laws,
• identify technology needs,
• identify admission test accommodations,
• attend college fairs and tours,
• facilitate applications for VR services, if eligible,
• provide PSE information to family members,
• facilitate access to services and supports from developmental/intellectual disability service agencies, if eligible.

**Accommodations Available in PSE**

Remember that PSE does not fall under IDEA mandates, but students can still receive accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It is important that the TS understand the accommodations available in PSE so that they can help students access them.

The ADA (1990) upholds and extends the nondiscrimination mandates set forth in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. These mandates apply to both public and private colleges and universities, regardless of their receipt of federal financial assistance, but they do contain exceptions for private clubs and religious entities.

It is essential to the PSE planning process that the TS teach the student about the special departments and supports available at the PSE institutions of their choice. College tours should include a visit to the office that oversees the provision of disability services and supports whenever possible. That office has various names (Special Services, Student Services, Disabled Student Services, Disability Support Services, etc.) depending on the PSE site. It is important to note that services vary by site and should be investigated as part of the fact-finding efforts in deciding on a PSE institution.

To receive accommodations as a student with a disability, the student must identify themselves as having a disability. To ensure the provision of appropriate services, they must present current and comprehensive documentation to the relevant Disability support service office. It is also important for them to be aware of and understand the college’s privacy or confidentiality policies. Generally, these records are covered under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the federal law that protects the privacy of student education records.

**Summary of Performance (SOP):** To promote easier access to needed supports after
school exit, students should leave the secondary school system with a summary of performance (SOP), as required under IDEA. The language regarding the SOP in IDEA 2004 is as follows: For a youth whose eligibility under special education terminates due to graduation with a regular diploma or exceeding the age of eligibility, the local education agency "shall provide the child with a summary of the child's academic achievement and functional performance, which shall include recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child's postsecondary goals" §Sec. 300.305(e)(3). With the accompanying documentation, the SOP is important in helping a student transition from high school to higher education, training, or employment. This information is also necessary under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA to establish the student’s eligibility for reasonable accommodations and supports in postsecondary settings. Providing information about the student’s current level of functioning is intended to help agencies and postsecondary institutions consider accommodations for access.

4. **Workplace Readiness Training**

Workplace readiness training is designed to equip students with the set of skills and behaviors necessary for any job. Workplace readiness skills are sometimes called soft skills, employability skills, or job readiness skills.

These skills help employees interact successfully with supervisors and co-workers, reinforce the importance of timeliness, and help the student understand how others perceive them. All employers value employees who can communicate effectively and act professionally.

The role of the TS is to explicitly teach the student these skills, communicate why they are important, and assess each student’s mastery of them.

**Specific workplace readiness social skills:**

- Communication,
- Positive attitude,
- Teamwork,
- Problem-solving,
- Cooperation,
- Active listening,
- Decision making,
- Conflict resolution,
- Body language,
- Empathy,
- Professionalism,
- Good manners,
- Supporting other

Another important aspect of workplace readiness training is independent living skills, which will allow the student to be a dependable and healthy employee. It is important for the TS to include independent living skills in workplace readiness training.
Specific workplace readiness skills related to independent livings skill.

- Good hygiene,
- Time management,
- Healthy lifestyle,
- Using a cell phone,
- Using transportation,
- Money management,
- Nutrition/meal preparation,
- Accessing community services & supports,
- Community participation,
- Civic responsibility,
- Community safety,
- Developing friendships,
- Appropriate dress,
- Appropriate behavior

Other training areas:

- Financial literacy,
- Orientation and mobility skills,
- Job-seeking skills,
- Understanding employer expectations for punctuality and performance.

These types of services may be provided through instruction or other activities during which the student can learn and apply knowledge.

5. Instruction in Self-advocacy

Self-advocacy describes an individual's ability to effectively communicate, convey, negotiate, or assert their interests and desires. It means taking responsibility for straightforwardly communicating one's needs and desires to others. The development of self-advocacy skills should begin at an early age because they will be needed in education, workplace, and community settings.

The TS can play a vital role in a helping student develop self-advocacy by helping them identify their interests and desires. They can provide guidance or scripts on how to communicate needs and desires clearly.

The Learning Disabilities Association of America provides tips on becoming an effective self-advocate in the workplace.

Specific workplace readiness skills related to self-advocacy:

- Self-awareness,
- Disability understanding,
- Disability disclosure,
- Decision making,
- Setting goals,
- Evaluating options,
- Identifying independence,
- Requesting and using accommodations,
- Knowing one's rights and responsibilities,
- Self-determination,
• Knowing how to request and accept help,
• Intrinsic motivation,
• Taking a leadership role,
• Planning,

• Assertiveness,
• Listening to others’ opinions,
• Problem-solving,
• Monitoring progress,
• Positive self-talk

**Self-determination**

Self-determination reflects the belief that all individuals have the right to direct their own lives. Individuals with disabilities have the same freedom to plan their own lives, pursue the things that are important to them, and experience life opportunities as other people in their communities. A student with self-determination skills has a stronger chance than others of successfully making the transition to adulthood, including employment and independence. The student must be prepared to participate in planning for their future to accomplish their goals.

**Accommodations**

Employers are required to provide reasonable accommodations to employees under ADA. A *reasonable accommodation* is any change to the application or hiring process, the job, the way the job is done, or the work environment that allows a person with a disability who is qualified for the job to perform the essential functions of that job and enjoy equal employment opportunities. Accommodations are considered “reasonable” if they do not create an undue hardship or direct threat.

Information about accommodations is available through many disability organizations. For example, the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) (askjan.org) has qualified people to help job seekers and employers find the best accommodation solutions. JAN provides free one-on-one guidance on job accommodation solutions, Title I of the ADA and related legislation, and self-employment and entrepreneurship options for people with disabilities.

**Peer Mentoring**

Peer mentoring is a process through which a more experienced individual encourages and assists a less experienced individual in developing their potential within a shared area of interest. The resulting relationship is a reciprocal one in that both individuals in the partnership have an opportunity for growth and development. Peers are individuals who share some common characteristics or circumstances such as age, ability, or interests. Peer mentors are individuals who have more experience than their mentees within those common areas and additional training in how to assist another in acquiring skills, knowledge, and attitudes.

The TS can create peer mentoring connections and opportunities, which is a great way to build a vibrant community among students. It allows the mentor to gain leadership
skills and self-confidence while providing the mentee with peer support.

When identifying potential mentors, the following factors should be considered:

- Ability to pass a background check,
- Expertise in a particular career area or occupation,
- Flexible strategies to provide support,
- Good people skills,
- Enthusiasm,
- Ability to identify potential problems and find solutions,
- Ability to provide constructive evaluation and feedback to nurture learning,
- Perception of possible benefits of mentoring.

Mentoring relationships can help students (a) stay in school, (b) develop positive self-esteem, and (c) identify realistic career and academic goals. Mentoring is especially effective in helping youth with disabilities transition into the workplace and adulthood.

Is It Pre-ETS?

Determining whether an activity is a Pre-ETS activity or an IDEA transition activity can be challenging. If it is a Pre-ETS activity, it must be documented in the Pre-ETS database. To record and track an activity as a Pre-ETS, one of the following conditions must be met:

1) **VR delivered** the Pre-ETS under a coordinated service or purchase agreement. Note: YTP is a purchase agreement under contract. If the TS is delivering Pre-ETSs, they should document the work in the database.

2) **VR coordinated** the services. For example, a TS invited a public speaker to lead a class in a lesson about one of the Pre-ETS. This would be a Pre-ETS that should be documented in the database.

3) **VR funded** a service that created access to a Pre-ETS. VR might have funded a service in part or in whole, such as Camp Leadership | Empowerment | Advocacy | Development (Camp LEAD), summer work experiences, or a school-based business accessed by more than YTP students. Data should be entered for all potentially eligible students who participate in these Pre-ETS activities. If VR funds are being used to serve a youth with a disability, document the service as a Pre-ETS.

The “Yes” test (Figure 4.4) helps determine whether an activity should be documented. If the answers to these three questions are “Yes,” then a Pre-ETS has been delivered and should be documented.
Figure 4.4 Pre-ETS Yes Test

If Yes
• Did the student request the Pre-ETS Service?

If Yes
• Is the student potentially eligible for VR services?

If Yes
• Was the activity delivered, coordinated, or funded in part or whole with VR funds? (i.e. YTP, TS, VRC)

If a service is provided only as part of IDEA services and no VR influence is involved, do not record these services in the Pre-ETS database.
Core YTP Services

Core YTP activities are transition services above and beyond IDEA transition services provided by the TS to students who are eligible for VR services. These activities provide a focused, collaborative experience to help students meet their postsecondary employment goals. The Core YTP activities are:

a) identifying and referring students with disabilities who are interested in employment to VR,
b) using motivational interviewing to elicit personal motivations for development and change,
c) developing an IPE and IEP focused on postsecondary employment goals,
d) providing instruction in vocational and related independent living and social skills,
e) providing career development activities, including exposure and connection to paid employment,
f) providing information and referrals to other vocational assistance sources, including Work Incentives Planning,
g) providing follow-up support for one year after students exit YTP.

While students are in high school, educators, support staff, and service providers all help them prepare for further education, employment, and independent living. After students with disabilities leave high school, they have an array of options and adult service agencies in the community that can assist them. However, for students to move from high school to adult life seamlessly, the schools must work collaboratively with those adult agencies, such as VR, mental health agencies, and brokerages, to plan for and provide services. IDEA makes it clear that the school district has the primary responsibility for providing transition services. Interagency collaboration is encouraged through the language of the statute and regulations.

An IPE is developed for each student who receives VR services. Ideally, the IPE is aligned with the transition services in the student’s IEP to ensure that services are consistent and complementary to each other.

When an IPE is developed through YTP, focus on the following:

• Collaborate with the student to focus on their future.
• Some adult service agencies can provide support before the student leaves high school.
• Early coordination between education and VR providers prevents a gap in services between high school and adult life.

Motivational Interviewing

Motivational interviewing is a collaborative, goal-oriented method of communication that pays attention to the language of change. It is designed to strengthen an individual’s motivation for and movement toward a specific goal by eliciting and exploring the person’s own reasons for changing.
• Coordinate wraparound services to provide a wide range of support for YTP students to ensure their success in and after high school.

Developing the IPE

The IPE documents the services that VR will provide for a student to get and maintain a job. The IPE is developed collaboratively based on the student’s employment goals. Services in the IPE are based on the information collected to determine eligibility and a conversation with the TS, the student, and their family. Although the VR counselor (VRC) is responsible for writing the IPE, determining the IPE services should be done collaboratively. One way to develop the IPE is to meet as a team:

• The TS arranges to meet with the VRC, student, their family (as appropriate), and (when possible) the special educator.

• At the beginning of the meeting, the team members introduce themselves and explain their roles in the transition process. The VRC briefly explains the purpose of the meeting and explains that the whole team will work together to accomplish it.

• The transition components (e.g., preferences, interests, needs, and strengths (PINS), postsecondary goals, annual goals) of the student’s IEP are reviewed. This review allows the student to demonstrate and practice self-advocacy and self-determination skills by talking about their PINS. It is an opportunity for them to describe their life goals (i.e., postsecondary goals) and what they would like to accomplish while they are still in high school. The student’s IEP identifies their course of study — activities and classes that will help the student gain the skills necessary to reach their postsecondary goals.

• Parents should relay their expectations for the student’s life after high school. School staff should give a brief overview of the evaluation information collected in preparation for this planning meeting. The VRC might also want to present the results of their eligibility determination process at this time.

• Then, the whole team can develop the YTP services that the student will need. That process can include:
  
  o Discussing what the student wants for the future and what needs or challenges are perceived as barriers to reaching those goals.
  
  o Identifying the accommodations and supports that will help the student obtain the skills they need to reach their postsecondary goals.

YTP Services are individualized and will look different for each student in the areas of instruction, community experiences, related services, and independent living skills. This individualization reflects the importance of self-determination for the student and the shared responsibility of agencies and personnel to design services that will help the student gain the skills they need to live and work in the community.
Preparing a Student for the IPE Meeting

No one likes to attend a meeting when they don’t know its purpose, what will be discussed, or the expected outcome. Before meeting with the VRC to review the IPE, the TS should individually meet with the student to provide all that information, explain what information will be shared, and give the student a chance to ask questions. With the student, plan ways for the student to be involved in the meeting. Some students might want or need to lead the meeting. Other students might need to be prompted to provide input at key times. The student might need to practice what they will say and develop a set of questions to ask. This time together is another opportunity to practice motivational interviewing, self-advocacy, and self-determination strategies with the student.

The student should know that the IEP and IPE meeting processes are very similar — they involve different people but have similar outcomes. If a student has been involved in their IEP meetings, many parts of the IPE meeting will be familiar to them. If they have not been involved in their IEP meetings, this is an opportunity to practice and demonstrate the skills they need to be involved in their next IEP meeting.

Reviewing and Signing the IPE

Once the VRC has written the IPE, the TS arranges and attends a meeting with the VRC, the student, and their family (as appropriate). The purpose of that meeting is to review the IPE and talk about the services the student will receive from VR and YTP. If everyone agrees about the services to be provided, the student signs the IPE if they have reached the age of majority. If the student is younger than 18 years, their parent or legal guardian signs the IPE.

Implementing the IPE

The TS reviews the IPE and begins providing the services and conducting the activities outlined in it. The TS needs to share the IPE with the Core YTP team, especially the student’s special education teacher or case manager. It might be necessary to change the IEP to align with the IPE.

Aligning the IEP with the IPE

After YTP services have been determined, the YTP team members should reflect on the results of the meeting and find ways to coordinate and align the IEP with the IPE. This is an excellent time to include the student’s special education teacher and case manager in the discussion. Remember, the purpose of IDEA is to prepare the student to reach their postsecondary goals. The school district is responsible for providing transition services, including a coordinated set of activities and course of study. The IEP should document when another agency will provide transition services. Examples of how to document and align services across the IEP and IPE include:
• Adding the IPE to the IEP as an attached document,
• Documenting the YTP services on the IEP in the present level of academic achievement and functional performance section, the transition services section, or as an annual goal,
• Ensuring that the postsecondary employment goal in the IEP is identical to or substantially similar to the employment goal in the IPE, or
• Amending the IEP to reflect the decisions reflected in the IPE.

Figure 4.4 shows the YTP Services Process. All students with disabilities are eligible to receive the services shown to the left of the dotted line, including mandated IDEA services. If a student is found eligible for VR services, they may receive the Core YTP activities, which are to the right of the dotted line.
**Transition Services and Pre-ETS**

**IEP**

**IDEA Transition Services**

Secondary Transition Requirements:

1. Invite student
2. Assessment
3. PINS
4. Post-secondary goals
5. Annual goals
6. Transition services
7. Other agencies
8. Updated annually (including course of study)

**Possible referral to VR or other adult agencies**

**VR provided Pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETSs)**

**Section 504 Plan**

**Potentially Eligible**

**VR Application**

**Core YTP Services**

**Core YTP Activities and Services**

1. ID and referral
2. Motivational interviewing
3. IPE development
4. Instruction in vocational skills
5. Career development
6. Work incentives planning
7. Job development
8. Follow-up support

**Core YTP Services**

**Develop IPE**

**Align and coordinate IEP and IPE**

**VR eligibility process**

**Figure 4.4 Transition Services**
## Essential Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.2 Essential Features of YTP Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student and family preferences and interests are documented and incorporated into the YTP transition planning process to ensure that the process is student-driven.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. STUDENT SKILLS:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The current skill levels of YTP students are documented and incorporated into the transition planning process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. COLLABORATIVE PLANNING:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition plans are developed in collaboration with key players from appropriate school and adult service agencies and coordinated with the student’s IPE, as developed by the VR counselor.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4. POSTSECONDARY GOALS:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEA transition planning incorporates all relevant areas of transition, including education, training, employment, and (when appropriate) independent living goals. YTP services and activities focus on the student’s postsecondary employment goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. SYSTEM CHANGE:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YTP procedures provide a model for using student input to drive a seamless movement from high school to adult life through collaborative planning and coordinated delivery.</td>
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Chapter 5: INSTRUCTION
Introduction

The provision of instruction is critical to fulfilling the purposes of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the first of which is

(a) to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free 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; (emphasis added 34 CFR §300.1(a)).

Merriam-Webster defines instruction as the “action or process of teaching.” This chapter offers guidance for developing and providing appropriate instructional options for youth. These instructional options include the transition services needed to prepare a student to meet their education, employment, and independent living goals after high school. Students in the Youth Transition Program (YTP) identify postsecondary goals based on their preferences, interests, needs, and strengths (PINS) as part of their IDEA transition services. When planning and providing instruction within YTP, there are two critical, underlying aims to keep in mind:

• Develop instructional options based on the student’s postsecondary employment goals.

• Provide opportunities for YTP students to learn the skills that will enable them to live, work, and learn independently in their communities.

The transition specialist (TS), in collaboration with the special education teacher and case manager, must figure out what to teach and when, where, and how to provide instruction to help YTP youth achieve their postsecondary employment goals.

The TS should be invited and make every effort to attend the IEP meetings for all YTP participants and those youth who are potentially eligible for YTP services. Information from the TS, such as the results from a transition assessment or work experience, can be invaluable in developing the IEP. Knowing the annual goals, services, and supplemental aids included in the IEP can also help the TS. It is critical that the TS collaborate with the special education teacher and potentially many others (e.g., general educators, families, other service providers) to provide the instruction students need to achieve their postsecondary goals. Working together to determine and deliver instruction ensures the consistency and continuity students need to be successful. The remainder of this chapter focuses on determining what to teach and when, where, and how to teach it to prepare YTP youth to meet their postsecondary employment goals.
What To Teach

What to teach will be based on each student’s measurable postsecondary goals in three areas:

- training/education,
- employment,
- independent living skills (where appropriate).

The primary goal of YTP is to increase the employment outcomes of students with disabilities. Therefore, most YTP instruction should help students gain the skills they need to obtain and maintain competitive integrated employment, which can include skills related to the education or training required by the job they want, as well as the independent living skills they need to function in adult roles. To determine what to teach, ask the question: What knowledge, behaviors, and skills does this student need to learn to

- enroll in and persist in postsecondary, vocational, continuing, or adult education to reach their employment goal,
- obtain and maintain integrated, competitive, or supported employment,
- participate in adult services, live independently, and participate in the community?

When answering that question, think about the student’s general work readiness skills and occupation-specific knowledge, behaviors, and skills.

(a) General work readiness skills are the basic knowledge, behaviors, and skills needed for most jobs. Examples include reading, math, and arriving on time. General work readiness includes both

- academic skills (e.g., reading for information, applied mathematics, locating information, problem-solving, and critical thinking),
- professional skills (e.g., communication, personal characteristics, and behavioral skills, including getting to work on time, adaptability, integrity, and cooperation).

(b) Occupation-specific knowledge, behaviors, and skills are specialized and depend on the specific job or occupation the student is seeking (e.g., reading a blueprint, dressing for an office job, or operating a backhoe).

Most students will need instruction in both general work readiness and occupation-specific skills to meet their postsecondary goals. Age-appropriate transition assessments can help to identify the general and specific skills a student needs. Embedded within both general and specific skills are the self-determination and self-advocacy skills students will need in adulthood.

Self-Determination and Self Advocacy

The emphasis on self-determination and self-advocacy embedded throughout YTP reflects
the implicit focus on self-determination in IDEA 2004 and the explicit focus on self-advocacy in the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA 2014). IDEA requires students to be invited to their IEP meetings whenever transition is discussed. Their PINS form their postsecondary goals through age-appropriate transition assessments. WIOA 2014 mandates instruction in self-advocacy as a re-employment transition services.

*Self-determination* is “the ability to make choices, solve problems, set goals, evaluate options, take the initiative to reach one’s goals, and accept consequences of one’s actions” (Rowe et al., 2014). Self-determination skills empower students to make decisions and direct their futures. Throughout their involvement in YTP, students learn self-determination and self-advocacy skills by being allowed and required to make choices and lead their lives. This philosophy manifests through instruction in goal setting, problem-solving, and self-advocacy skills and in allowing students to experience both failure and success.

Once a student’s postsecondary goals are identified, develop a plan for what to teach by starting with the student’s employment goals and working backward from where they want to be to where they are. Try to identify the specific knowledge, behaviors, and skills they need to learn to achieve their specific goals; that will form the basis of what you will teach. Do the backward planning exercise described below with the student to solicit their input about what they want and need to learn to reach their goal and become more independent. Be both tenacious and patient in this phase. YTP students are generally unfamiliar with professionals who seek their input in program design. They may respond, "I don't know," or "I already know it all.” The student might not trust that their ideas will be heard or used. Using a backward planning process with will assure the student that their input is valued and will be implemented. Motivational interviewing provides strategies to support students through this process.

Below is an example of a backward planning process.

After high school, Madison will work as a personal trainer at the YMCA. To reach her employment goal, she needs a high school diploma. Further education, such as a certificate, is not required to work as a personal trainer, but it is preferred by some employers. To reach her postsecondary employment goal, Madison and her IEP team determined that she needs to graduate high school with a standard diploma. To earn her diploma, she needs (a) a course of study focused on her interests in science, health, and PE and (b) to pass her English classes. Additionally, she needs instruction in (a) self-determination/self-advocacy skills (she refuses to request and accept accommodations in English classes), (b) good hygiene (she doesn’t shower regularly), (c) time management skills (she is often late or absent), and (d) coping skills (she frequently loses her temper and yells at peers and adults).
When, Where, and How To Teach

Once the knowledge, behaviors, and skills that the student needs to learn have been identified, the next step is to determine when, where, and how to teach those things. There is no pre-determined YTP curriculum that all YTP students must master before completing the program. Nonetheless, all YTP students should receive instruction in five major areas:

- functional academics — reading for information, money management, and writing in daily life,
- vocational — general work readiness skills and specific occupation skills for the worksite,
- independent living — washing clothes and securing a place to live,
- personal/social skills — communication and appropriate worksite behavior,
- self-determination/self-advocacy — setting and monitoring goals, making decisions.

When making plans for an individual student, consider each of those areas in the context of their postsecondary goals.

When and Where To Teach

YTP instruction can take many forms. Some students could enroll in a "work-readiness" class at their high school; others might attend an independent living skills class offered at an apartment in their community. Some students participate in job clubs that meet after
school, and others learn social skills through one-on-one instruction provided by a community mentor on Saturdays. The TS can provide instruction to a single student, a small group of students, or a class co-taught with a special education teacher or other colleague. However, the TS cannot be the teacher of record for a class. To determine when and where instruction in YTP will occur, follow the four steps outlined in the procedures below.

Procedures

Instruction does not occur in isolation, and the TS is not solely responsible for its delivery. Collaborating with the YTP student’s special education teachers, case managers, and counselors is vital to ensure that instruction in YTP is consistent with and complementary to the instruction occurring in other aspects of the student’s education program. Below are six steps for getting started. Remember: although each YTP site develops its own methods and unique format for providing instruction, the hallmarks of instruction in YTP are:

- individualization, considering the unique needs of each YTP student,
- flexibility, to meet students where they are,
- practical, real-life applications to enable youth to be more independent,
- relevance to the student’s current and future environments,
- a strong focus on self-determination and self-advocacy development,
- co-teaching.

Step 1: Create a Master List of What Students Need To Learn

Review information and create a master list summarizing the knowledge, behaviors, and skills each YTP student needs to learn based on their postsecondary employment goals and the backward planning process.

Step 2: Gather Information About Existing Programs

Identify programs within the school and community that the YTP student can access to meet the instructional needs you prioritized in Step 1. This information might have been collected during the transition planning process, or the community might have developed a Transition Resource Manual that includes this information. If you are starting from scratch, consider

- **Resources within the school:** work experience programs for all students such as vocational education classes, career and technical education classes, life skills classes, alternative education classes, and vocational/technical preparation classes. Remember, YTP students are general education students first. They should access the same school resources as students without disabilities.

- **Resources within the community:** summer employment programs, community college classes, private non-profit agencies that provide vocational evaluation and training (e.g., Goodwill Industries, Job Corps, Adult and Family Services job search
Determine whether those programs will meet some or all of a YTP student’s needs. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of participating in those programs vs. a class specifically developed for YTP students. The local community and resources that exist within it will determine the best approach.

**Step 3: Investigate Model Programs**

Review information about model programs developed by other YTP sites across the state. The YTP network contains a vast wealth of knowledge. Talk with a YTP Technical Assistance Provider (TAP) about the options you are considering. The TAP can facilitate a cross-site conversation with a similar site. Seek advice, and learn from others’ experiences.

**Step 4: Discuss Options with Your YTP Site Team**

As a local YTP team, talk about the options being considered to determine what instructional model you will implement. Keep in mind the system change goal of YTP. Include key personnel within and outside the school, such as school administrators, educational reform planners, business/education partners, and school counselors, in these planning sessions. Involving others will increase the program’s visibility and credibility.

As part of the planning process, check the list of instructional priorities identified in Step 1. Consider how those priorities might translate easily into any logical groupings for providing instruction. For example, if several students want to learn how to drive, it might be necessary to develop a class to prepare them to get their driver permits. If many students need to learn how to build resumes and practice interview skills, consider developing a job club. If students’ needs are varied, providing individualized instruction or connecting students to existing instructional resources in the school or community might be necessary.

**Step 5: Develop a New Program**

If the research shows that no existing program will meet the needs of the YTP students, develop a new program. Procedures for developing five different instructional models, (1) a mentorship program, (2) a job club, (3) a YTP class, (4) an independent living program, and (5) a school-based business, are provided next.

**Instructional Models**

There are various options for when and where to teach students the knowledge, behaviors, and skills they need. To achieve their postsecondary goals using any of the instructional models below, consider the needs of the students at the YTP site and the resources (current and potential) available in the school and community. Remember, this work is done in collaboration with students, special education teachers, case managers, TSs, and vocational rehabilitation counselors (VRCs). It takes time and energy to develop any of these programs. Be clear about the reasons for adopting or modifying any of these instructional models. Some
example reasons are summarized in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1. Instructional Models and Reasons To Consider Adopting a Model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Model Options</th>
<th>Reasons To Consider Adopting the Model</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Mentor Program              | • Students have no exposure to the world of work.  
• Students need to be connected to adult role models.  
• Students need to develop social skills for employment.  
• YTP staff have the desire and ability to develop a broad base of supportive community employers. |
| Job Club                    | • Many students have left the high school program, or students are spread out in different geographic locations.  
• Students need a motivational enhancement career intervention.  
• Students need to learn how to seek, get, and keep a job.  
• Students need a peer support group to process job-related issues.  
• YTP staff want to provide instruction away from the school environment.  
• YTP staff have adequate support from the school administration and (in some cases) vocational rehabilitation (VR) management to run a job club in an off-campus setting or at the local VR office. |
| Co-teaching a Class         | • Most YTP students are enrolled in a single high-school program.  
• Students need to learn a variety of skills across several content areas.  
• YTP staff have adequate support from the school administration to push into an existing class or develop a new class within the high school or at a community college. |
| Independent Living Program  | • Many students are ready to move into their own homes or apartments.  
• YTP staff want to provide hands-on instruction in a community setting.  
• YTP staff have adequate support from the school administration to develop an off-campus program. |
| School-based Business       | • The local community does not have the business or industry base to provide students with adequate work-based learning experiences.  
• Students need instruction in a closely monitored setting before they enter a community job setting. |
| Internship/Apprenticeship   | • Students need to earn elective credit toward a high school diploma.  
• Students need a real-world setting for teaching and giving feedback.  
• Students need to build strong relationships with potential employers. |
### Reasons To Consider Adopting the Model
- Employers.
- YTP staff need a good way to assess students’ strengths and needs for planning future instruction.

### Effective Predictors

**Predictors of Post-school Success According to High-quality Research**

These predictors of post-school success are in-school interventions (e.g., programs) derived from correlation research studies. For more information visit the NTACT:C website (https://transitionta.org).

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<tr>
<th>Predictors of Post-school Success</th>
<th>Effective Predictors</th>
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<td>• Career Awareness</td>
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<td>• Career Technical Education</td>
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<td>• Community Experiences</td>
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<td>• Exit Exam</td>
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<td>• Exit Exam Requirements/High</td>
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<td>School Diploma Status</td>
<td>• Highschool Diploma</td>
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<td>• Goal-Setting</td>
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<td>• Inclusion in General Education</td>
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<td>• Interagency Collaboration</td>
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<td>• Occupational Courses</td>
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<td>• Paid Employment/Work Experience</td>
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<td>• Self-Care/Independent Living</td>
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<td>• Self-Realization</td>
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<td>• Social Skills</td>
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<td>• Work Study</td>
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<td>• Youth</td>
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<td>• Autonomy/Decision-Making</td>
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### New Employment Options

Taking an expansive view of the employment process can create a new range of opportunities for students to learn about the world of work. Such a view sets the stage for system change as businesses, educators, YTP staff, and VRCs learn to build cooperative relationships to develop competitive workers. There are three basic steps in developing new employment options for YTP students:

- Review information on model programs developed by YTP sites.
- Discuss options with the YTP team and develop a plan.
- Develop new programs designed to expand employment opportunities or build work readiness skills.
How To Teach

Determining how to teach students the knowledge, behaviors, and skills they will need to work, learn, and live in their communities is as important as determining what, when, and where to teach. Through high-quality research in secondary transition, researchers have identified effective (i.e., evidence-based, research-based, or promising) practices. Effective practices (EPs) are instructional strategies that high-quality research has shown to be effective for teaching specific skills. They apply to secondary transition planning and instruction by:

- Providing the best scientifically based, peer-reviewed research to date in secondary special education and transition,
- Identifying effective teaching methods shown to help students with disabilities learn specific skills in secondary transition,
- Supporting the development of IEP goals and objectives to ensure that students gain new knowledge and skills efficiently.

EPs are applied with individual students to help them learn specific knowledge, behaviors, or skills (e.g., computer assisted instruction, mnemonics, parent training in transition, peer assisted instruction and support). EPs support IEP goals and objectives, as well as skill development. In teaching, select the appropriate EP to use a student based on the skill being taught and the student’s individual needs. Pair the EPs with the YTP instructional models to maximize the likelihood of success for the student. For example, in job club, use mnemonics to teach job application skills. For a complete list of EPs and the references used to establish them, along with information explaining how these practices were identified, visit www.transitionta.org.

Table 5.3 lists the essential features of YTP instructional opportunities. The procedures that follow provide strategies to establish specific instructional opportunities. The opportunities described and procedures for implementing them are only guidelines, which are suggested but not required to implement YTP. If the essential features are implemented, the process will be successful and create system change within schools and communities.
## Essential Features

### TABLE 5.3 Essential Features of YTP Instruction

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Postsecondary Employment Goals:</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>A YTP student’s instruction in academic, vocational, independent living, and personal social areas is intended to meet each student’s postsecondary employment goals.</td>
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<th>Self-Determination:</th>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>YTP instruction emphasizes goal setting, problem-solving, and self-determination skills, so a student can make their own decisions and direct their own futures.</td>
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<th>Instructional Services:</th>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>To prepare a YTP student to live and work independently in their community, YTP staff provide instruction in the academic, vocational, independent living, and personal-social areas tied to their postsecondary employment goals.</td>
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<th>System Change:</th>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Instructional strategies, formats, and curriculum within the existing school structure have been modified to accommodate the student’s transition needs as a result of implementing YTP instructional services.</td>
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<th>Family Involvement:</th>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Families are the first instructors. Finding ways to involve families leads to positive post-school outcomes for youth participating in YTP.</td>
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</table>

## Procedures To Implement Instructional Strategies

### Procedures for Developing a Mentor Program

Below are 10 steps for developing a YTP Mentor Program. For additional information, talk with the TAP assigned to the YTP site.

**Step 1: Gather Information and Develop a Program Description**

Review the information about the mentor program included in this chapter. Talk to staff at other YTP sites that have developed successful mentor programs. Learn about their program goals, the materials they use, and their meeting schedules. Develop a brief program description outlining the program’s vision, goals, purpose, and general structure. Use that written program description to lobby for support to develop the program within the school.
and community.

**Step 2: Obtain Support Within the School**

Before developing a program, school administrators need to fully support it. Ideally, as members of the Core YTP team, they were engaged in setting the program vision, goals, and purpose. Set up a meeting with school administrators; share the program description, and obtain their input and support for developing the program. Be prepared to answer the following specific questions:

a. Can students get credit for participating in the program?

b. When will students meet with their mentors, and how will that fit into their regular, daily schedules?

b. How will students get to their mentor sites?

d. How will students and mentors be chosen, screened, and paired for the program?

**Step 3: Obtain Support Within the Community**

Brainstorm a list of individual community members who might be interested in serving as mentors. Consider employers who previously hired students with disabilities, members of service clubs or other business groups, employers in specific industries, friends, neighbors, or other prominent community members — one YTP site had the city manager as a mentor! Contact those individuals to assess their interest in participating. Share the program description. Describe the program's purpose, the time commitment involved, and the benefits to students and mentors. Ask for an initial commitment to participate (e.g., one term) and explain that they will be contacted when a specific student is identified for them to mentor.

**Step 4: Develop Materials Needed for the Program**

Check with other YTP sites to see what materials and learning activities mentors and students complete. Develop materials that clearly define the

a. roles and responsibilities of the mentor and the student,

b. different options available for developing a mentoring relationship (e.g., short-term occupational exploration vs. long-term mentoring relationships that could go beyond the workplace),

c. methods for evaluating mentoring outcomes,

d. opportunities for mentors and students to receive support.

Mentoring relationships are reciprocal and thus require that both parties actively participate, communicate, problem-solve, and negotiate to make the interaction meaningful and successful. For help setting up a mentor program, contact the TAP assigned to the YTP site.

**Step 5: Select Students To Participate**

Whether all YTP students participate in the mentor program or only those who express an
interest, have students complete a program application. Gather information about their job history, employment goals, and general interest areas: review the student’s applications and note areas of occupational interest and possible mentor sites.

**Step 6: Match Students with Mentors**

Students can be matched with mentors in several ways:

a. The student can request a specific occupation or person they would like to be their mentor.

b. The students may request to be placed with several mentors to explore a variety of jobs, spending a small amount of time with each one. This strategy is advantageous if a student is unsure of their vocational goals.

c. YTP staff can identify a student’s mentors based on information in the application.

**Step 7: Arrange for the Initial Meeting**

Once a YTP student has been matched with a prospective mentor, YTP staff should contact the potential mentors from the initial start-up list and reconfirm their willingness to participate. Next, have the student contact the mentor and set up the initial meeting. At that meeting, the mentor and student should schedule regular (usually weekly) meeting times for a prescribed period (usually one school term). During the first meeting, a student should expect to:

a. Be given a business tour and general explanation of the mentor’s job duties.

b. Discuss the mentor’s expectations and goals.

c. Discuss the student’s goals for the mentorship.

**Step 8: Provide Support to Mentors and Students**

After the mentorship placements have been established, YTP staff need to contact the mentors regularly to check on their progress. Find out if the student is having any difficulties either keeping to the established schedule or completing the tasks the mentor has assigned. Is the mentor satisfied that the student is making progress in meeting their goals? If problems don't seem to be easily resolved, the student might need to be matched with a different mentor. Both the mentors and the students need to know that they have established and constructive ways to alter or end their relationship.

**Step 9: Debrief and Reflect on the Mentorship Experience**

At the completion of a mentorship placement, YTP staff should schedule a final meeting with each student–mentor pair. At that time, the students and mentors can discuss their experiences and talk about what they have learned. YTP staff should also review any written assignments the student completed, and (if appropriate) award school credit.
Step 10: Evaluate the Success of the Program

The final step in developing any new program is to evaluate its effects. YTP staff should gather evaluation information from mentors and students to determine the program’s overall effectiveness. Consider using a business-driven evaluation tool, such as a consumer satisfaction survey. Based on that feedback, YTP staff can decide if the program needs to be revised and whether it should continue as an instructional option for YTP students.

Procedures for Developing a Job Club

Below are eight steps for developing a YTP job club. For additional information, talk with a TAP.

Step 1: Gather Information and Develop a Program Description

Begin by reviewing the information in this chapter about job clubs. Talk with staff at YTP sites that have already developed successful job clubs. Learn about their program goals, the materials they use, and their meeting schedule. Develop a brief program description outlining the program’s vision, goals, purpose, and general structure. Use that written program description to lobby for support to develop the program within the school and community.

Step 2: Obtain Support Within the School

Before developing the program, school administrators need to fully support it. Ideally, as members of the Core YTP team, they were engaged in setting the program vision, goals, and purpose. Set up a meeting with school administrators; share the program description, and obtain their input and support for developing the program. Be prepared to answer the following specific questions:

- a. Who will participate in the job club?
- b. How will students be referred to the job club?
- c. How might other school staff be involved in the job club?

Step 3: Obtain Support from Vocational Rehabilitation

The local VRC is a key resource for developing a job club. Some VRCs might have existing job clubs that serve adults with disabilities, and others have years of experience teaching job search skills individually. In either case, work closely with a VRC serving the YTP site to develop the structure for job club. The most successful job clubs are collaborative programs developed and run jointly by school and VR staff.

Step 4: Develop Specific Materials Needed

Many vocational curricula are available to teach interviewing skills, resume writing, and other job search skills. After reviewing various materials, develop a set of specific goals for the program, along with a general outline of the content that will be taught at each job club.
session. Depending on the program goals and the student’s skill level, it might be necessary to adapt materials that already exist or develop new materials to meet the student’s needs.

**Step 5: Schedule Regular Job Club Meetings**

Most YTP sites have scheduled weekly job club meetings at a location away from school grounds, such as the VR office, community college, or the local mall. The off-campus location helps reinforce the idea that this is an adult program designed to teach the skills needed for independence. Be sure to schedule job club at a convenient time for students in school or working in the community. Generally, late afternoon or early evening seems to work best.

**Step 6: Select Students To Participate**

Whether all YTP students participate in the job club, only those who express an interest, or only those invited, it is important to explain the program’s purpose to students and get an initial commitment from them to attend the meetings. Give students a written reminder of the time and meeting place. School staff might need to provide transportation to the meetings, especially in areas with no reliable public transportation.

**Step 7: Hold Weekly Meetings**

Job club meetings should be informal, engaging, and enjoyable for students and staff. Provide structured time each week for teaching or practicing specific skills and time for more informal student-driven discussion. Encourage peer support, individual goal setting, and networking. At one YTP job club, students and staff set weekly personal goals. To encourage participation at job club, plan fun events that will both attract students and be educational.

**Step 8: Evaluate the Success of the Program.**

The final step in developing any new program is to evaluate its effects. YTP staff can informally collect evaluation information from students to determine the program’s overall effectiveness. Based on that feedback, YTP staff should decide whether the job club format should be continued, revised, or eliminated as an instructional option for YTP students.

**Procedures for Developing a Transition Class**

This instructional opportunity requires a teaching license or co-teaching arrangement with a licensed teacher to ensure that YTP is not supplanting the school district’s responsibilities under IDEA. The TS **cannot** be responsible for a class. They must be able to leave the class and attend to other needs as they arise.

Below are six steps for developing a transition class. For additional information, talk with a TAP.

**Step 1: Gather Information and Develop a Course Description**

Review the information about a transition class in this chapter. Talk with staff at YTP sites that
have already developed successful transition classes. Learn about their program goals, the materials they use, and their meeting schedule. Develop a brief program description outlining the program's vision, goals, purpose, and general structure. Use that written program description to lobby for support to develop the program within the school and community.

**Step 2: Obtain Support Within the School**

Before developing any program, school administrators need to fully support it. Ideally, as members of the YTP team, they were engaged in setting the program vision, goals, and purpose. Set up a meeting with school administrators; share the program description, and obtain their input and support for developing the program. Be prepared to answer the following specific questions

a. When and where will the class be held?
b. How long will the class be (full-year or one term)?
c. What type of credit can students receive for participation?
d. How will this class fit in with other activities, such as paid work for YTP students?
e. What will the curriculum content be?
f. Who will teach the class?

**Step 3: Invite Students To Participate**

It may be decided to include all YTP students in the class or limit enrollment to those students who need specific skills. Student participation will also be influenced by existing class and work schedules. As part of the selection process, it is essential to explain the class's purpose to students and get an initial commitment from them to attend.

**Step 4: Develop Specific Materials Needed**

Many pre-packaged curricula are available to teach independent living, personal/social, self-determination/self-advocacy, and vocational skills to students with disabilities. Review a variety of materials and decide whether they are appropriate to meet the targeted YTP students’ needs. Depending on the program goals and student skill levels, it may be necessary to adapt existing curriculum materials or develop new materials. It will be necessary to create lesson plans and handouts or activities for each class every week.

**Step 5: Teach Class on a Regular Basis**

Most transition classes meet daily for at least one hour as part of the regular school schedule. The class should be a mixture of structured instruction focused on students' specific goal areas and more informal discussion and activities. Some YTP classes take field trips to local businesses or community agencies. Some classes include a series of speakers on transition-related topics. In general, YTP staff have had the most success by obtaining student buy-in and input, facilitating student learning through hands-on instruction or role-playing, and emphasizing problem-solving and self-advocacy skills.
Step 6: Evaluate the Success of the Transition Class

The final step in developing any new program is to evaluate it. YTP staff should gather evaluation information from students to determine the class's overall effectiveness. Consider using a business-driven evaluation tool, such as a consumer satisfaction survey. Based on that feedback, YTP staff decide whether the program needs to be revised and whether to continue the transition class as an instructional option for YTP students.

Procedures for Developing an Independent Living Program

Outlined below are 12 steps for developing an independent living program. For additional information, talk with a TAP.

Step 1: Gather Information and Develop Program Overview

Talk to staff at YTP sites that already have a successful independent living program. Learn about their program vision, goals, materials, and day-to-day operations. Involve key school and VR administrators and partners early to discuss the feasibility of this type of program and get their input on the program's overall goals. Develop a brief program description outlining the program’s vision, goals, purpose, and general structure. Use that written program description to lobby for support to develop the program within the school and community.

Step 2: Obtain Support Within the School

Before developing the program, school administrators need to fully support it. Ideally, as members of the YTP team, they were engaged in setting the program vision, goals, and purpose. Set up a meeting with school administrators; share the program description, and obtain their input and support for developing the program. Although not all of the questions listed below will be answerable in the first meeting, the district and school administration will need enough information to give their initial support to developing an independent living program. Specific questions to discuss include:

a. Is the district willing to support an off-campus program to teach independent living skills?

b. What are the potential benefits to students and risks to the school district?

c. What are potential sources of funding for this program?

d. Could the students receive school credit for participation?

e. How would liability issues be addressed?

f. Where could the program be housed?

g. How would the program be staffed?

h. What types of instruction would be offered?
Step 3: Obtain Support from VR To Develop the Program

The local VRC and VR branch manager are vital resources for developing an independent living program. VR staff can help identify other local agencies that provide independent living services to adults with disabilities. Those agencies can provide information and might be interested in developing a collaborative program. VR staff will also be critically important when discussing funding options for this type of program. Some YTP sites have used VR case-service dollars to help pay for independent living program development. Meet with a local VRC to identify potential resources within the VR system.

Step 4: Obtain Funding for the Program

Independent living programs need funding beyond the basic YTP IGA to hire staff, rent a house or apartment, and purchase furniture and household supplies. There are several options for funding an independent program. YTP sites have used VR case-service dollars (money used by VRC to provide various special services for individual students, such as job coaching, special clothing, bus passes, etc.), grants through the local school district, Oregon Department of Education money, or other VR funds to pay for independent living program development. Once a potential funding source has been identified, submit a detailed proposal and budget to the funding agent.

Step 5: Address Liability Issues with Providing Off-campus Instruction

One of the most significant barriers to developing off-campus instruction is addressing the school district's liability. After the program funding is secure, work with school district administrators to manage any liability issues associated with providing instruction away from the school grounds. Meet with school district personnel responsible for risk management to talk about insurance coverage and how students and classified staff will be supervised. It will be necessary to determine who will sign the lease or rental agreement.

Step 6: Locate a Site for the Off-campus Instruction

Locate an appropriate apartment or house for the program. The building should be easily accessible for students, either on a bus line or within walking distance of the school. When investigating various possibilities, meet with the landlord to describe the program and be sure they understand and support the purpose of the program. Some sites receive a rent reduction by doing building or grounds maintenance, which provides an additional vocational training opportunity for students.

Step 7: Arrange for the Needed Personnel

Most YTP sites hire staff who are responsible for developing and coordinating their independent living program. The dedicated staff are responsible for providing direct instruction and supervision to the students. Independent living staff can be hired through the school district, as an additional TS, or as direct contractors through VR. Whatever the funding source, develop a position description, post the job, interview applicants, and hire the most qualified individual that can be found. The person in this position needs to have
good organizational skills, good teaching skills, and the ability to collaborate with staff from
the school and VR.

**Step 8: Develop Instructional Materials**

Several curricula are available for teaching a variety of independent living skills, including
money management, cooking and nutrition, and household management. To determine
the content to teach, ask students what skills they think should be taught. Develop
specific goals for the program and a general outline of the content to be taught at each
session. Depending on the program vision, goals, and student skills, it might be necessary
to adapt existing materials or develop new materials.

**Step 9: Invite Students To Participate**

Whether all YTP students participate in the independent living program or only those who
express an interest, have students complete a program application. As part of the selection
process, it is important to explain the class’s purpose and get an initial commitment from
students to attend. Solicit input from students about the best schedule for providing
instruction. Existing YTP sites have found it is most effective to schedule small groups of
students for specific blocks of time at the apartment. For example, some student groups
meet twice weekly from 12:30 to 3:30. Others meet one evening a week from 3:00 to 6:00
p.m.

**Step 10: Purchase the Supplies and Furnishings Needed To Set up the Program**

One of the first lessons that students in these programs learn is how to furnish an apartment
and purchase the supplies they need to set up a household. Students should be involved in
setting up the environment, from painting walls to buying and refinishing furniture to
purchasing groceries for meals. Involving students in this initial set-up process is very
motivating and helps promote the idea that this learning space is their place. Some sites
show off the new program by hosting open houses for school staff and families.

**Step 11: Facilitate Instruction in Independent Living Skills**

Independent living skills instruction should include time for structured instruction in
specific skills, discussion, and activities. Staff in these programs adopt the role of
facilitator. They provide learning opportunities and guide students as they make choices
and participate. Although much of the instruction occurs at the apartment, many sites also
incorporate field trips and community-based instruction at local businesses, community
agencies, or recreational facilities.

**Step 12: Evaluate the Success of the Program**

The final step in developing any new program is to evaluate its overall effectiveness.
Evaluate the independent living program’s effects by measuring student performance on
specific skills or competencies and by interviewing students to get their perceptions of its
effectiveness. Based on that feedback, decide whether to revise different aspects of the
program or continue it. Ultimately, the effectiveness is measured by whether YTP students function independently as young adults in their community.
Chapter 6: JOB DEVELOPMENT, EMPLOYMENT, AND JOB COACHING
Job Development

Introduction
This chapter describes the work a transition specialist (TS) performs as a job developer in the local community and explains how to achieve employment outcomes. It also explains the complexity of employment and how to provide minimal job coaching services to students who have obtained employment.

The Transition Specialist As Job Developer
Preparing students to be placed in competitive integrated employment or career-related postsecondary training is an important aspect of YTP. Sometimes training or a specialized path that supports reaching competitive integrated employment is necessary. This chapter focuses on the culmination of YTP services and shows why YTP exists: to help students with disabilities get and keep a paid job.

Because YTP bridges the gaps between a school district’s services to students and their employment in post-school life, part of the TS role is to be a job developer. Networking in the local community, within schools, and in partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) helps the TS identify suitable job placements for students who are ready to work.

The job development duties of the TS account for most of their work time. Therefore, the TS’s other responsibilities should allow for flexibility in leaving the educational setting and engaging with the community. Their schedule should give them the flexibility and autonomy to adjust their schedule and, if needed, work outside of regular school hours, including late evening shifts, early morning shifts, and even weekends, should that be necessary to support students. Remember the TS needs to be available to support students when they are working before school, after school, and on weekends.

Identify Job Opportunities and Network with Potential Employers
Successful job development requires the TS to be effective in two related areas: (1) networking in the local community to identify potential employers, build partnerships, and develop work experiences and job placements, and (2) connecting YTP students with potential employers.

Recruiting and developing relationships with community employers who will support YTP is paramount to student success. There are many approaches to networking with employers. Developing relationships in the community requires a unique combination of
public relations skills, knowledge of the local business community, and optimism.

Employer Networking/Recruitment

This section describes procedures TSs can use to recruit a broad base of employers who will support YTP in the community. These preliminary recruitment activities are critical. The more success a TS has in creating support within the employment community, the easier it will be to successfully place students in satisfying jobs. The four basic steps to employer recruitment are:

1. Take inventory of student employment goals.
2. Identify potential jobs in the community.
3. Develop a systematic approach for contacting employers.
4. Contact employers in the community.

Step 1: Create an Inventory of Student Employment Goals

The TS should maintain a list of their students’ employment goals. Keeping that list will remind them of their students’ primary job development needs. The list should also help narrow down the following steps as they work to identify and develop relationships with employers in their community by allowing them to target specific needs over general needs.

Step 2: Identify Potential Jobs in the Community

Network with other agencies. Employer recruitment begins by marketing YTP and networking with other agency personnel. Identify other local agencies or programs whose purpose is to place individuals into community employment. For example, the local offices of the Oregon State Employment Department might have a youth employment program. Private non-profit agencies in the community might offer employment training programs, or vocational skill training programs might be offered at the local community college. Personnel in those programs are potential sources of employment information.

In some cases, established programs could view YTP’s efforts in the community as competition. Be especially sensitive to this issue; it can confuse and alienate useful contacts in the business community when they are approached by a wide variety of programs that are all seeking the same outcomes — jobs for individuals. With good communication skills, it is possible to share information about employment resources and work cooperatively to provide the best services to students.

Review existing labor market information. Another way to identify potential jobs in the community is to become familiar with its current and projected local labor market demands. If the community has an existing transition team, it might supply additional information about the status of the local labor market. Confirm and update that
information as necessary. Online tools to help identify potential jobs in the community are:

- Oregon Employment Department/Oregon Labor Market Information System (QualityInfo.org),
- Oregon Career Information System (CIS)(oregoncis.uoregon.edu),
- Work Source Oregon (WorkSourceOregon.org).

Visit the local Oregon State Employment Department or local VR office to get current statistical information. Several Employment Division Economists across Oregon do locally referenced labor market studies that might be helpful.

**Develop a list of potential employers and community partners to contact.** After talking with personnel at other local agencies and learning about the current and future market demands in the community, create a list of the types of jobs currently or projected to be available in the community that might be appropriate for YTP students.

- Develop a list of employers to contact about participating in YTP. Include any local business groups in the community, such as the Chamber of Commerce or service clubs such as the Kiwanis, Masons, or Rotary. Such groups are almost always interested in hearing presentations about local programs, and they provide an opportunity to present information about YTP to a group of potential employers.
- Use free local tools such as Chamber of Commerce listings, the local newspaper's classified section, and online searches of Craigslist, Indeed, Facebook marketplace, and local community posts to groups. All that information can help identify individual employers who might have jobs appropriate for YTP students. The transition specialist will probably have good luck with employers who have had work experience students or have hired persons with disabilities in the past.
- Find the hidden job market: Remember that only 15–30% of all jobs on the labor market are advertised publicly. Much of the remaining 70–85%, the so-called hidden job market, is accessible through networking, and some of those openings are filled through recruitment agencies. Networking in the community will provide access to that hidden job market.
- Organize employers by the types of jobs they offer, or group them by location to make it easier to plan the actual job search contacts. Use CIS to help find sector-based employment, or use local employment WorkSource resources.

**Step 3: Develop a Systematic Approach for Contacting Employers**

**Plan a strategy for contacting employers.** Decide on strategies to use when contacting employers. Decide how much time is available each week to devote to job development activities and plan to divide that time between general marketing or networking activities (such as making group presentations) and contacting individual employers.

Three basic strategies for contacting individual employers are: (a) informational
interviews, (b) cold calls, and (c) strategic conversations when there is a specific student for a specific job.

For informational interviews, schedule a specific time to meet with an employer, usually 15–30 minutes, to provide information about YTP and learn about their company or industry. These conversations are informal, and the purpose is to learn more about a specific field or employment area.

Cold calls involve calling or dropping in on a business unscheduled, asking about possible job openings, and leaving YTP marketing materials. Sometimes a cold call can be used to arrange a later in-depth conversation with an employer. Cold calls are fast and require little to no preparation, but they can require a substantial investment of time and often produce little return.

Strategic conversations entail contacting an employer when a particular YTP student has a specific vocational focus that aligns with their business. Strategic discussions allow the employer to learn more about YTP and the potential employee.

Most TSs effectively use some combination of those approaches. No matter which approach is used, it is imperative to listen carefully to what employers want and need. Employers frequently state that they welcome appropriate training and support (some of the business services offered as part of job development), but they express a strong aversion to the inflexible and bureaucratic procedures inherent in many vocational programs. Approach potential employers as a business person instead of a program representative. That means looking at the employer’s perspective and thinking first about what they need and how YTP and the student can support those needs. Avoid approaching employers from a place of helping a needy individual with a disability.

Follow the general steps below to develop a strategy for contacting employers:

1. Set specific goals for employer contact. For example, contact at least 10 employers weekly or plan one marketing presentation per month.
2. Decide with the team who will be responsible for making the contacts — the student, the TS, VR counselor (VRC), or some combination of staff.
3. Plan general timelines for making contacts with employers.

**Design a system for maintaining employer contact information.** It is important to keep a record of the contacts made with employers. Develop a well-organized resource bank of potential employers. The information can be organized on paper, in an online database, or on a smartphone. In any case, systematically maintain contact information to keep track of when to re-contact interested employers and purge those who are clearly uninterested in YTP.
**Step 4: Contact Employers in the Community**

**Present YTP to community organizations, associations, and business clubs.**
Presentations about YTP can be made to local organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and other business and service groups. When speaking about YTP, plan a brief presentation outlining the services YTP provides and describing how schools and business people can develop partnerships to better prepare students with disabilities for life in the community and benefit businesses.

*Below is an example presentation*

- Provide an overview of the YTP goals.
- Describe YTP services.
- Describe how a school–business partnership benefits both youth and business.
- Share student success stories, with their permission.
- Distribute YTP marketing materials and contact information.
- Describe how employers can be involved (e.g., mentoring).
- Collect names and follow up with those who want additional information.

YTP may need to be differentiated from existing employment programs in the community. Avoid using educational jargon to describe YTP, and use real examples of students to illustrate success. If employees are new to YTP or the site is new, ask a TAP or check the YTP website for examples of student-specific stories. Be mindful not to disclose a student’s disability.

When developing marketing materials, consider using photos, but be sure to obtain students’ written permission (i.e., photo/story release for use by YTP) to use their picture and story when talking about their participation in YTP. Distribute YTP marketing materials and contact information.

Close the presentation by giving employers options for participating in YTP (e.g., job shadowing or work experience sites, mentoring relationships, field trips or informational interview sites). Collect the names of people who want more information and follow-up with them within three days. Ongoing contacts with businesspeople will give YTP credibility in the community and ensure sources for job leads later.

**Prepare for contacts with individual employers.** When conducting informational interviews with selected companies, do the groundwork. Learn who has the real decision-making authority relative to hiring. Often, that person is not in the Human Resources Department but a line supervisor or mid-level manager. Next, gather as much background information about the company (e.g., size, product, reputation) as possible. That information can be found online through the company’s website or a social media site, at the Chamber of Commerce, or from talking with other local businesspeople in the community.
Visit company/business sites and meet with employers. Because this is the initial contact with an employer, it is important to be well prepared. Dress professionally and be sure to bring the YTP marketing materials and a business card. Remember, employers are busy people; plan to spend 15–30 minutes for this interview. During the interview:

1. Introduce and describe YTP.
2. Ask about the company's personnel needs and answer any questions the employer might have.
3. Ask questions to learn additional information that could help build a potential partnership. Pay attention to the following issues:
   - Evaluate the employer’s attitudes. Are they flexible, cooperative, and willing to work closely with school personnel?
   - Evaluate the ability of supervisors and other personnel to work alongside students with disabilities. Are employees disrespectful to each other?
   - Document the business location. Is it on or near public transportation?
   - Evaluate the safety of the work environment. Note if machinery is in good working order, with safety systems in place.
   - Evaluate the stability of the business. How long has the company been in operation? What is the rate of employee turnover?
   - Determine whether there will be opportunities for career advancement in this company. With experience, will students be able to move beyond entry-level positions?

Determine the employer's level of commitment and interest in YTP. Make sure to thoroughly explain the benefits and goals of YTP and ensure that the prospective employer understands the support services provided. Check with a TAP if there are any questions about those areas. Before ending the interview, determine whether the employer is interested in committing to working with YTP students. Give the employer several options for participation:

- Allowing students to visit their business to observe or job shadow with their employees,
- Talking with students about their business as part of a YTP class or job club,
- Serving as a volunteer mentor with a specific individual student,
- Offering their place of business as a work experience site,
- Hiring students as paid employees.

If the employer is interested in any of those options, determine which ones and make follow-up arrangements. Even if the employer is not interested at that time, let them
know they can always contact YTP in the future. Thank the employer for taking the time to talk, and leave a YTP business card with a name and number.

**Document employers contacted.** Keep track of the contacts made with employers. Google Docs or Excel are suitable tracking tools for organizing notes in a logical and meaningful way. This information will be invaluable for building a network of employers who can potentially support YTP. First, document all contacts, including those not currently interested in the program. Update that information when an employer chooses to interview or hire a student. In reviewing notes, answer the bottom-line question, *Is this a potential employer for YTP students?* Some employers might want to hire students, but the worksite might not be a good one. Don't be afraid to screen out those employers.

**Send a thank-you letter to every employer contacted.** Because every employer contacted might someday participate in YTP, it is important to maintain positive working relationships with all of them. Let them know, in writing, that YTP appreciates their time and the contribution they made.

When employers aren’t considered appropriate at that time for a particular student, send a thank you anyway. For potentially valuable the employers, send a thank-you letter and include a paragraph outlining how their future involvement with YTP might unfold. Remember to personalize the letter by using their name, company name, and details specific to the conversation and visit (e.g., I learned a lot about molding plastics from the tour of the plant).

**Connect Potential Employers with Students with Suitable Employment Goals**

As described in the preceding section, effective networking skills are the foundation for successful job development. They can be used in targeted or general ways, depending on the needs of the YTP site and students. The process of job development is highly individualized. It centers on the current YTP students’ employment goals, skills, and ability to navigate the process of obtaining employment and the support they require to do so successfully. This section details the steps a job developer takes during job matching and placement.

**Step 1: Review the Student’s Job Behaviors, Abilities, and Interests**

Once a student is work-ready and has an individualized plan for employment (IPE) with VR, the TS reviews the information gathered about that student during screening and eligibility determination, particularly the information about vocational skills and interests.

Confirm the student’s employment goals and verify the job requirements. Know the attributes that affirm the student’s work readiness.

Become familiar with each student’s general vocational strengths and their present
level of functional performance, along with any specific limitations (e.g., transportation problems, physical limitations) that could restrict the jobs available to them.

**Step 2: Prepare the Student for Job Search Activities**

Developing a specific job search plan, writing a resume, submitting a job application, and interviewing are common job search activities that should be part of every students’ YTP experience. These fundamental activities are described briefly here for the TS.

**Develop a specific job search plan.** Although the YTP TS will be actively involved in developing job leads, each student should also have particular job search responsibilities. Helping the student develop those skills will prepare them for future job searches after they have left YTP. Students will have a higher probability of success in seeking and securing employment on their own in the future if they are taught and allowed to practice real strategies to find, get, and keep their jobs rather than having it done for them. Some strategies to help students plan their job search are:

- Encouraging students to use their connections and follow potential job leads independently. Students will often have connections through family or friends that can help them get their first job.
- Having students develop a list of potential employers to contact.
- Helping students set a job search goal and complete that number of job applications each week.
- Teaching students how to develop and maintain a job search record. This record should be shared regularly with the TS. Include the VRC in this process as part of their need to have monthly documentation on their caseloads.
- Asking students to schedule regular meetings with YTP staff to review progress, share information about possible job openings, and set new job search goals.

**Help students develop their resumes.** Before a student begins an active job search, make sure they have a complete resume. Ensure that the student is familiar with the process of reference checks and are prepared to provide appropriate references.

**Prepare students to submit job applications.** The appearance of the application is often the only opportunity a student will have to present their qualifications to an employer. Strategies to prepare a student include:

- Highlighting the importance of making a good first impression and explaining that the job application is often the only contact they have with a potential employer;
- Teaching the student to fill out job applications neatly and accurately: whether the application is online, printed, or handwritten, a neat and complete job application gives an employer a first impression of the student as a potential employee;
• Teaching the student to transfer the information in their resumes to their job applications by completing a series of practice applications.

As part of completing job applications, verify again that the student has the necessary paperwork to document their eligibility for employment in the United States. Review the Employer Eligibility Verification (I-9) form and help ensure that the student has copies of any special documentation, such as a birth certificate, that they will need to be hired.

**Practice interview skills with students.** Use the resources found at CIS, local job fairs, VR-sponsored events, and other opportunities to prepare students for interviews. Strategies include:

• Providing opportunities for students to practice their answers verbally;

• Providing feedback to students on the content of their answers and how they present themselves; for example, encourage them to have good posture, smile, and if culturally appropriate, shake hands and maintain eye contact with the interviewer;

• Arrange a series of mock interviews in which students practice entering a room, greeting an employer, answering a series of questions, and closing the interview.

As a final test of interview skills, consider inviting a local businessperson to the classroom to interview each student. Recording those interviews and reviewing them together can be a helpful tool in the process.

**Step 3: Identify Current Job Openings That Match Students’ Employment Goals**

**Contact specific employers to determine available jobs.** Job matching — identifying job openings and comparing them with students’ needs and abilities — is an ongoing, individualized process. It requires a combination of logical thinking and being ready. Sometimes an ideal employer appears, and it is possible to move ahead with job placement even if the student doesn’t currently have all the skills they need for the job. Knowing a student’s skills and needs can make it easier to predict whether they will eventually be independent on a job if they get the right type of training and support now. Some available jobs might be screened out because no students are currently interested in that type of job or are qualified to perform it. Generally, the YTP team needs to feel confident that a student can succeed at a job before proceeding with job placement.

This point in the job placement process is about identifying current job openings to meet the needs of specific students. Start by contacting the potential employers identified during the employer recruitment process, and make additional cold calls as needed. When contacting employers, find out whether they have any current or projected job openings and if they are willing to meet to discuss the placement of a specific YTP student. Use other resources for job leads as well, such as online job posting sites, help wanted ads, information from the Employment Division, and the
team’s network of community contacts.

After identifying employers with potential job openings, arrange to visit each place of business to gather information about job requirements and employer expectations. Collect that information by asking employers questions and directly observing the job. Keep in mind that more than one job might be available at any site. For example, a restaurant could have openings for a dishwasher, a prep cook, and a server. Interview the employer about all the jobs available, noting the work hours and job duties. If possible, observe the available jobs. Note any special skills required, such as filling out forms, operating complex machinery, or running a cash register.

**Compare the abilities and interests of the students with the specific jobs available.**
Develop a list of jobs that match the student’s interests and could be job placements. For example, a local retailer who has an opening for a stock clerk and a YTP student whose job goal is to work in retail sales and who has some previous experience stocking shelves at a grocery store looks, on paper, like a good job match, especially if the student is also available to work during the required hours. If the student is interested in the position, move ahead with the application and interview processes.

*Step 4: Facilitate Contact Between Employer and Student*

Connecting students with employers is the final step in the job matching process. This step can take different shapes. Some students can move ahead and apply independently with tailored job leads; other students might need help with most steps along the way. In some cases, it might be necessary to pre-arrange a placement for a student who significantly struggles to market their skills and abilities independently.

*Step 5: Follow up with Employers, Regardless of the Outcome*

Effective job developers follow up any facilitated contact a student has with a potential employer. This activity serves a dual purpose. First, it helps gauge the student’s performance during their interactions with the potential employer. Hearing the employer’s perspective can identify necessary areas of improvement in how a student applies or interviews for a job. Second, it is an opportunity to gather important information about the employer's perspective and strengthen YTP by preparing the student to respond to the needs of local employers.
Employment

Introduction

Employment is an integral part of most Americans’ lives. Most individuals with disabilities want a job, and some will need support to gain successful employment. Employment can look different for different people — some people with disabilities work full-time, 40 hours per week, and others are employed part-time, less than 40 hours per week; some are self-employed or work in the gig economy; and others can be employed in supported or customized jobs.

The ultimate goal for young adults participating in YTP is to find and maintain competitive integrated employment. Meeting that goal requires careful preparation, training, and support from the YTP TS.

Many YTP participants will exit YTP having obtained a job in the specific goal area identified in their IPE. Other students will exit from YTP before they attain their employment goals. Those students are often preparing for careers by engaging in more substantial training. In those cases, the YTP participant should be familiar with the adult services available to help them find a job after their training is completed successfully.

Understanding Common Employment Terms

Understanding the terms used to describe employment and how they apply to YTP helps students successfully navigate the real world of finding and keeping a job. These terms lay the foundation for helping students toward gainful employment in the community.

To ensure smooth collaboration between partners, YTP team members need to understand the common terminology used in the career development and employment field.

Employment

Employment is “service for an employer...performed for remuneration or under any contract of hire, written or oral, express or implied” (https://www.oregonlaws.org/ors/657.030). Within the context of YTP, the goal is to achieve a level of stability for the student and likewise for the employer. Although short-term employment can be helpful as work experience, some form of ongoing employment should be the goal when placing a student in their final job.

Competitive Integrated Employment

According to the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA), competitive integrated employment is work that:

A. is performed on a full-time or part-time basis (including self-employment) and for
which the participant is compensated at a rate that:

i. Is not less than the higher of the rate specified in section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1)) or the rate required under the applicable State or local minimum wage law;

ii. Is not less than the customary rate paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by other employees who are not participants with disabilities and who are similarly situated in similar occupations by the same employer and who have similar training, experience, and skills; and

iii. In the case of a participant who is self-employed, yields an income that is comparable to the income received by other participants who are not participants with disabilities and who are self-employed in similar occupations or on similar tasks and who have similar training, experience, and skills; and

iv. Is eligible for the level of benefits provided to other employees; and

B. Is at a location:

i. Typically found in the community; and

ii. Where the employee with a disability interacts to perform the duties of the position with other employees within the particular work unit and the entire worksite, and, as appropriate to the work performed, other persons (e.g., customers and vendors), who are not participants with disabilities (not including supervisory personnel or participants who are providing services to such an employee) to the same extent that employees who are not participants with disabilities and who are in comparable positions interact with these persons; and

iii. Presents, as appropriate, opportunities for advancement that are similar to those for other employees who are not participants with disabilities and who have similar positions. WIOA Rule 361.5(c)

In simplified terms, competitive integrated employment is “full or part-time work at minimum wage or higher, with wages and benefits similar to those without disabilities performing the same work, and fully integrated with co-workers without disabilities” (Institute for Community Inclusion, n.d.).

**Supported Employment**

According to WIOA, supported employment is:

A. Competitive integrated employment [that] is working on a short-term basis toward employment that is individualized, customized, consistent with the unique strengths, abilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual. This includes customized employment, or employment in an integrated work setting where an individual/youth with a most significant disability works on a short-term basis toward
competitive integrated employment, including with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities:

i. For whom competitive integrated employment has not historically occurred, or for whom competitive integrated employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability; and

ii. Who, because of the nature and severity of their disabilities, need intensive supported employment services and extended services after the transition from support provided by the designated State unit to perform this work.

B. For purposes of this part, an individual with a most significant disability, whose supported employment in an integrated setting does not satisfy the criteria of competitive integrated employment, as defined in paragraph B.iii. of Competitive Integrated Employment definition, is considered to be working on a short-term basis toward competitive integrated employment so long as the individual can reasonably anticipate achieving competitive integrated employment:

i. Within six months of achieving a supported employment outcome; or

ii. In limited circumstances, within a period not to exceed 12 months from the achievement of the supported employment outcome, if a longer period is necessary based on the needs of the individual, and the individual has demonstrated progress toward competitive earnings based on information contained in the service record. WIOA Rule 361.5(c)(53)

**Customized Employment**

According to WIOA, a participant with a significant disability can achieve customized employment, competitive integrated employment that is:

A. Based on an individualized determination of the unique strengths, needs, and interests of the participant;

B. Designed to meet the specific abilities of the participant and the business needs of the employer; and

C. Carried out through flexible strategies, such as:

i. Job exploration by the participant

ii. Working with the employer to facilitate placement, including:

   (1) Customizing a job description based on current employer needs or previously unidentified and unmet employer needs;

   (2) Developing a set of job duties, work schedule and job arrangement, and specifics of supervision (including performance evaluation and review), and determining a job location;

   (3) Using a professional representative chosen by the participant, or self-represent, to work with an employer to facilitate placement; and
Job Stabilization

i. Job stabilization is a VR term and is the ideal point of transition to extended, long-term support funded by an agency other than VR (or by VR in limited circumstances with youth) or to natural supports.

ii. Stabilization in employment will be part of the conversation from the beginning of IPE development to ensure that everyone on the team understands and recognizes job stabilization for the participant. The team, acknowledging that stabilization in employment is close, can then facilitate a timely transfer to extended services.

Process of Obtaining Employment

The process of helping YTP students find employment is one of the most significant priorities of YTP. How the TS should perform job development duties has been described above. How the team should help students obtain employment is described in greater detail below. The two different aspects of obtaining employment are important to understand, though they have some overlap.

Job placement is the key to successful outcomes for YTP students, as described below.

Step 1: Before Starting the Job Search

Ensure that the student’s portfolios are complete and presentable. A portfolio should include a resume and a master application. Resumes can take different forms, including the standard paper copy, electronic documents, or videos. Master applications are helpful documents to guide the process of completing online applications and should include all pertinent information in one place.

Depending on the student’s employment goal area, a cover letter might complete the portfolio. Although helpful and professional-looking, cover letters might not be necessary for all entry-level jobs, and they must in any case be tailored for each job application.

Step 2: Help Students Apply for a Position

Complete applications for potential jobs. Most employers will require that YTP students fill out an application, and some might request a resume before they will schedule a job interview. Help the student obtain and complete a presentable, competitive application. Remind the student about the importance of a neat application, paying attention to detail, thoroughness, demonstrating their work history, and honesty. Point out that employers often use the information in applications to develop interview questions that explore the applicant’s work history, skills, and qualifications.
Step 3: Help Students Interview for the Position

Schedule interviews with potential employers. Help the student contact targeted employers and schedule an interview. Ensure that the student know how to dress for the interview and how to get to the employment site. This might mean having them arrive at the TS’s office dressed for work or meeting them at the bus stop and physically going to the potential job site with them. Help the students prepare answers to interview questions specific to the company and job for which they are applying. Prepare the student to ask appropriate questions when given the opportunity during the interview.

Accompany the student to the interview (if necessary). Some students may feel more comfortable going to an interview alone, and some will want the TS to go with them. If they appear to be unready to answer questions independently, the TS might need to sit in on the interview. The TS might also need to answer the employer's questions about YTP. Observing an interview can help the TS determine whether the student’s needs additional interview practice.

Document each interview. The student should document each interview. The TS will also want to note the date and outcome of each interview in a tracking/monitoring system. This will allow the student to follow up 24–48 hours after each interview and keep track of the outcomes. Knowing the outcome promptly eliminates uncertainty and allows them to move on.

Step 4: Follow-up with the Potential Employer After the Interview

Have the student send a follow-up letter to all employers who interview them. Sending a follow-up letter or email after an interview demonstrates the student’s interest and follow-through. The student needs to learn how to write a brief follow-up letter after a job interview. This contact is their opportunity to thank the employer, emphasize to the employer how interested they are in the position, and provide any additional information requested in the interview. Help the student prepare a formal, typed letter. As with the application, the follow-up letter is an opportunity to make a positive impression on the employer. Work with the student to make sure it is error-free.

Check back with all employers who provided interviews. If employers don’t contact the student within a reasonable time (based on the timeframe discussed in the interview), encourage them to contact the employer to determine the job opening status. The student should find out whether the employer is interested in hiring them, with the understanding that YTP staff will be available to provide training and support as needed. It might be helpful for the TS to ask the employer for feedback on the student’s performance during the interview and their perception of the student’s potential for success on the job. Understanding students’ strengths or areas for improvement from the employer’s perspective is invaluable information that will help both staff and the student prepare for the next interview.
**Step 5: Follow Through After a Job Offer**

**Confirm that the job placement is appropriate.** The student and YTP team should decide together whether the offered job fits the abilities and interests of the student. This important conversation helps the student determine whether they should accept the job offer. This discussion can occur before the student applies for a specific job, after an interview, or after a job has been offered. Before the student make a final decision on a job placement, discuss the pros and cons of the job with them. Consider the following questions:

- Does the student have the basic skills needed to succeed on the job?
- Is the student interested in this type of work? Ensure that they asked the right questions in the job interview to understand the type of work that will be performed.
- Does the job fit with the student’s postsecondary employment goals, or is it just a job?
- Does the job provide benefits, opportunities for further training, or other aspects that would promote upward mobility?
- Where is the job located? If the student does not drive, is it within walking or biking distance from their home or near public transportation?
- What are the working hours? Are the hours adequately flexible if the student is enrolled in school?
- What are the wages and benefits? Is there a probationary period?
- Will the job need to be modified for the student; if so, how?
- What is the temperament of the supervisor? What is the work environment?
- Does the student need to disclose their disability to an immediate supervisor? What, if any, accommodations do the student need to request?

The answers to those questions will inform the student’s decision to accept or reject a job offer. Empowering the student to be self-determined self-advocates means they have the right to accept or reject a job offer. It also means that they need to fully understand the advantages and disadvantages of taking a job and the consequences of accepting or rejecting a job offer.

A TS can best prepare a student to make decisions that are right for them by understanding their preferences, interests, needs, and strengths, developing a well-articulated postsecondary goal that capitalizes on them, and matching the student with a job aligned with their goal.
Starting a Job — First day. Finalize arrangements for job placement with the employer. Once a student has a firm job offer from an employer and has accepted the position, there are a few final details to work out before their first day on the job.

- The student and employer must determine a start for on-the-job training and agree on a weekly schedule.
- Help the student plan transportation arrangements and provide transportation training, if needed.
- Prepare the student to request accommodations, if needed.
- The student should find out whether any special equipment or clothing is needed for this job and make arrangements to acquire it before the job begins. Often, the VRC can assist in paying for these job-related expenses.
- Ensure that all paperwork is in place — I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification, W-4 Employee’s Withholding Allowance Certificate, social security documents.
- Affirm the student’s readiness.

Starting a Job — First few weeks. Starting a new job begins a learning process for any new worker. They need to learn the new job duties and how to integrate into the work environment and build relationships with supervisors and co-workers to become effective employees. A YTP TS can support a student during this time of acclimatization. Depending on the student’s skills and abilities, such support can range from checking in and coaching them through minor challenges remotely to stepping in onsite to diffuse tension or even spending a few hours with the student on the job helping them master their job duties to meet their employers’ performance expectations.

In some cases, long-term support might need to be put into place. In those cases, the TS will have to transfer student support to appropriate providers, coordinating with VR and other agencies. During the first few weeks, the goal is to help the student reach stable employment and open the door to a successful closure of the VR case so the YTP team can decide to exit the student from YTP.

The Role of the Transition Specialist as Job Coach

Another tool to help a student maintain successful employment is job coaching. It often goes hand in hand with job development, complementing job search support by helping a student learn their job responsibilities effectively.

Job coaching can be used in many ways: helping a student learn their duties on the job with in-person support, such as prompting appropriate next steps in the workflow; video modeling; or offsite supports such as training in specific skills or workflow.
Job Coaching in YTP

The YTP TS is busy. Their duties range from delivering Pre-ETS to potentially eligible students, to screening and referring students for VR services, to building relationships with employers and agencies in the community. They also interact with staff within schools, develop jobs that meet each student’s employment goals, and coach them to succeed in those jobs. Job coaching can quickly become a daunting addition to the to-do list of a TS already balancing all of those tasks.

The time spent job coaching should be limited to about 10 hours per student to allow the TS to succeed in their job and meet the program’s performance expectations. The TS will be able to foresee a student’s needs for job coaching services during their extensive work together before the student lands a job. If they expect that 10 hours of job coaching will be insufficient to help the student successfully start their new job, the TS needs to collaborate with the VRC to realize another option. In some cases, the VR can arrange for more extensive job coaching through a VR vendor.

Long-term job coaching might also be available through other agencies when students need lasting support in employment. In those cases, the team (the TS, VRC, and appropriate agency) should work together to ensure a seamless transition of support services for the student.

5 Steps of Job Coaching

Job coaching can be complex and unique because it depends on an individual student’s employment and support needs. Nonetheless, five basic steps lay the foundation for successful job coaching. The following description is adapted from a resource developed for Wisconsin’s Let’s Go To Work project.

Step 1: Exchange Information with the Employer

Job coaching starts by reaching out to an employer and explaining the process and benefits of having the TS support a new hire on the job. Ideally, this can be done before a student starts their new job, allowing the TS and employer to exchange pertinent information.

The TS should obtain the student’s schedule, a job description, and any policies or procedures the employer can share about the processes of orientation and training. A TS should only perform job coaching at a worksite with the employers’ expressed permission. When on-site job coaching is not possible, the TS should learn as much as possible about the job expectations and then develop creative ways to support the student remotely.
The TS should also share helpful information with the employer, especially the most effective methods for communicating with the student. That allows employers to supervise their new employees, especially when a student experiences pressure or stress to meet the new employer’s expectations. In addition, the TS should clearly explain how an employer can and cannot support students in their new job.

**Step 2: Analyze the Worksite and Job**

The TS needs a solid understanding of the employer and the student’s job duties to provide successful job coaching services.

At the highest level, the TS analyzes the worksite to identify potential barriers. These can range from mobility obstacles to distractions or sensory over-stimulation. Knowing the potential barriers will help the TS identify any reasonable accommodations that might be needed and any coping strategies to teach the student.

While performing a job analysis, the TS examines the various tasks included in the job duties. Particular focus should be given to areas that might prove difficult and require more intensive training and skill development.

A task analysis will look in detail at the individual tasks students are required to perform as part of their job duties. This level of analysis should focus on tasks that might be difficult or challenging for the student.

**Step 3: Implement Systematic Instruction To Teach Job Tasks**

Once the TS has obtained permission to coach the student and completed the job analysis, they need to implement systematic instruction to help them successfully learn their job duties. Having come to know the student well through Pre-ETS delivery and helping them get in an IPE, the TS should be able to recall successful learning strategies that worked with this student in the past. No two students are alike, so this step will always have to be customized for each student.

Documenting a student’s performance while teaching them specific skills will provide the TS with an assessment that measures successes along the way. When it seems that a student is not making progress, consider changing the teaching techniques being used.

**Step 4: Support Natural Workplace Communication**

One of the most important features along the path of job coaching is helping a student learn and follow natural workplace communications. Asking a TS for clarification or help might seem to be the easiest way to get an answer, but the student needs to

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*Job coach* is a person who uses structured techniques to help individuals with disabilities learn and accurately carry out job duties. Job coaches provide on-the-job training and support the individual as they adjust to their chosen work environment. With this support, individuals will be able to become independent employees who can maintain employment.
identify the natural contacts in their work environment and reach out to them. Those contacts can be co-workers or supervisors, depending on the request. Helping a student build the confidence to reach out and the knowledge of the right people to talk to will lay the foundation for their success in the future, especially when tasks or job duties change.

*Step 5: Fading back from Direct Coaching and Teaching*

The TS will decrease their direct interactions the with the student as they learn their job tasks and build confidence in navigating their job duties and workplace environment. Gradually limiting the TSs presence at a job site while remaining available to consult or problem-solve will allow the student to develop independence as an employee.

**Essential Features**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 6.1 Essential Features of YTP Job Development, Employment, and Job Coaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **1. SYSTEM CHANGE:**  
YTP supports employment as the first priority consideration for students with disabilities. |
| **2. EMPLOYER RELATIONSHIPS:**  
YTP staff provide information to community employers and develop a network of employers who assist in providing YTP services. |
| **3. JOB PLACEMENT:**  
YTP students receive the instruction and support they need to obtain meaningful, paid jobs matched to their interests and skills. |
| **4. JOB MAINTENANCE:**  
YTP staff work effectively with employers, co-workers, and students to help students increase their job satisfaction and retention. |
| **5. TRANSITION SPECIALIST:**  
The role of the transition specialist is to be a job developer. Building relationships in the community and assisting in job placements are essential duties of the transition specialist. |
| **6. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT:**  
Families and friends can help YTP participants locate, obtain, and maintain competitive integrated employment. |
Chapter 7: FINAL JOB PLACEMENT AND FOLLOW-UP
Introduction to Final Job Placement and Follow-Up Services

Students in the Youth Transition Program (YTP) might experience several job placements or work experiences (e.g., volunteer or unpaid work, paid temporary work, or even holding a job to build skills and work experience). Final job placement and follow-up services are the last elements of the YTP process. This chapter describes the general procedures for preparing students for their final job placement and then monitoring their transition into the community. The procedures recommended here are intended to accomplish two major goals:

1. Helping students obtain and maintain competitive integrated employment as defined in their individualized plan for employment (IPE);
2. Conducting follow-up interviews and providing follow-up services to ensure students’ ongoing success.

The final job placement is the job a student has at the time they exit YTP services. It should be consistent with student’s vocational rehabilitation (VR) IPE goal. Once a student has reached their final job placement and is stable in the job for 90 days or more, they are exited from YTP, and follow-up services begin.

Follow-up services are the monitoring that the transition specialist (TS) does 6 and 12 months after the student exits YTP. During the follow-up period, the TS maintains contact with the student to ensure that they continue to be successful in their final job placement. Contact should be infrequent, and the support should decrease in intensity. A student should not be exited from YTP when they are still receiving frequent or significant support from the TS.

The YTP final job placement and follow-up process has three steps:

1. Determine whether the student should exit YTP.
2. Plan and prepare for the student’s exit planning meeting.
3. Provide follow-up services to the student.

Step 1: Determine Whether the Student Should Exit YTP

To put final job placement in context, recall the screening and referral process described earlier and partially shown in Figure 7.1. Following the provision of YTP services, the VRC closes the VR file either as a successful rehabilitation or as other. Regardless of how that case file is closed, the YTP team must decide whether the student continues with or exits YTP after VR closes the file.
Remember: the VRC unilaterally determines when to close a VR file, and the YTP team determines when to exit a student from YTP.

**Figure 7.1 Partial Screening and Referral Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continue YTP Services When...</th>
<th>Exit YTP Services When...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A student still needs constant and intense support and intervention.</td>
<td>• A student is stable in employment and no longer needs support from the transition specialist.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Continue YTP Services When...** | **Exit YTP Services When...**
---|---
• There is an impending change in the student’s life (e.g., change of job duties, promotion, changes in their family, life situation, or relationship situation) that could disrupt their success. | • A student is unresponsive; doesn’t follow-through.

• A student has not yet met their IPE goal(s). | • A student has met their IPE goal(s).

When VR closes a student’s file, the TS must review that student’s progress to determine whether they are ready to exit YTP. A student might be ready to exit YTP for any of several reasons, including:

• They met their goals and no longer need YTP services.
• They are on track to reach their goals, and no longer need support from YTP.
• They are unable to meet their goals, and YTP services are no longer appropriate.

Table 7.2 lists reasons that a student might exit YTP and criteria to consider when making the decision to exit a student.

**Table 7.2 Reasons Students Exits YTP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Exit from YTP</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Completed YTP successfully:** The student exits YTP because they’ve been engaged in employment for at least 90 days. | • The student obtained permanent competitive integrated employment, or
• Enrolled in long-term training, such as a college or university degree program consistent with the vocational goal identified in the IPE, and
• No longer needs YTP services. |

<p>| Transferred to the VR caseload: The student exits YTP as engaged in employment, training, or both. | • The student no longer requires YTP services but maintains an open file with their VR counselor (for example, the student might be enrolled in a long-term vocational training program or employed but requiring further disability accommodations provided by VR). |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Exit from YTP</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moved/unable to locate:</strong></td>
<td>• The student might have moved out of the area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student exits YTP as not engaged.</td>
<td>• The student’s VR file might have been transferred to another office or relocated to another state or country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The YTP team might be unable to locate the student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Declined services:</strong></td>
<td>• The student no longer wants to participate in YTP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student exits YTP as not engaged.</td>
<td><strong>Lack of follow-through or uncooperative behavior:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student exits YTP as not engaged.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the decision is made to exit a student from YTP, the TS remains in contact with them for 12 months, conducting follow-up interviews with the student 6- and 12-months after they exit the program. After the 12-month interview has been conducted, the student has completed YTP.

**Step 2: Plan and Prepare for the Student’s Exit Planning Meeting**

When the YTP team decides a student should exit YTP, an exit planning meeting is scheduled. Other key people, such as family members or agency personnel, may also be invited. If the student refuses to cooperate or simply disappears, the YTP staff might need to close the student’s case without holding an exit planning meeting. Exit planning can happen as a series of meetings or as a single event.

In preparation for the exit planning meeting, the transition specialist reviews the student’s case file to summarize and celebrate the student’s progress while in YTP. Part of the summary should be an evaluation of strategies that have proven helpful in the student’s employment or training. This summary should be used as a reason to celebrate and reinforce the skills and strategies the student has learned while in YTP.

**YTP Exit versus YTP Completion**

*YTP Exit* means the student is no longer actively involved in YTP activities and is not receiving ongoing YTP services from a transition specialist. At exit, the student moves into follow-up services, and interviews are conducted at 6- and 12-months.

*YTP Completion* means the 6- and 12-month interviews have been completed, data were entered into the YTP database, and the student’s YTP story is now complete.
Step 3: Meet as a Team with the Student to Complete the Exit Planning Process

Document the student’s status and goals achieved. The exit planning meeting should be a positive experience for the student; find reasons to celebrate, even if not all the goals have been reached. The meeting agenda should include:

- A review of the student’s current status and the progress made in YTP. Discuss their current educational, living, and employment status, giving a quick picture of what the student is doing.
- A focus on goals identified and achieved. This is an opportunity to look at the student’s progress in many areas of transition and celebrate their achievements.
- A focus on the student’s final job placement. Keep the discussion student-centered; ask for and respect the student’s opinions when answering the following questions:
  - Is everyone satisfied that this is a good job match for this individual?
  - Will there be opportunities for career advancement or further training in this position?
  - Are there any concerns or issues that could prevent the student from maintaining this job?

For YTP participants who exit YTP without meeting their IPE goals, the exit planning meeting is still an important process. It is important to note all the goals that were achieved (e.g., obtaining a high school diploma or passing the driver’s license exam). All students need to understand why they are leaving YTP and what they would need to do to re-enter YTP or the adult VR system.

Determine any unmet needs and describe follow-up services. The Core YTP team should identify any transition needs that have not been met through YTP.

The student must understand that although they are leaving the program, the TS will continue to monitor their employment, and they can continue to receive minimal support from YTP staff.

Step 4: Provide Follow-Up Services to the Student

Exiting a YTP participant triggers the start of follow-up services. The TS will check in with the student to learn about their current employment. If significant difficulties or challenges occur, the student can be referred back to VR or another agency to receive needed services.

The purpose of providing follow-up services is twofold:

1) to ensure that the student is successful in their placement and
2) to collect the program outcome data points required as part of the YTP site’s benchmarks.

To ensure that a student’s placement is successful, fading of supports must be implemented. In other words, interactions with the student should become less
frequent over time, encouraging their independence in the workplace and reducing the TS’s presence in their life. Although the contact becomes less frequent, the TS can still intervene at crisis moments.

**Collect follow-up information.** Follow-up services are designed to monitor the student as they transition into the community. The follow-up data contain each student’s engagement status and information about their job title, hourly wage, number of work hours, benefits, training programs, and number of training hours.

The TS should interview the student to collect that follow-up information 6-months and 12-months after the student is exited from YTP. The information can be collected over the phone or in a face-to-face meeting. Follow-up information should be collected from all students who have left YTP, even if they still have open files with VR.

**Document student status and need for services.** The TS completes the follow-up interviews and collects the data required in the secure YTP database. These data are used to determine whether the YTP site has met the benchmarks outlined in its intergovernmental agreement between the school district/education service district and VR.

**Provide follow-up services as needed.** The goals of follow-up are to (a) release the student into independence in the community, (b) provide a minimal level of support or case management to maintain independence, and (c) collect information to monitor program outcomes. Most YTP follow-up services are provided in employment and continuing education. Typical services are short-term and involve a minimal commitment of time and energy from YTP staff; examples include providing (a) information about job leads, (b) help updating a resume, or (c) referral for further education or training to meet a career goal.

If needs are identified through the follow-up interviews, the YTP team should schedule a meeting with the former YTP participant to develop a plan of services for the next six months. Examples of services could be phone calls, text messages (or social media interactions, if sanctioned by district policy), or brief visits at the job site to ensure that the student continues to be successful. These points of contact should be reduced over time, and data should continue to be collected 6-months and 12-months after exit. In some situations, significant interventions might be required. However, the guiding principle is that follow-up services should be short-term, involving a minimal time commitment from YTP staff. Table 7.3 lists a range of follow-up services and examples of services provided.

**Table 7.3 YTP Follow-Up Services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Examples of Services Provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up contact 6-months and 12-months after the YTP exit date</td>
<td>Phone contact or texting to conduct follow-up interviews at 6- and 12-months, depending on the student’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Short-term assistance provided by the YTP team without a change in VR status

Referral to another agency without a change in VR status

Short-term assistance from the YTP team

Long-term assistance provided by the YTP team, including reopening the VR file

The essential features described in Table 7.4 are the critical components of the YTP final job placement and follow-up services process. As long as all of the essential features are implemented, the process will be successful and create system change within the schools and community.

Essential Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 7.4 Essential Features of Final Job Placement and Follow Up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. **JOB PLACEMENT:**
   
   Once a student has developed the skills and independence necessary to hold a job, the TS helps them find a suitable placement that aligns with their IPE through Job Development.

2. **MONITORING:**
   
   Following a successful placement, the TS and VR counselor will monitor the student’s performance. After 90 days of successful employment, the Core YTP team will decide with the student whether to exit the student from YTP. Both the VR closure date and agreed-upon YTP exit date are entered into the YTP database.

3. **FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS AND DOCUMENTATION:**
   
   At 6 and 12 months, the TS interviews the student and records the student’s engagement status in the YTP database.
Chapter 8: PROGRAM PERFORMANCE AND OUTCOMES
Introduction

There’s an old adage that what gets measured, gets done. This chapter describes how the performance of the Youth Transition Program (YTP) is measured and evaluated. The performance measures are intended to accomplish the two primary goals of YTP:

1. To improve post-school transition outcomes for youth with disabilities by preparing them for employment or career-related postsecondary education/training.
2. To increase capacity and create system change in schools and other agencies serving students with disabilities as they transition from school to work.

Outcomes

The first YTP program goal focuses on the outcomes that YTP participants achieve when they exit and complete YTP, that is, being engaged in employment or enrolled in career-related postsecondary education/training. All YTP activities, resources, and efforts are directed to achieving that goal.

The YTP measure for that is Engaged at Exit. The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) measure (and a YTP benchmark) is Closed Rehabilitated. YTP participants are considered closed as rehabilitated when they achieve the employment outcome described in their individualized plan for employment (IPE), are stable, and maintain that outcome for at least 90 days. Each YTP site’s target for the percentage of students who are closed as rehabilitated is defined in the current biennium’s intergovernmental agreement (IGA). Those program benchmarks are monitored within the YTP database and can change as directed by VR.

Process Outcomes

The second program goal, increasing capacity and creating system change, focuses on how systems within the school and other agencies help youth with disabilities reach and maintain their employment outcomes. Although it is listed as the second goal, the systems and processes of YTP enable youth to prepare for and meet their employment outcomes. Without adequate systems and procedures in place — such as providing in-school transition services and pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS), allocating sufficient resources, and implementing key program areas (e.g., communication, staffing), the desired outcome listed first will not be achieved. The effectiveness and
efficiency of these processes are measured at the program and individual student levels in various ways.

At the program level, information is collected by assessing site needs, evaluating training events, and monitoring the database. At the student level, the benchmarks for In Application, Individualized Plans for Employment, and Follow-Up Support Services are indications that the student, and therefore programs, are on track to reach the closed-as-rehabilitated target. The information gained by monitoring the program performance is used to improve the systems and processes experienced by YTP participants.

The two major program goals are summarized in Figure 8.1. Fundamental to YTP is the belief that providing transition services, Pre-ETS, and YTP services increases the student’s likelihood of achieving positive outcomes. Data are collected and used to drive YTP program improvement to ensure that this formula works as intended.

**Figure 8.1. Formula for Success**

![Formula for Success Diagram]

**Using data to drive improvement.** Monitoring program performance is more than just watching benchmarks; it requires using data to guide program improvement and increase positive outcomes for each student with disabilities who participates in YTP. Two types of data are considered when examining a site’s YTP data — outcome and process data. Outcome data measure what the student achieved by participating in YTP. Process data measure which features of the program contributed — positively or negatively — to the outcomes.

Outcome data (summative) tell whether a specific goal or benchmark was met (e.g., 50% closed rehabilitation rate). Knowing whether an outcome was achieved is good, but it does not provide information about what to continue doing or what to change. Knowing what to change or maintain comes from evaluating the process.

Process data (formative) tell how or why a benchmark was met (e.g., all students had multiple work experiences before leaving high school). Process data are more valuable than outcome data for developing and implementing a program. Table 8.1 lists questions to consider when measuring outcomes and corresponding process questions. For more information on collecting or using outcome or process data, contact a Technical Assistance Provider (TAP).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome Questions</th>
<th>Process Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Are students meeting their IPE goals?                                             | • Are all YTP participants receiving Pre-ETS?  
• Are the predictors of post-school success used to give students the best opportunity to be prepared for employment?  
• Are key program areas (e.g., communication, staffing) implemented consistently?  
• Are YTP students participating in the general, in-school transition services provided to all students with disabilities, as well as those transition services provided to the general student population (e.g., college visits, resume writing, completing senior projects)?  
• Are IPEs being developed within 90 days?  
• Are students staying interested and actively involved in YTP?  
• Are students participating in Career and Technical Education classes? |
| Do IPE goal completion rates differ based on gender, race/ethnicity, disability, age, or school exit method (graduate or dropout)? | • Are the genders, race/ethnicity, disability of participants receiving Pre-ETS and YTP core services proportional to the school’s population? If not, why not?  
• Do all of the YTP participants have multiple paid work experiences before leaving school?  
• Is the YTP team collaborative and cooperative?  
• Are all the team members participating in team activities?  
• Should other agencies that can provide long-term supports and services be involved?  
• Have the site and community needs been assessed (e.g., What jobs are needed or available in the community)?  
• Are some activities relevant to most students (e.g., most students need a driver’s license)? |
| Do the YTP staff have what they need (e.g., knowledge, skills, resources) to do their jobs? | • Are sufficient resources allocated?  
• Have staff received the training and support needed to provide appropriate services to students?  
• Is specific training or technical assistance needed in an area (e.g., collecting data, working with collaborators, talking to employers, using the website, or reporting data)?  
• Are training events helpful and informative? |

The remainder of this chapter is divided into essential features (Table 8.2) and procedures for monitoring program performance in terms of the two major program goals of YTP.
Essential Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 8.2 Essential Features of Program Performance and Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. YTP STAFF ROLES:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YTP staff have clearly developed roles and responsibilities that capitalize on individual team members’ skills, strengths, and interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. SCHOOL/VR/FAMILY COLLABORATION:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YTP school and VR staff meet regularly to review each student's progress and program benchmarks and to coordinate delivery of services. The team communicates regularly with families regarding student participation in YTP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. COORDINATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The delivery of transition services is coordinated among YTP, existing school programs, adult agencies, and community programs. The family clearly understands the roles of the various agencies and programs that are supporting their young adult.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. SYSTEM CHANGE:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YTP staff have created opportunities for marketing the program to more effectively integrate YTP services into the school and community. Families are included as an integral part of the community of practice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Procedures

Each YTP site’s contract contains language about the responsibilities and benchmarks used to measure the effectiveness of that site’s YTP. Monitoring YTP is essential to program sustainability. Monitoring program performance at a given site has three basic steps:

1. Know the contract.
2. Monitor the benchmarks for the YTP site.
3. Conduct and monitor follow-up services.

Step 1: Know the Contract

Request and read the YTP contract, also known as the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). The IGA outlines important information relevant to operating a YTP site, including timelines, definitions, roles and responsibilities, and data collection elements for monitoring performance. For members of a consortium site with many schools or districts, ask for information relevant to the specific school or district.
When schools or districts apply to VR to be a YTP site, local education administrators determine the number of youth who will be served by YTP. That number, known as the student base, is used to determine the amount of time (i.e., full-time equivalent) the transition specialist (TS) can devote to YTP and to set the performance goals, or benchmarks, specified in the YTP contract. Having an adequate student base is critical to the overall success of a YTP site, which is why determining the student base is the first step in developing a YTP site.

**Step 2: Monitor the Benchmarks for the YTP Site**

As outlined in the site IGA, YTP sites are expected to fulfill performance benchmarks in three areas: (a) VR applications, (b) IPEs, and (c) percentage of students whose VR cases are closed as rehabilitated and who are engaged at program exit and 6-month and 12-month follow-up. These areas are assessed at specific intervals over the life of the IGA. Read the current IGA for the YTP site to learn key area’s dates and performance criteria. Below is a brief description of the three key areas.

(a) **VR applications:** Youth in YTP who participate in Core YTP activities are required to apply for VR services. Within the YTP database, the In-Application benchmark measures the number of students and correlating percentage of the student base that has met that criterion.

(b) **IPEs:** After students are found to be eligible for VR services, the VR counselor (VRC), with input from the student and the TS, writes the IPE. Participants are expected to be involved in developing their own vocational goals. The IPE activities are designed to help the student achieve their employment goal. The IPE should be written as soon as possible and no later than 90 days after eligibility is established. Within the YTP database, the IPE benchmark measures the percentage of the student base that has met that criterion.

(c) **Closed as rehabilitated:** When YTP participants achieve the employment outcome described on their IPE and maintain that outcome for at least 90 days, they are considered rehabilitated by VR. Within the YTP database, the Closed as Rehabilitated benchmark measures the percentage of the student base that has met that criterion.

(d) **Engaged at Exit and 6-month and 12-month Follow-up:** YTP exit and VR closure often occur on the same date. A student is considered to be engaged if they are employed or enrolled and participating in postsecondary education. Within the YTP database, engagement measures the percentage of students who meet either of these criteria at the time of YTP exit and the 6-month and 12-month follow-up interviews.
Step 3: Conduct and Monitor Follow-Up Services

Provide follow-up services as needed. Many young adults experience peaks and valleys after leaving the school system's predictability. Follow-up services provide ongoing support and crisis management to help these young adults manage the complex realities of the adult world during their first few years out of school, when many critical career decisions are being made.

The YTP follow-up process provides specific strategies for staff who work with the student during exit planning and follow-up. Several critical features are incorporated into the follow-up process.

- Each student participates in an exit planning meeting with key YTP staff.
- YTP staff monitor student progress for a year beyond program exit to document outcomes and the need for further services.
- YTP follow-up services emphasize each student’s self-determination and problem solving to help ensure independence.

When a student is ready to exit YTP, YTP staff meet with the student to conduct a follow-up interview. If substantial needs are identified through the follow-up interview, the YTP team should schedule a meeting with the student to develop a plan of services for the next six months. Follow-up services can vary in intensity, ranging from a phone call to check-in to reopening a VR file and developing a new plan for services.

When a YTP participant exits YTP, they move into follow-up status. A few key terms are important to understand relevant to exiting a student from YTP:

- **Exit from YTP** means that a student has met all of their goals and no longer needs active YTP services. YTP exit triggers the start of follow-up services. The decision to exit a student from YTP is made collaboratively by the TS, VRC, and the student.
- **Follow-up** means that for 12 months, YTP participants can continue to receive support services to encourage them to achieve or maintain a positive presence in the community.
- **Positive outcomes** are employment, training, or postsecondary education, and they are collectively known as *engagement*.
- **Engagement** is employment or enrollment in postsecondary education or training (or a combination of employment and education/training) consistent with a participant’s abilities, interests, and (when applicable) IPE.

Follow-up services emphasize self-advocacy and self-determination skills to ensure that the student and their families take ultimate responsibility for the transition process. At a minimum, follow-up services consist of check-ins with the student at 6-months and 12-months. Follow-up services are based on the individual needs of each participant and can include such things as:
• Gathering information,
• Allowing YTP staff to monitor their progress,
• Case management,
• Referral to other agencies,
• Information and referral activities for additional employment-related resources.

Table 8.3 lists the range of follow-up activities and includes some example services that can be provided. Follow-up services will be individualized and unique to each YTP participant.

**Table 8.3 Levels and Examples of Follow-up Services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Service</th>
<th>Examples of Services Provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>No intervention beyond follow-up contact in 6 months</strong></td>
<td>Phone contact to check in every 6 months for 1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Referral to another agency without a change in VR status</strong></td>
<td>Referral to Adult and Family Services to obtain food stamps, referral for family planning services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short-term assistance provided by the YTP team without a change in VR status</strong></td>
<td>Assistance with obtaining a promotion within their current job, assistance with living situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short-term assistance by the YTP team</strong></td>
<td>Purchasing tools or clothing needed to maintain a job or obtain a new job within the same general field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Long-term assistance provided by the YTP team, including reopening of the VR file</strong></td>
<td>Extended assistance with career planning, job placement, and job training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The goal of follow-up services is to collect outcome data and provide the minimal level of support or case-management services needed for YTP participants to maintain their independence in the community. Most YTP follow-up services are provided by the TS and are related to employment and continuing education. Most follow-up services are short-term, requiring a minimal commitment of time and energy from YTP staff. Typical follow-up services include providing information about job leads, helping to update a resume, or referring youth for further education or training. Occasionally, YTP participants require extensive vocational counseling or long-term training during follow-up. YTP participants who require such extensive services should return to VR, re-establish eligibility, and work with their VR counselor (VRC) to develop a new plan. At the end of 12-months, the YTP obligation for services ends. At that 12-month mark, the YTP participant is a YTP Program Completer. YTP maintains a secure online database for collecting follow-up data. Within the database, Individual Site Reports show each site’s progress toward achieving its benchmarks. Refer to the site’s IGA for specific benchmarks.
Continuing a Successful YTP Program

For YTP participants to achieve their desired postsecondary employment goals, they will need various program experiences to build skills. Each YTP site is unique, and how program experiences are provided will vary across YTP sites. A job club in an urban area of Oregon might operate differently from a job club in rural Eastern Oregon. Nevertheless, a job club's key characteristics should be apparent in both locations. Below are three strategies for building a solid YTP:

- Stay current with what’s happening in the field of transition.
- Implement the best available research.
- Work closely with the TAP assigned to the YTP site.

Exciting things are happening in the field of secondary transition. Although it is not the role of YTP to become political, what happens at the national and state levels influences YTP overall. Here are some recent highlights:

At the national level,

- The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was authorized in 2014. WIOA is the legislative authority for the VR system. WIOA supersedes the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and amends three other acts: (a) the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, (b) the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the (c) Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) was last reauthorized in 2004. IDEA is the legislative authority for special education. This manual will be revised as needed when reauthorization occurs.

At the state level,

- Oregon leaders have taken several steps to improve outcomes for youth with disabilities, especially as related to employment outcomes.
  - The Office of the Governor Executive Order 13-04 calls for improved systems for designing and delivering employment services.
  - The Employment First Initiative makes integrated employment the goal for all Oregonians with intellectual and development disabilities.
  - VR, the Oregon Department of Education, and the Office of Developmental Disability Services have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to share data.

YTP staff can do several things to stay current.

- Read updates and information from VR and the Oregon Department of Education.
- Talk with the YTP Management Team and local VRC about any updates, and understand the implications for YTP.
- Attend the required trainings provided by the YTP Management Team and the
required annual conferences sponsored by VR or the Oregon Department of Education.

• Join professional organizations focused on transition, career development, and VR. Those memberships often come with subscriptions to leading journals in the field, such as *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals* and the *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*.

**Implement the Best Available Research**

Recent research in secondary special education has identified 23 predictors of post-school success. *Predictors* are the in-school experiences that increase the likelihood that individuals with disabilities will have positive post-school outcomes in further education, employment, and independent living (Test et al., 2009; Mazzotti et al. 2015). For example, research has shown that youth who receive career awareness training in school are likely to have better outcomes in employment and education than those who do not. Community work experiences increase the likelihood that youth will have positive employment outcomes. Implementing the predictors of post-school success helps a YTP site and its students be successful.

Like the predictors, *effective practices*, also known as evidence- or research-based or promising practices, are instructional strategies that research has shown to be effective in helping youth learn specific skills. For example, mnemonics have been shown to be effective in teaching academic skills, and simulations have been shown effective in teaching banking skills and social skills. For a complete list of evidence-based transition practices, visit the website for the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition: The Collaborative (transitionta.org). Building a local YTP using the best available research increases the likelihood that students will learn the skills they need to achieve positive post-school outcomes. For more information about the predictors of post-school success or effective practices, talk to a TAP from the University of Oregon (UO).

**Work Closely with the UO Technical Assistance Provider (TAP)**

Lastly the technical assistance team at the University of Oregon (UO) has a wealth of knowledge and expertise related to about secondary transition and career development. The team consists of former educators, VRCs, school administrators, employment counselors, and the TS. This team is here to help YTP sites navigate and negotiate all aspects of YTP. For information or help, contact the UO TAP assigned to the YTP site.
APPENDICES
Appendix A: Transition Specialist Job Descriptions

Example 1

**Job Title:** Youth Transition Program Coordinator Vocational Education Consultant

**Reports To:** Administrator

**Evaluated By:** Director of Special Services

**JOB GOAL:** To coordinate, plan, and implement the Youth Transition Program (YTP) School to Work Program for the School District. To work in concert with the High School Special Education Team to identify community work sites that give target participants the opportunity to gain meaningful employment skills in a structured work setting.

**ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS:** To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to execute each requirement satisfactorily. The requirements listed below indicate the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for the position.

1. Have a high school diploma or equivalent, as required by OAR 581-37-030, Oregon Department of Education
2. Meet the federal requirements for being “highly qualified” (AA degree or 2 years of college, or pass the district test for academic knowledge and pedagogy)
3. Be 21 years of age or older
4. Be able to work harmoniously with others and communicate effectively (both orally and in writing) with participants, parents, staff, and community employers
5. Be able to understand and follow oral and written instructions
6. Be able to communicate with parents and community members
7. Be able to work with participants from a variety of ethnic, cultural, and language backgrounds
8. Be able to maintain confidentiality
9. Be able to work effectively in an environment that can be both physically and emotionally fatiguing; perform physically demanding job activities
10. Be able to develop curricular materials and participate in designing individual plans for participants
11. Be able to develop contacts in the business community to promote the district’s school-to-work program
12. Be self-directed in organizing, planning, and initiating community contacts and programs
13. Have an interest in developing participant programs about occupational choices
14. Be able to serve as the liaison between the district and Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR) and Developmental Disabilities Services

15. Understand district/school procedures and policies and be able to interpret them for participants, parents, staff, and community

16. Be familiar with federal and state regulations related to participant employment (wage and hour laws, etc.)

17. Be able to operate a computer, telephone, and other office equipment

18. Be able to perform secretarial and administrative support functions that require independent judgment, decision making, and problem-solving

19. Be able to respond to and direct participants

20. Be able to perform physical activities that require:
   A. A moderate degree of physical stamina
   B. Frequent standing, walking, bending
   C. Physically restraining a participant as needed
   D. Willingness to be exposed to bodily fluids when assisting participants in using restrooms and tending to injury and illness
   E. An ability to drive to various locations in the community and all school/district locations

21. Be able to perform other activities that the School Board or Administration deems appropriate and acceptable

**ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** In delivering YTP activities and assisting participants, the Youth Transition Program Coordinator’s duties shall include:

1. Identifying and referring participants to VR and, as necessary or as requested by VR, assisting VR in referring participants to other employment-related sources of assistance.

2. Gathering and providing school documentation of disability for each participant, along with other key information found in the participant’s Summary of Performance or individualized education plan (IEP) to help VR in determining the participant’s eligibility for VR services and identifying the participant’s vocational goals and supports.

3. Helping participants apply to VR to acquire transportation to keep appointments to assess their eligibility and determine their priority for services. Assist with transportation to help non-wait-listed participants keep appointments to access individualized plan for employment (IPE) services.

4. For participants subject to a VR Order of Selection waitlist:
   1. Ensuring that referrals are to non-YTP or non-VR-funded resources.
2. Ensuring that individualized information and referrals are provided to non-YTP and non-VR funded resources.

5. For non-waitlisted YTP participants:

1. Coordinating with VR and participants to schedule additional disability assessments or career exploration activities needed to develop each participant’s IPE.

2. Identifying transition and career-skill readiness deficits that need to be in a participant’s IPE.

3. Coordinating each participant’s IEP and IPE transition activities and services with VR.

4. In collaboration with VR, providing a variety of transition activities and services to participants, including developmental work experiences, job shadows, and career exploration activities, and develop paid employment opportunities consistent with the vocational goals of each participant.

5. Advocating for participants to ensure that they have access to the district training opportunities and resources they need to successfully transition from school to work or additional education and career training.

6. Providing referrals and access to individualized and group activities beyond the training or resources available to the general student body; examples include job clubs, community-based work experiences, work skill development, job coaching, community mobility training, selection or enrollment in postsecondary training, and arranging for long-term employment.

7. Providing individualized job development for both work experience and career-related employment.

8. Taking lead responsibility in helping participants ensure that their IPE activities are carried out. Could take the lead in developing the IPE with the participant (including working with the participant to identify their vocational goals).

9. Providing Follow-up Activities for 12 months following each participant’s completion or termination of campus-based secondary schooling activities to ensure continuing access to the resources required for success in postsecondary training or employment.

10. Collecting and reporting data to VR and the University of Oregon YTP Technical Assistance Team to document participant progress toward the completion of IEP and IPE activities.

11. Meeting with the VR counselor, as requested by VR, to provide updated information about participant progress and status of completion of secondary school, employment, or postsecondary activities.
12. Reporting to VR any change in the status of a participant that affects the successful completion of their IEP or IPE or the identification of appropriate resources.

6. Attending trainings and meetings provided by the YTP Technical Assistance Team, including trainings to improve the understanding and use of evidence-based VR practices, including the use of Motivational Interviewing methods.

7. Using the resources and training available on the YTP website to support and further develop an understanding of VR evidence-based practices.

8. Assisting participants in the completion of a variety of information forms and job applications, preparing for interviews, and completing GED tests.

9. Completing vocational and interest assessments with participants.

10. Facilitating opportunities for participants to visit a variety of work-related conferences and workshops, as available and appropriate.

11. Attending all staff in-service and training activities related to vocational education.

12. Maintaining a high level of ethical behavior and confidentiality toward participants and staff.

13. Facilitating the completion and maintenance of an individual work portfolio for each program participant.

14. Providing job coaching and on-site support to individual participants as needed.

15. Monitoring worksites and evaluating participants’ performance.

16. Communicating regularly with community employers and work-site supervisors about participant performance.

17. Organizing and arranging for a variety of pre-work activities (vocational surveys, shadowing, work crews on and off campus) that can lead to community-based work experience placements.

18. Matching the interests and abilities of each participant to potential worksites.

19. Participating in the team that designs IEPs and IPEs for participants.

20. Participating as requested in the team that designs individual transition plan for specific participants.

21. Maintaining records pertaining to the wage and hour laws for each participant in the caseload.

22. Helping at-risk youth remain in school or attain a GED.


24. Performing other tasks (which might require knowledge of other job descriptions) as deemed appropriate by the Board of Administration.
25. Maintaining satisfactory attendance, as defined in District policy and regulations.

CERTIFICATES, LICENSES, REGISTRATIONS, BONDING, AND/OR TESTING REQUIRED
1. Valid first-aid card, as required
2. Criminal justice fingerprint clearance
3. Valid Oregon driver’s license
4. Bloodborne pathogens training
5. Hepatitis B shot series training, as required

PHYSICAL DEMANDS: The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. (See addendum.)

WORK ENVIRONMENT: The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. (See addendum.)

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT: Days and hours to be arranged, with salary according to current schedule.

EVALUATION: Following the probationary period, the performance of this job will be evaluated annually in accordance with provisions of the Board’s policy on the evaluation of classified personnel.

I have read and understand the responsibilities and qualifications of this job description.

___________________________________________________________
Signature    Date

___________________________________________________________
Printed Name
Example 2

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Transition Specialist
Department: Special Education
Reports To: Coordinator
Salary: Classified salary schedule – Range 13 – 220 calendar days

JOB SUMMARY

Provides services to prepare secondary students for the transition to adulthood. Areas of services include employment, community training, and connecting students and families with community resources and services where appropriate.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The essential duties of this position include the following. Employees in this position perform some or all of the following tasks. Other related duties may be assigned.

1. Demonstrates proficiency in planning, organizing, and coordinating assigned tasks.
2. Coordinates with school districts and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services to identify students for referral to VR.
3. Provides recommendations about needed supports to help students be successful in transition-related activities and assists with the development of a transition plan.
4. Sets and manages student schedules for job shadowing, work experience, and other transition-related learning activities.
5. Develops community contacts for potential work experience sites.
6. Provides appropriate work/transition opportunities based on student needs and skills.
7. Develops students' communication and social interaction skills through specific instruction and interventions, using other available staff to assist when necessary.
8. With supervisor input, develops and implements employer feedback forms to provide instruction to students.
9. Maintains appropriate data to provide on-the-job training feedback to students.
10. Under direction of the supervisor, completes interest inventories and other formal and informal vocational assessments with students.
11. Assists students in selecting appropriate job experiences and post–high school vocational and educational goals.
12. Seeks to maintain close contact and communication with employers to adjust interventions and strategies that help students be successful on-the-job.
13. Tracks and reports student informational data as outlined in Youth Transition
Program Grant.
14. Oversees the maintenance and processing of a variety of confidential records and data.
15. Maintains ongoing and open communication with outside agency service providers to help in planning transitions into the adult world of work or further education and training, at the direction of the supervisor.
16. Seeks to resolve employer–student workplace conflicts.
17. Maintains open communication with participating school districts and Oregon VR.
18. Identifies professional strengths and limitations and sets and meets performance goals.
19. Creates a positive work environment by:
   a. Tolerating others' points of view.
   b. Soliciting input from others.
   c. Resolving conflict at the lowest level possible.
   d. Responding effectively to crisis situations.
20. Acts conscientiously by:
   a. Maintaining good attendance.
   b. Being punctual for stated office hours and meetings.
   c. Notifying appropriate staff and others of absences and schedule changes in a timely manner.
   d. Completing required paperwork in an appropriate time and manner.
21. Follows District procedures, especially as outlined in the Staff Handbook, and helps support staff to do the same.
22. Provides supervisor with a vision of how to move the transition program forward based on students' needs.
23. Provides IEP teams with relevant pre-employment and employment needs.
24. Provides students with a stable resource to help them process concerns and promote good work ethics.
25. Communicates clearly and effectively in a variety of situations, including difficult ones, with agency staff, district staff and the public.
26. Maintains positive public relations, demonstrates effective written and verbal communication skills, and acts as a team player.
27. Bring issues of non-compliance to the attention of the District.

MARGINAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The marginal duties of this position include the following. Employees in this position perform some or all of the following tasks. Other duties may be assigned.
1. Transports students around the community as needed.
2. Answers the telephone.
3. Types/generates grammatically correct documents as necessary.
4. Uses email.
5. Faxes documents.
6. Files documents.
7. Delivers paperwork to various locations.
8. Orders supplies as needed.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

None.

QUALIFICATIONS

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required. Reasonable accommodations can be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- **Education or Experience**: Have a high school diploma or general education degree (GED) and one to three months of related experience or training or equivalent combination of education and experience.

- **Interpersonal Skills**: Ability to work well with others, focus on resolving conflict, maintain confidentiality, listen to others without interrupting, keep emotions under control, remain open to others’ ideas, and contribute to building a positive team spirit.

- **Language Skills**: Ability to communicate fluently in English, verbally and in writing; verbally respond to common inquiries or complaints from students, parents, regulatory agencies, or members of the community; effectively present information to students, employers, and community members; read and interpret documents such as safety rules, operating and maintenance instructions, and procedure manuals; write routine reports and correspondence.

- **Mathematical Skills**: Ability to add, subtract, multiply, and divide in all units of measure using whole numbers, common fractions, and decimals; compute rates, ratios, and percentages; draw and interpret bar graphs.

- **Reasoning Ability**: Ability to solve practical problems and deal with a variety of concrete variables in situations in which only limited standardization exists; interpret a variety of instructions furnished in written, oral, diagram, or schedule form.

- **Computer Skills**: Have general knowledge of computer use and ability to use word processing and spreadsheet software, e-mail, and the Internet.

- **Other Skills and Abilities**: Ability to appropriately communicate with students, teachers, parents, and members of the community; exercise good judgment; and meet timelines while working in a dynamic environment.

- **Confidentiality**: Ability to maintain the integrity of confidential information about agency records and data, students, families, colleagues, and district patrons; use or relay personal and agency information only in the course of performing assigned responsibilities and in the best interest of the individuals involved.

- **Attendance Standards**: Ability to maintain timely and regular attendance, including being held accountable for adhering to regular work hours and
schedule. In the event an employee is unable to meet this expectation, they shall obtain approval from their supervisor in advance of any requested schedule change. This approval includes requests to use appropriate accruals, as well as late arrivals to or early departures from work and any special attendance needs of the position, as determined by the District.

- **Certificates, Licenses, Registrations**: Certificates as determined by the District, including a valid Oregon driver's license.

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations can be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to talk or hear, sit and use hands for fine manipulation, handling, or feeling. The employee is frequently required to stand. The employee is occasionally required to reach with hands and arms. The employee must regularly lift and move up to 10 pounds and occasionally up to 25 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.

**WORK ENVIRONMENT**

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations can be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

The noise level in the work environment is usually low. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is occasionally exposed to outdoor weather conditions, and the job entails working with standard office and instructional equipment with moving mechanical parts.

**SAFETY REQUIREMENTS**

1. Compliance with all safety rules, protocols, and procedures established at each specific worksite.
2. Completion of mandatory written reports after a safety or security incident.
3. Responsibility to communicate all safety-related incidents and concerns to supervisor and other responsible individuals at each worksite.
4. Maintain situational awareness of the environment at all times.

**OTHER**

*Note*: This is not necessarily an exhaustive or all-inclusive list of the responsibilities, skills, duties, requirements, efforts, functions, or working conditions associated with this position. This job description is not a contract of employment or a promise or guarantee
of any specific terms or conditions of employment. The District may add to, modify, or delete any aspect of this description (or the position itself) at any time as it deems advisable.

Prepared By: District Date Revised: ______

I have read and understand the responsibilities and qualifications in this job description.

___________________________________________________________
Signature    Date

__________________________________________________________
Printed Name
Example 3

TITLE: YOUTH TRANSITION SPECIALIST

QUALIFICATIONS

1. High school diploma or general education degree (GED).
2. A valid Oregon driver's license.
3. One to three months of related experience or training or an equivalent combination of education and experience.
4. Computer skills with word processing and database applications required.
5. Experience with student information software preferred.
6. Alternatives to the above qualifications that the District Board of Directors and Superintendent find appropriate and acceptable.

REPORTS TO

Student and Family Support Services Program Administrator

JOB GOAL

Provide services to help prepare secondary students for transition to adulthood. Areas of services include employment, community training, and connecting students to appropriate resources.

PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

The duties listed below are not inclusive, but they are characteristic of the type and level of work assigned for this position. Individual employees may perform all or some combination of the duties listed below, as well as other related duties.

Essential Functions:

1. Provides recommendations to supervisor about needed supports to help students be successful in their work on transition-related activities.
2. Sets and manages student schedules for job shadowing, work experience, and other transition-related learning activities.
3. Develops community contacts for potential work experience sites.
4. Provides work/transition opportunities appropriate to student needs and skills.
5. Develops students' communication and social interaction skills through specific instruction and intervention, using other available staff to assist when necessary.
6. With supervisor input, develops and implements employer feedback forms to provide instruction to students.
7. Maintains appropriate data to provide on-the-job training feedback to students.
8. Under direction of the supervisor, completes interest inventories and other formal and informal vocational assessments.
9. Assists students in selecting appropriate job experiences and post–high school vocational and educational goals.
10. Seeks to maintain close contact and communication with employers using data collected on the job to adjust interventions and strategies that help students be successful at work.
11. Tracks and reports student informational data as spelled out in the Youth Transition Program Grant.
12. Maintains ongoing and open communication with outside agency service providers to help students plan their transitions into the adult world of work or further education, at the direction of the supervisor.
13. Seeks to resolve employer–student workplace conflicts.
14. Maintains open communication with participating school districts and Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation.
15. Provides IEP teams with information about relevant pre-employment and employment needs.
16. Provides students with a stable resource to help them process concerns and promote good work ethics.
17. Transports students around the community when necessary.
18. Maintains regular attendance at work; is punctual in meeting deadlines, attending meetings, and following schedules.
19. Works well within a team; promotes good staff morale; and put team needs above individual needs.
20. Collaborates with others to complete tasks and solve problems in a positive manner.
21. Communicates effectively in a courteous, tactful, and professional manner.
22. Uses a teleservice platform to provide services to educators, students, and district staff as directed.

Other Functions:

1. Attend district and program-sponsored in-service and professional growth opportunities as assigned.
2. Work collegially with parents and school district, social service, and court-appointed personnel.
3. Provide summer services as required by the Grant Agreement.
4. Maintain confidentiality at all times.
5. Demonstrate a commitment to marketing equity and diversity.
7. Perform other duties as assigned.
8.

**WORKING CONDITIONS**

1. Ability to provide services on an itinerant basis in assigned geographic regions.
2. Ability to provide own transportation to schools, family homes, and agencies in assigned geographic region.
3. Ability to transport students in own vehicle around the community as needed.
4. Ability to sit for extended periods of time in a vehicle and at a desk.
5. Ability to lift and carry up to 40 pounds.
6. Ability to use computer for extended periods of time to generate reports and complete data entry and schedules.

**EMPLOYEE STATEMENT:** “I hereby certify that I possess the physical and mental abilities to fulfill the essential functions of the above position with or without reasonable accommodation. If I require accommodation(s) to fulfill any or all of these essential functions, I agree to provide all relevant information to ___________.”

**EMPLOYEE/SUPERVISOR STATEMENT:**
“We certify that we have reviewed and discussed the above position description and understand its contents.”

____________________________________
Employee Name (Please Print)

____________________________________
Employee Signature Date

____________________________________
Supervisor Signature Date
Example 4

TITLE: Youth Transition Program Specialist

REPORTS TO: Director/Coordinator or Designee

JOB SUMMARY

To coordinate, plan, and implement the Youth Transition Program (YTP) School to Work Program for the ESD. This work is done in collaboration with high school teams, students, parents, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselors, and other community partners to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETSs) and core YTP services to eligible participants within the component districts. The overall goal is to assist transition-age students who experience disabilities in securing appropriate, meaningful employment or postsecondary education to ensure their success and independence. This position differs from the Transition Network Facilitator/Pre-ETS Support Specialist in that it works under the supervision of the district’s Special Education director or superintendent in conjunction with their ESD supervisor.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Assists the Transition Network Facilitator.
- Identifies and refers participants to VR; as necessary or as requested by VR, assists VR in referring participants to other employment-related sources of assistance.
- Gathers and provides school documentation of each student's disability and other relevant information that can be found in the student's Summary of Performance or IEP to assist VR in determining the student's eligibility for VR services and identifying individual vocational goals and supports; coordinates each student's IEP and Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) transition activities and services with VR.
- Assists students with VR application to acquire transportation to keep appointments for assessing their eligibility and determining their priority for services; assists with transportation for non-waitlisted participants to keep appointments for accessing IPE services.
- Coordinates with VR and participating students to acquire additional disability assessment or career exploration activities needed to develop the IPE.
- Identifies transition and career-skill readiness deficits that need to be in each student's IPE.
- Coordinates the IEP and IPE transition activities and services of participating students with VR.
- Collaborates with VR to provide a variety of transition activities and services to students, including the development of work experiences, job shadows, and career exploration activities and the development of paid employment
consistent with students’ vocational goals.

- Advocates to ensure that student participants have access to the District training opportunities and resources they need to successfully transition from school to work or additional education and career training.
- Provides referrals and access to individual and group activities beyond the training or resources available to the general student body; examples include job clubs, community-based work experience, work skill development, job coaching, community mobility training, selection or enrollment in postsecondary training, and arranging for long-term employment.
- Provides individualized job development for both work experiences and career-related employment.
- Works with participating students to develop the contents of the IPE (including assisting the student in identifying their vocational goals).
- Provides Follow-up Activities for 12 months following students' completion or termination of campus-based secondary schooling activities to ensure continuing access to the resources required for success in postsecondary training or employment.
- Collects and reports data to VR and the University of Oregon YTP Technical Assistance Team to document student progress toward the completion of activities related to IEPs and IPEs.
- Meets with the VR counselor, as requested by VR, to provide updated information about student progress and status in completing secondary school, employment, or postsecondary activities; reports to VR any change in student status that would affect the successful completion of their IEP or IPE; identifies appropriate resources.
- Attends trainings and meetings provided by the YTP Technical Assistance Team, including activities promoting the understanding and use of evidence-based VR practices, such as the use of Motivational Interviewing.
- Uses the resources and training available on the YTP website to support and further develop an understanding of relevant evidence-based practices.
- Assists students in completing a variety of forms and job applications, preparing for interviews, and completing GED tests.
- Facilitates opportunities for students to visit a variety of work-related conferences and workshops, as available and appropriate.
- Attends all staff in-service and training activities related to vocational education.
- Maintains a high level of ethical behavior and confidentiality concerning students, families, and staff.
- Facilitates the completion and maintenance of an individual work portfolio for each student participant.
- Monitors worksites and evaluates student performance.
- Communicates regularly with community employers or worksite supervisors regarding student performance.
- Organizes and arranges for a variety of pre-work activities (vocational surveys, shadowing, work crews on and off campus) that can lead to community-based
work experience placements.

• Matches the interests and abilities of each student to potential worksites.
• Participates in the team that designs individual plans for qualified students to achieve self-sufficiency and employability.
• Maintains records pertaining to the wage and hour laws for each student on the caseload.
• Performs other tasks deemed necessary or appropriate by the Board or Administration.
• Maintains satisfactory attendance, as defined in District Policy and regulations.

QUALIFICATIONS

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required. Reasonable accommodations can be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

• **Education and Experience:** Preferred experience working in special education at the secondary level; experience working with secondary transition-age students; an understanding of or experience working with adult service agencies and providers.

• **Interpersonal Skills:** Ability to work with students of varying ages, genders, races, ethnicities, and religious and social backgrounds; work as part of a multidisciplinary team; solve conflicts; maintain confidentiality; listen to others without interrupting; keep emotions under control; remain open to others' ideas; contribute to building a positive team spirit; successfully work with students, staff, and the public.

• **Language Skills:** Ability to communicate fluently in English, verbally and in writing; effectively present information and respond to questions from students and other school staff in one-on-one and small group situations; verbally respond to common inquiries from students; read and interpret documents such as safety rules, operating and maintenance instructions, procedure manuals, and governmental regulations; write routine reports and correspondence.

• **Reasoning Ability:** Ability to apply common sense understanding and carry out instructions furnished in written, oral, schedule or diagram form; deal with problems involving several variables in a variety of situations.

• **Computer Skills:** General knowledge of computer use; ability to use database software, e-mail, internet software, spreadsheets, and word processing software, with knowledge of the MS Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook) and Visions/Citrix database strongly preferred.

• **Other Skills and Abilities:** Attends work regularly and as scheduled; ability to perform all functions of the job, with reasonable accommodations provided as needed; ability to exercise good judgment and work in an environment with constant interruptions; ability to work independently.

• **Certificates, Licenses, Registrations:** A valid Oregon driver’s license; ability to obtain a valid CPR/First Aid card.
PHYSICAL DEMANDS

The physical abilities described here are representative of those that an employee will need to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations can be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- Frequently required to walk, stand, and sit.
- Occasionally required to bend, stoop, kneel, climb stairs, crouch, or crawl.
- Regularly required to talk and hear.
- Use hands for fine manipulation, handling, or feeling; reaching with hands and arms; operating a computer keyboard and mouse.
- Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, color vision, night vision, ability to adjust focus, and peripheral vision.
- Regularly lift and move up to 15 pounds and occasionally up to 25 pounds.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations can be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

The noise level in the work environment is usually low to moderate, but occasionally high depending on the student population and activities. The employee is occasionally exposed to wet or humid conditions and outdoor weather conditions. Employee might be exposed to bloodborne pathogens.

Note: This is not necessarily an exhaustive or all-inclusive list of responsibilities, skills, duties, requirements, efforts, functions, or working conditions associated with the job. This job description is not a contract of employment or a promise or guarantee of any specific terms or conditions of employment. The school district may add to, modify, or delete any aspect of this job (or the position itself) at any time it deems advisable, contingent on the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

I have read and understand this job description.

Signature: _______________________
Date: _______________________

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Appendix B: Functional Limitations

The following pages contain a Functional Limitations checklist designed to bridge the needs of the education system and Vocational Rehabilitation services. This form can be filled out by school staff, based on their knowledge and observations of students. It allows Vocational Rehabilitation counselors to develop a better understanding of a student’s limitations based on their disability.
Functional Limitation Statement

Educators Vocational Rehabilitation

Functional capacities are life activities or skill areas that significantly affect the ability to be successfully independent or employed. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation has defined eight such areas to identify functional limitations and determine the severity of an individual’s disability.

Student/Student Name: ___________________________ Date Reviewed:_______
Form Completed By: _______________________________ Title_____________
Return To: ______________________________________ By: _______________

Directions for Special Education Case Managers: Using your knowledge of your student’s skill and Individual Education Plan (IEP), please complete the following document, checking off appropriate functional limitations under each category and ‘none’ in categories when appropriate. Please add relevant information that is missing from this generalized document under ‘other.’ Please return to the identified staff by the date listed above. This information is integral to employment planning and agency support for the student identified.

INTERPERSONAL: The ability to interact easily and comfortably with others.

- Difficulty recognizing social cues (i.e., facial expression, body language, tone of voice, personal space)
- Difficulty handling constructive criticism
- Difficulty managing frustration (i.e., overreacts, withdraws)
- Lacks appropriate social skills or uncomfortable in social situations
- Difficulty effectively resolving conflict or problem solving
- Difficulty working in groups
- Other____________________________________________________________
- None

MOBILITY: The physical, cognitive, and psychological ability to move from place to place inside and outside the home.

- Difficulty using public transportation
- Requires assistance getting around community
- Difficulty reading street signs or bus schedules
- Difficulty recalling basic location directions
- Difficulty traveling due to social, emotional, or physical challenges
Functional Limitation Statement

Educators Vocational Rehabilitation

- Difficulty managing time independently
- Balance/gross motor coordination issues
- Limitations in understanding directions, organization, sequences, or plans
- Other
  *Please note if student uses a wheelchair, cane, or guide dog.
- None

**MOTOR SKILLS**: The purposeful movement and control of the body and its members to achieve results.

- Difficulty with the use of upper extremities to obtain, control, and manipulate objects
- Has partial or total loss of functioning in one or both upper or lower extremities
- Experiences loss of control and coordination during fine/gross motor movements
- Difficulty performing activities of daily living such as feeding, with or without the use of aids/prostheses
- Difficulty performing tasks at a competitive pace
- Moves slower than average or fatigues easily
- Has involuntary movements that interfere with the ability to control and coordinate muscles
- Other
- None

**SELF-CARE**: The ability to care for one’s self and living environment.

- Difficulty performing daily living activities independently (i.e., hygiene, feeding, toileting, safety, health)
- Difficulty adjusting to changes in routine (i.e., transitioning from one activity to another)
- Poor decision making or unawareness of consequences of behavior
- Requires support or personal care attendant
- Difficulties in math or reading that affect management of finances, transportation, and health care
- Impaired ability to apply past experiences and learning to decision making
- Needs adaptations in their environment to be independent
- Vulnerable or susceptible to being taken advantage of
- Difficulty recognizing a threat or potentially dangerous situation
- Other
- None

**SELF-DIRECTION**: The ability to regulate behavior in a purposeful and predictable way, taking into account personal goals, environmental conditions, cultural values, and expectations.

- Impaired ability to follow directions
- Impaired ability to complete tasks and work independently in a timely manner
- Lack of self-advocacy skills
- Inability to use feedback to improve or correct work performance
Functional Limitation Statement

Educators ⚆ Vocational Rehabilitation

- Inability to sustain effort and stay focused, especially when confronted with a problem or change
- Impaired ability to understand and change behavior as a result of consequences
- Difficulty initiating work and working independently
- Difficulty shifting from one activity to another
- Cognitive deficits that impair work quality or productivity
- Inability to make decisions independent of others
- Other
- None

COMMUNICATION: The ability to exchange (give and receive) information.

- Unable to communicate verbally
- Speech and verbal language are difficult to understand
- Unable to effectively communicate via telephone, email, or text
- Difficulty initiating or sustaining conversation
- Conversation is limited to single words, short phrases, or illogical rambling
- Talks and interrupts excessively
- Difficulty following written instructions or interpreting written materials
- Difficulty communicating needs effectively
- Difficulty understanding instructions and expectations
- Difficulty generalizing, transferring, or assimilating information
- Illegible handwriting
- Unable to describe skills, work, and education (i.e., application/employment interview)
- Other
*Please note if student uses sign language, braille, lip reading, or augmentative communication device.
- None

WORK TOLERANCE: The capacity to meet the physical and psychological demands of work.

- Difficulty completing a full day of school
- Poor attendance
- Has low capacity or endurance due to physical or mental limitations
- Difficulty managing stressful environments
- Needs frequent breaks or modified schedule
- Inability to remain in one physical location for extended times without fidgeting, feeling restless, or fleeing the site
- Difficulty ignoring normal background noise to focus on a task
- Difficulty establishing or maintaining relationships with peers or staff
- Other
- None
Functional Limitation Statement

Educators Vocational Rehabilitation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORK SKILLS: The capacity to learn and perform tasks.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty maintaining attention on a task for a reasonable amount of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty remembering directions or needs information repeated frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant impairments in academic skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently tardy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty learning new tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty taking initiative without prompts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs frequent reminders to stay on task until completion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impaired ability to refocus after interruption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty conforming to established rules or norms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impaired ability to remain aware of and adhere to safety guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impaired ability to generalize learning from one job task to another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note any assessment scores available:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive Assessments</th>
<th>Adaptive Behavior Scales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Behavior Rating Scales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary:

NOTE: The lists provide examples only and should not be used to exclude an individual who might qualify for VR services. This information includes Vocational Rehabilitation’s definitions of functional capacity areas. This information can be incorporated within a variety of special education documents, such as the Individualized Education Plan, psychological reports, or vocational assessment summaries.

Adapted from:
- Cooperative Assessment Guidelines for School Practitioners, Colorado Department of Education: Exceptional Student Services Unit and Department of Human Services: Vocational Rehabilitation (January 2004)
- Linn Benton Lincoln Youth Transition Program
Appendix C: YTP Forms

The following pages contain a collection of forms that might be useful to YTP Transition Specialists. The intent of these forms is to provide sites with a starting point. These forms can and should be modified to meet the needs of each YTP site.

Transition specialists should always remember that forms containing confidential information should be stored in a secure location in accordance with district policies and that the information collected should be used only for the intended purposes.
Employment Site Screening Form

Name of Company: ____________________________________________ Date: 

Address _____________________________________________ Phone: 

City ________________________________ State ______________________ ZIP 

City ________________________________ State ______________________ ZIP 

On or near public transportation? YES _______ NO _______ 
Primary contact person(s): 

________________________________________________________ ________________

Title: 

________________________________________________________ ________________

Best time to contact: 

Description of business: 

________________________________________________________ ________________

Types of jobs available: 

________________________________________________________ ________________

SUPERVISION PROVIDED (Is supervision adequate for YTP student’s needs?) POOR FAIR GOOD 

EMPLOYER’S ATTITUDE (Is the employer flexible and open to hiring people with disabilities?) POOR FAIR GOOD 

NATURAL SUPPORTS (Are there opportunities for co-workers to provide ongoing support?) POOR FAIR GOOD 

Is the employer interested in…? (Check all that apply) 

_____ having students tour or job-shadow 

_____ talking to students at YTP class 

_____ serving as a volunteer mentor 

_____ placing students in work experience positions 

_____ hiring students as paid employees 

COMMENTS: 

________________________________________________________________________ 

________________________________________________________________________ 

________________________________________________________________________ 

__________________________________________
Student Summary Form

Name ___________________________________________________ Date ___________

1. Student job goals: ___________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________

2. Hours available to work: ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________

3. Type of transportation used: _________________________________________
4. Previous work experience (paid or unpaid): ____________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________

5. General vocational profile: For each specific skill listed, indicate whether this is an area of strength (S) or weakness (W) for this student.

   INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION SKILLS
   ___ working with the public
   ___ answering the telephone
   ___ working as a member of a team
   ___ following verbal directions
   ___ other ________________

   FUNCTIONAL ACADEMIC SKILLS
   ___ operating cash register
   ___ counting change
   ___ completing paperwork/forms
   ___ following written directions
   ___ other ________________

   PHYSICAL DEXTERITY/STRENGTH
   ___ repeated bending/lifting
   ___ standing for extended periods
   ___ using heavy equipment
   ___ working quickly
   ___ other

   OTHER JOB SPECIFIC SKILLS
   ___ working independently
   ___ ____________________
   ___ ____________________
   ___ ____________________
   ___ ____________________

   Comments:
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________
Resume Worksheet

Name: ____________________________________________________________________
Address:___________________________________________  PHONE ______________

WORK EXPERIENCE
Job Title __________________________ Duties:  ________________________________
Employer _________________________ ________________________________
City/State _________________________ ________________________________
Start/End Dates ____________________ ________________________________

Job Title __________________________ Duties:  ________________________________
Employer _________________________ ________________________________
City/State _________________________ ________________________________
Start/End Dates ____________________ ________________________________

EDUCATION (Grade/High School/City & State)
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

SKILLS & EXPERIENCE
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

REFERENCES
Name: ______________________________________________ Phone: ______________
Address:  ________________________________________________________________

Name: ______________________________________________ Phone: ______________
Address:  ________________________________________________________________

1 References should never be included on a resume. However, it is important to identify appropriate references at the beginning of the job search process.
Common Interview Questions and Tips for Answering Them

1. **TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF.**
   *Tips for Answering Question 1:*
   
   The employer is looking for an idea about your confidence and ability to handle yourself under pressure and a description of your background and abilities as they relate to the job.

   Mention those things that you are proud of and comfortable talking about, keeping them job-related. For example, talk about your skills, abilities, personal qualities, work experience, or vocational training.

2. **WHY DO YOU WANT TO WORK HERE?**
   *Tips for Answering Question 2:*
   
   You should be excited about working for the employer who is interviewing you. Do some research on the company so that you have a list of reasons that you want to work there.

3. **WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS?**
   *Tips for Answering Question 3:*
   
   If you do not know where you will be in five years, remember that is true for most people. Be honest.

   Try to keep your answers related to the job you are applying for.

   Ask the employer about ways to advance within the company.

4. **WHY SHOULD I HIRE YOU?**
   *Tips for Answering Question 4:*
   
   This is your chance to tell the employer about your best qualities and your strongest skills. Be positive!

   Think about what the employer needs and describe how you could meet those needs.

5. **WHAT ARE YOUR STRENGTHS?**
   *Tips for Answering Question 5:*
   
   Remember that we all have strengths. It is important to be able to notice yours and talk about them with an employer.

   Talk about the strengths you have that are important for the job for which you are applying.

6. **WHAT ARE YOUR WEAKNESSES?**
   *Tips for Answering Question 6:*
   
   Be willing to admit that you have weaknesses.

   Mention to the employer how you are working to correct your weaknesses.
7. WHY DID YOU LEAVE YOUR LAST JOB?
   *Tips for Answering Question 7:*
   Give a short explanation for why you left your last job. Don’t talk about the problems or faults of your last employer.
   Remember, your past employer might be called for a reference check. Your stories should match.

8. WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR LAST JOB?
   *Tips for Answering Question 8:*
   Talk about some part of your last job that you will also find in your new job. For example, “I liked working around people.”
   If you don’t have anything good to say, don’t say anything at all.

9. HOW ARE YOU QUALIFIED FOR THIS JOB?
   *Tips for Answering Question 9:*
   It is a good idea to first communicate your understanding of the job before you answer this question. If your understanding is correct, the employer will be pleased. If not, the employer will be happy to correct you.
   Remember that you are qualified or the employer would not be having an interview with you. This is your chance to really sell yourself as the person to be hired for this position.

10. WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT OUR COMPANY?
    *Tips for Answering Question 10:*
    Make positive statements about the company based on the research you have done. For example, “I know that this is a very competitive firm that has been growing very quickly.”
    If you haven’t researched the company, your best response is probably, “Actually, I know very little about your company. I wonder if you would mind answering a few questions.”

11. HOW SOON COULD YOU START?
    *Tips for Answering Question 11:*
    If you already are working, you need to be fair and give two weeks’ notice to your employer. The interviewer will respect you for your consideration.
    Good answers for people who can start work right away are “Today!” or “Anytime, you name it!”

12. DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS FOR ME?
    *Tips for Answering Question 12:*
    Remember that you are interviewing the employer as well as being interviewed. By asking questions, you let the employer know that you are looking for the right place to put your skills to work.
You should be prepared to ask at least three or four good questions. You can ask questions in any of the following categories.

- About the job (what are the exact job duties?)
- About the work environment (Where would I be working?)
- About the company (About how many people work here?)
- About the opportunities (If I start working here as a busboy and show I am a good worker, can I work up to being a waiter?)

You should end the interview by finding out when the employer will make a decision about hiring.
1. Tell me about yourself.
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

2. Why do you want to work here?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

3. Where do you see yourself in five years?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

   Why should I hire you?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

4. What are your strengths?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

5. What are your weaknesses?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

6. Why did you leave your last job?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
7. What did you like most about your last job?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

8. How are you qualified for this job?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

9. What do you know about our company?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

10. How soon could you start?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________

11. Do you have any questions for me?
__________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Contact Person</th>
<th>Call Back</th>
<th>Turned in Application</th>
<th>Job Interview</th>
<th>Comments/Follow-up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
Open Job Summary Form

Employer ________________________________ Date ____________________

1. Job(s) available

__________________________________________________________________

2. Work hours required

__________________________________________________________________

3. Wages/benefits offered

__________________________________________________________________

4. Job duties:

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

Specialized skills required: (Check all that apply):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMUNICATION SKILLS</th>
<th>PHYSICAL DEXTERITY/STRENGTH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>______ working with the public</td>
<td>______ repeated bending/lifting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______ answering the telephone</td>
<td>______ standing for extended periods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______ working as a member of a team</td>
<td>______ using heavy equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______ following verbal directions</td>
<td>______ working quickly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______ other ________</td>
<td>______ other ________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNCTIONAL ACADEMIC SKILLS</th>
<th>OTHER JOB SPECIFIC SKILLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>______ operating cash register</td>
<td>______ working independently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______ counting change</td>
<td>______ ________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______ completing paperwork/forms</td>
<td>______ ________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______ following written directions</td>
<td>______ ________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>______ other ____________________</td>
<td>______ ________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________
Monthly Progress Report

Name _________________________ Employer: _______________________________________

Please rate this individual’s current performance in the following areas:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Behaviors</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Attends work regularly and calls when unable to come to work.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Arrives at work on time and follows break/departure schedule.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Follows workplace rules and regulations, including safety rules.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Meets expectations for the quantity and quality of work.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Adjusts to changes in work schedules, routines, or assignments.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Maintains good working relationships with co-workers and supervisors.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Job Duties</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Employer Signature: ________________________________ Date: __________
Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are commonly used in education and transition services provision. Many are used within this manual, and others are included as a reference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>504</td>
<td>Section 504 Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADA</td>
<td>Americans with Disabilities Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMCHP</td>
<td>Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Camp LEAD (Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAS</td>
<td>Community Access Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIE</td>
<td>Competitive Integrated Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIS</td>
<td>Oregon Career Information Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTE</td>
<td>Career and Technical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Developmental Disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRO</td>
<td>Disability Rights Oregon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Evidence Based Practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EP</td>
<td>Effective Practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESD</td>
<td>Educational Service District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTE</td>
<td>Full-Time Equivalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Intellectual Disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEP</td>
<td>Individualized Education Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEA</td>
<td>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Also refers to Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEA 2004</td>
<td>Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGA</td>
<td>Intergovernmental Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPE</td>
<td>Individualized Plan for Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LTS</td>
<td>Long Term Supports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTACT</td>
<td>National Technical Assistance Center on Transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTACT:C</td>
<td>National Technical Assistance Center on Transition the Collaborative (formerly known as NTACT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Office of Developmental Disability Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODE</td>
<td>Oregon Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVR</td>
<td>Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVRS</td>
<td>Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PA  Personal Agent
PINS  Preferences, Interests, Needs, and Strengths
PLAAFP  Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance
Pre-ETS  Pre-Employment Transition Service
PSE  Post-Secondary Education
PSW  Personal Support Worker

R
RES  Regional Employment Specialist (ODDS)
RSA  Rehabilitation Services Administration

S
SB  Student Base
SC  Service Coordinator (ODDS)
SAS  Self-Advocacy Strategy
SD  School District
SD IEP  Self-directed Individualized Education Plan
SLD  Speech/Language Pathologist
SOP  Summary of Performance
SPED  Special Education

T
TAP  Technical Assistance Provider
TNF  Transition Network Facilitator
TS  Transition Specialist
U
UO  University of Oregon
V
VR  Vocational Rehabilitation
VRC  Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

W
W-4  Employee’s Withholding Allowance Certificate
WBL  Work-Based Learning
WBLE  Work-Based Learning Experience
WFA  Whose Future is it Anyway?
WINTAC  Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center
WIOA  Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014

Y
YCC  Youth Conservation Corps
YTP  Youth Transition Program
References


Resources


Self-Advocacy Strategy https://kucrl.ku.edu/self-advocacy

The Age-Appropriate Transition Assessment Toolkit (4th ed.)

Effective Practices in Secondary Transition: Operational Definitions

Transition Assessment Resource Kit
https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/SpecialEducation/SecondaryTransition/Pages/transrefmaterialsbooklets.aspx

Transition Technical Assistance Network
https://transitionoregon.org

Effective Practices Curricula

Corrective Reading Curriculum (reading)
https://www.mheducation.com/prek-12/program/MKTSP-URA04M0.html?page=1&sortby=title&order=asc&bu=seg

Envision IT (college and career readiness)
https://transitiontn.org/vr/curriculum/envision-it-curriculum/

Expressive Writing Level One (writing)
https://www.mheducation.com/prek-12/program/expressive-writing-1-2-20052005/MKTSP-USK02M0.html?page=1&sortby=title&order=asc&bu=seg

Family Employment Awareness Training (FEAT)
https://beachcenter.lsi.ku.edu/beach-family-employment-awareness-training-feat

REWARDS Program (Reading)
https://www.voyagersopris.com/literacy/rewards/overview
Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction (SDMI) (goal setting and decision making)
https://selfdetermination.ku.edu/homepage/intervention/

Self-Directed IEP
https://www.ou.edu/education/centers-and-partnerships/zarrow/choicemaker-curriculum/self-directed-iep

SOLVE IT (Math)
https://www.exinn.net/solve-it-third-edition/

Student Directed Transition Planning

**Whose Future Is It Anyway?**
http://www.ou.edu/content/education/centers-and-partnerships/zarrow/transition-education-materials/whos-future-is-it-anyway.html

Working at Gaining Employment Skills (WAGES)
https://www.saavsus.com/store/wages-a-job-related-social-skills-curriculum-for-adolescents