

Cooperation and Coordination with Other Agencies and Other Entities

Coordination with Education Officials

Plans, Policies and Procedures for coordination with Education Officials to facilitate transition services for students with disabilities

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS or Division) has been a leader in innovative transition services for students with disabilities. The focal point of this success in transition services is the partnership between the DRS and the Office of Special Education in co-funding the Transition Services Liaison Project. This project initiates the following successful transition activities:

Transition Services Liaison Project: TSLP provides technical assistance and training to students with disabilities, families, local education agencies and adult service agencies to promote the movement from school to post-school activities. There are three Transition Liaisons and a Transition Services Liaison Project Coordinator to provide these activities. TSLP manages the transition programs listed below.

Project Skills: Project Skills is a paid work experience program for high school students with disabilities in South Dakota. The program is a cooperative arrangement between the state vocational rehabilitation agencies and local school districts which provides students the opportunity to learn different skills in a variety of job placements, with the assistance of a job coach. Project Skills helps to build the student's work history, references and assists them with experiencing different career fields as they mature and take on new challenges.

Project Search: Project Search is a national model partnering with a large employer, local school district and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Program. South Dakota currently has 3 Project Search Initiatives in operation in Aberdeen, Brookings and Sioux Falls. A 4th Project Search initiative is being developed in Rapid City to begin with the 2016 Fall School year.

Youth Leadership Forum: YLF is a unique career and leadership training program for high school juniors and seniors to learn more about self-advocacy skills and disability awareness. Students with disabilities cultivate leadership, citizenship, and social skills as a result of participating in this annual five-day event. The YLF was implemented at the state level by the Governor's Advisory Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, and other state and local partners.

Catch the Wave: A one-day conference designed specifically for high school students who have a disability and are considering post-secondary education (either college or technical institutes). Students learn about preparing for college life, securing appropriate accommodations, and developing self-advocacy and communication skills.

Regional Transition Forums: These forums are informal and interactive meetings for providers of services, transition-age students with disabilities, as well as consumers and family members.

Post-Secondary Disability Coordinators Forums: This forum is held annually in Chamberlain inviting all the Disability Coordinators from South Dakota Post-Secondary programs. This has been a very successful initiative helping the transition process for students with disabilities.

Summer Institute: The Summer Institute is a statewide training opportunity for Special Education teachers who are assisting students in the transition process. It is held for one week in the summer and offers training in areas of IDIEA, introducing self-determination curriculum and other assessment materials, and IEP planning. Teachers receive graduate credit for the class and gain knowledge from Disability Services Coordinators from post-secondary schools, vocational rehabilitation staff, Transition Liaisons, community mental health agencies and independent living services staff.

Augie Access

The Division is co-funding a post-secondary program for individuals with intellectual disabilities attending Augustana University. This program started in the 2015 Fall Semester with 5 students.

ASPIRE:

The Division is a participating agency in a regional consortium with five other states in a grant initiative called the Promise Grant. Utah Vocational Rehabilitation has taken the lead role in this consortium with the other states, North Dakota, Montana, Colorado, South Dakota and Arizona. The Aspire Initiative is a 5 year initiative with South Dakota receiving \$2,260,581 during these 5 years. This Grant is to conduct a study of 200 youth in South Dakota receiving Social Security Insurance between the ages of 13 and 16.

Pre Employment Transition Services

The Division is networking with the Office of Special Education and other transition agencies to assure Pre Employment Transition Services are available throughout the State. A brochure targeting students with disabilities has been developed and distributed across the State. Most of the services listed above qualify for the Pre Employment Transition Services. In addition, the Division is looking at ways to expand the self-determination training component to be available in all the school districts

Development and Approval of an IPE before leaving school

The Division is making great efforts to assure that students with disabilities access the vocational rehabilitation program and develop their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) before they complete high school. Following are some of these activities:

- * Division VR Counselors contact school counselors and 504 coordinators on a regular basis in an attempt to identify and meet with students.
- * Division VR Counselors inform school staff what services are available to students with disabilities and eligibility requirements. VR Counselors then follow up on referral in a timely fashion in order to determine eligibility prior to graduation.
- * Division VR Counselors and other Division staff will attend interagency meetings in order to inform other service organizations about Rehabilitation Services and obtain referrals of these students.
- * The Division will continue funding Project Skills to include serving students with disabilities who are not receiving special education services.

Interagency Agreement

The South Dakota Cooperative Agreement Concerning Transition Services for Youth With Disabilities, was revised on January 2014. This agreement includes the following South Dakota entities: Office of Special Education, Division of Workforce and Career Preparation, Division of Mental Health, Division of

Developmental Disabilities, Division of Rehabilitation Services, Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, Department of Labor and Department of Social Services.

The agreement identifies each agency's roles and responsibilities including:

- * Consultation and technical assistance to assist in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including vocation rehabilitation services;
- * Transition planning by personnel of the Division of Rehabilitation Services and school district personnel;
- * Roles and responsibilities of each agency including State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;
- * Financial responsibilities; and
- * Procedures for outreach and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.