

THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY
12234

TO: P-12 Education Committee
Adult Career and Continuing Education Services
(ACCES) Committee

FROM: Ken Slentz 
Kevin G. Smith

SUBJECT: Transition Planning
Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS)
and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

DATE: April 11, 2013

AUTHORIZATION(S):

SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

Should the Board of Regents adopt, on an emergency basis, the proposed amendment of sections 100.5, 100.6 and 200.5 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education to establish a nondiploma exiting credential for students with disabilities?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Proposed Handling

At the April 2013 P-12 Education Committee meeting, ACCES and P-12 will jointly present on how the implementation of the proposed CDOS standards can provide critical information in student preparation for transition to post-secondary programs and employment.

Procedural History

In April 2012 in a joint presentation on "Developing a Framework for Effective Transition from School to Work: A

goal was to improve the quality and outcome of transition planning for students with disabilities in New York State. Two of the identified critical components were:

- Quality referral information and assessments. Availability of information documenting the youth's disability, as well as strengths, is important to establish eligibility for ACCES-VR and other post-school resources.
- Availability of employment opportunities for students with disabilities. Participation in school work-study programs, internships, work-based learning experiences and summer employment improves a student's preparation for post-school employment success.

The report also referenced the need to develop an infrastructure to support instruction in the CDOS standards. A structured plan for providing students with career exploration and community and work-based learning opportunities would be invaluable in the students' preparation for adult services, such as those offered through ACCES.

As P-12 Education implements the new exiting credential to replace the Individualized Education Program (IEP) diploma, it is critical to consider measures for increasing students' understanding of their individual skills and the world of work while engaging them in work experiences.

Background Information

As the lead New York State agency for assisting working-age individuals with disabilities in preparing for and obtaining employment, the Office of Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (ACCES) relies upon career and educational assessments when determining eligibility for services and developing a specific vocational goal and/or employment plan. These assessments can be conducted at the time an individual engages with ACCES or prior to their involvement. With respect to students transitioning to post-secondary programs and employment, research has shown that the more exposure they have to individual skill development, career exploration, and work experience prior to exiting school, the better prepared the student is for post-secondary opportunities including employment. The new CDOS standards will provide students with these fundamental career development experiences.

The support needs of youth with disabilities making the transition from school to the responsibilities of adult life in the community are many and complex. The power of a high school education to prepare youth for this transition is diminished if it fails to address the full range of content related to the adult roles expected of youth when they leave school. Similarly, participation in the most sophisticated education and transition planning process is of minimal value if youth are not supported to explore post-school goals, and connect with resources related to those goals. (Benz, Lindstrom, Unruh and Waintrup, 2004)

Current policy allows for ACCES' engagement two years prior to the student's exit from school. At the time of referral to ACCES, most students have little knowledge of or experience with the world of work. The lack of exposure to skill development and employment opportunities places these students at a disadvantage in their ability to develop a viable vocational plan reflective of their individual abilities and interest. Many of these students apply to ACCES vocational rehabilitation services with no career development

experiences. Such students are often referred for diagnostic vocational evaluation (DVE) and other assessments after referral to ACCES, which extends the evaluation process and delays movement into training programs leading to employment. If students had stronger career preparation and work experiences while in school, they would be better prepared to engage in post-secondary services. While the CDOS standards are not a vocational evaluation, the credential can put the student on a positive trajectory toward a realistic

Consumers less than 22 years old with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) at Case Closure

data as of 3/1/2013

Federal Fiscal Year 2010 - 2011						
served (status 02-30)	percent of total	closed rehabilitated (status 26)	percent of cases	closed after plan initiated (status 28)	percent of cases	employment rate
38,232		4,504	12%	5,101	13%	47%

all consumers less than 22 years old

Observations extracted from this data show:

- Youth with IEP and high school diploma have a significantly higher employment rate after receiving VR services. During FFY 2012, the rate of employment outcomes for those with a high school diploma was 57% compared to 39% employment rate for those without a diploma.
- Youth with and without a high school diploma seem to “drop out” of VR services at a fairly high rate, which accounts for the above employment rates.

- 2) Career Preparation and Work -Based Learning Experiences – Career preparation and work-based learning experience are essential in order for youth to form and develop aspirations and to make informed choices about careers.
- 3) Youth Development and Leadership – Youth development is a process that prepares young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated, progressive series of activities which help them gain skills and competences.
- 4) Connecting Activities – Young people need to be connected to programs, services, activities and supports that help them gain access to chosen post-school options.

Recommendation

The implementation of the Career Development Occupational Studies Standards would ensure school districts are providing students with disabilities planned opportunities to explore, evaluate and be exposed to work-based learning and instruction that would effectively increase students' knowledge and understanding of their skills and interests. The adoption of the CDOS standards will enable ACCES and P-12 Education to work together to support students in gaining valuable career experiences that will expand their post-secondary opportunities.

References

- Benz, M. R., Lindstrom, L., Unruh, D., & Waintrup, M. (2004). Sustaining Secondary Transition Programs in Local Schools. Remedial & Special Education, 25(1), 29-50
- National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth. NCWD/Youth Guideposts for Success, <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/guideposts> Retrieved April 2, 2012