



Applying WIOA Pre-ETS for Transitioning Students and Youth

EMPLOYMENT FIRST STATE LEADERSHIP MENTORING PROGRAM

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Today's discussion will include:

- The potential of Pre-ETS to significantly impact employment outcomes for students and youth with disabilities
- How Pre-ETS are being applied so far
- Addressing the challenges and opportunities for fulfilling the potential of Pre-ETS
- Examples from one state: Tennessee

WIOA Can Be a Game Changer

- Case service funds spent on youth before school exit can be a good return on VR investment resulting in increased post-school employment outcomes, but
- We need to be wary of applying VR funds to group vocational activities and other types of congregate services that **don't** work

How might the WIOA help?

- Interagency collaboration between VR and schools is required for joint planning and coordination
- Services can be provided to youth potentially eligible for VR services but for whom a case has not yet been initiated

How might the WIOA help?

- Pre-Employment Training Services (Pre-ETS) is a new category of VR funding
 - Job exploration counseling
 - **Work-based learning experience**
 - Counseling on opportunities for enrollment post-secondary educations programs
 - Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living
 - Instruction in self-advocacy

Who is providing Pre-ETS?

Traditional service providers

- VR agency staff, including counselors
- Contracted service providers
 - Community rehabilitation providers (CRPs)
 - Independent living centers (ILCs)

New nontraditional contracted service providers, e.g.:

- Teacher-vendors delivering after-school activity (AK)
- State hired social workers as new early reach coordinators to provide outreach in schools (PA)

Source: Miller, Sevac & Honeycutt, 2018

Survey of 6 states on the use of individual Pre-ETS

- ▣ Workplace readiness training and job exploration most frequently authorized
 - Why?: Can be provided in larger groups
- ▣ Work-based learning experiences are used less than workplace readiness and job exploration
 - Why?: More resource intensive
 - Requires collaboration with employers
 - Students often need transportation
- ▣ VR often has to depend on offerings of existing service providers which limits types of Pre-ETS authorized

Source: Miller, Sevac, Honeycutt, 2018

How do VR counselors perceive the importance of transition practices and Pre-ETS?

- ❑ Over 530 counselors surveyed on importance of transition skills and preparation to perform them
- ❑ They rated all skills on the VR Transition Practices Scale, organized per Pre-ETS categories, as highly important
- ❑ Ratings on perception on their ability to perform them were lower, particularly for
 - ❑ Involving employers
 - ❑ Securing/offering work based experiences

Source: Luecking, Fabian & Neubert, 2018

How do VR counselors perceive the importance of transition practices and Pre-ETS?

- ❑ Time and case administration duties challenged counselors in serving students and youth
- ❑ Counselors with specialized caseloads expressed significantly fewer barriers to serving students and youth

Source: Luecking, Fabian & Neubert, 2018

What does research say about what predicts post school career success?

Work experience in high school
= higher rates of post-school
employment

Implications and considerations for using WIOA Pre-ETS

- Work experiences are more labor intensive, but have the most promise for positive impact of the 5 Pre-ETS categories
- Vendor options and capacity still need to be sorted out
- Professional development needs to reflect areas of needed proficiency
- VR Caseload specialization for students and youth may mitigate some barriers to effective caseload management

Using the Best Features of WIOA

- ❖ Work experiences **early** and **often**!
- ❖ **Paid work** as both a key transition intervention and the desired outcome
- ❖ Collaborations between schools, VR, and their partners focus on the **employment outcome** for commonly served youth (not just the “hand off”)

For more information

State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies' Early Implementation Experiences with Pre-Employment Transition Services, an issue brief of the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on VR Practices for Youth. (Miller, Sevac & Honeycutt, 2018)

Transition Practices of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors Serving Students and Youth with Disabilities, an issue brief of the RRTC on VR Practices for Youth. (Luecking, Fabian & Neubert, 2018)

Available from:

<http://vrpracticesandyouth.org/vocational-rehabilitation-vr-practices/center-publications/>

Pre-ETS in Tennessee: Overview

- Tennessee VR and Department of Education (DOE) entered into an Interagency Agreement in 2017
- 3 main vehicles for Pre-ETS
 - **Transition School to Work (TSW):** Contracts with local education agencies (LEA), 80/20 (78.7/21.3) cost split. Will have 48 contracts during 2018-19 school year.
 - **Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP):** 28 contracts this year, 35 contracts approved for next year.
 - **Pre-Employment Specialists:** Tennessee VR has 23 pre-employment specialist positions to provide and coordinate Pre-ETS services across the state.

Pre-ETS in Tennessee: Lessons

- LEAs and CRPs know their communities best. Local partnerships are stronger than centralized partnerships.
- Pre-ETS have been very popular in rural communities.
- Strong CRP relationships with LEAs are key.
- Importance of reinforcing that Pre-ETS are for ALL students with disabilities, not just one particular type.

Pre-ETS in Tennessee: Challenges

- Meeting 15% federal allocation requirement
- CRP development of Pre-ETS curriculum
- Working through master school calendars to provide Pre-ETS to students in general education classes
- Obtaining parent permission
- Antiquated data collection system

Pre-ETS in Tennessee: By the Numbers

- 1,964 Pre-ETS services provided during FY17
- 9,992 Pre-ETS services provided through April 2018 of FY18 (300% increase over previous FY)
- Approximately 42,000 eligible students in TN
- Goal for FY19 is 25% enrollment of eligible students
- Ultimate goal is 100% enrollment of all eligible students

Pre-ETS in Tennessee: What's Next?

- DHS/VR partnership with Vanderbilt Kennedy Center (VKC) to develop online training, professional development, and practical resources
- Includes online training modules for:
 - VR staff
 - LEA staff
 - Other professionals and stakeholders
 - Students and families
- Also includes annual regional trainings, data collection and evaluation efforts

Pre-ETS in Tennessee: Dobyns-Bennett High School TSW



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tl_SlLgPbSA&feature=youtu.be

Discussion and Questions

