TURNING TRANSITION INTO SUCCESS IN EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

Speakers:
Nicole Jorwic, J.D., Director of Rights Policy
Deborah Linton, Executive Director, The Arc of Florida
John Santoski, Executive Director, The Arc of the Piedmont
Billy Parker, Executive Director, The Chandler Gilbert Arc
Learning Objectives

• Early, paid work experiences prior to the student’s high school exit is the best predictor for competitive integrated employment success.

• This session will cover how to become an effective part of the transition process for individuals with I/DD within your community, and how to build on transition experiences to create opportunities for integrated, community employment.

• Learn how to utilize the resources from the education system, as well as public post-school entities: vocational rehabilitation; intellectual and developmental disabilities agencies; workforce development; and other government agencies, to assist in the job development process.
The Federal Landscape

Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA): Goal is to increase employment of people with disabilities in integrated employment settings; attempts to significantly limit the use of 14(c), particularly for transition-age youth:

• Defines and prioritizes integrated employment as work at or above minimum wage, with wages and benefits comparable to people without disabilities and fully integrated with co-workers without disabilities
• Limits entry into sheltered workshops: Anyone under 24 must try integrated employment before being placed in a sub-minimum wage setting; schools cannot contract with sub-minimum wage providers
The Federal Landscape-WIOA

Additional relevant provisions to increase access to integrated employment for people with disabilities:

• Requirement for formal cross-agency cooperative agreement between voc. rehab., state IDD agency, and Medicaid agency

• Requirement that at least 15% of voc. rehab. funds be used for pre-employment transition services

• Definition of supported employment clarified to make clear that it is integrated, competitive employment

• Post-employment support services extended from 18 to 24 months
• Requirement that at least half of supported employment state grant funds used for youth (up to age 24) with most significant disabilities
As determined by research, early paid work experiences prior to the student’s high school exit is the best predicator for competitive integrated employment success. Policy and funding provisions that support these experiences must be made available to students with significant disabilities so that they may make informed decisions about their career pathways. In particular:

- ED should strengthen and broaden the use of IDEA Indicator 14;
- ED should invest in evidence-based research to support new models and tools to assist transition age youth;
- Congress should reauthorize IDEA and the Perkins Act to align with the goals of WIOA.

Source: https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/WIOA.htm
Research indicates that students are successful in pursuing their career pathways when their families expect them to be employed and when families have support in making connections with public post-school entities such as vocational rehabilitation, intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health, workforce development, and other government agencies. Families must begin this effort early in their child’s life and during their students’ transition process so that they have the information necessary to provide the expectation of their student working in competitive integrated settings.

In order to facilitate post-school competitive integrated employment:
• ED should issue guidance to SEAs and LEAs that monitoring and reporting to parents occur quarterly;
• ED, along with HHS and SSA, should incorporate into their grant priorities, training requirements, and activities stronger guidance on available transition to careers resources to families.

Source: https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/WIOA.htm
**WIOA Subcommittee**

To effectively serve youth with significant disabilities and their families, key transition policy makers and other professionals must create an integrated, seamless system that aligns with predictors of post-school success and, ensures a comprehensive set of services and supports that are consistently available to promote access to competitive integrated employment and opportunities for career advancement.

In order to facilitate a more integrated Federal system, Congress:

- Should provide limited authority to the four relevant federal agencies -- ED (RSA, OSEP, OCTAE), HHS (CMS, ACL, SAMHSA); DOL (ETA; ODEP); and SSA -- to waive requirements that make it challenging for states to effectively use and braid funds;
- Require Federal agencies to support state-driven pilots that demonstrate success in combining resources.

U.S. Departments of Justice and Education should collaborate to issue specific joint agency guidance regarding the provision of Assistive Technology and quality Assistive Technology assessments as connected to the interpretation of Least Restrictive Environment, WIOA Section 511, and Americans with Disabilities Act Olmstead provisions.

Source: [https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/WIOA.htm](https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/WIOA.htm)
Department of Justice Activity

Lane v. Kitzhaber/U.S. v. Oregon:
- Court decision on motion to dismiss found that ADA and *Olmstead* applies to all government services, programs and activities, including employment. Rejected argument that only applies to residential services and programs.
- Consent decree focuses on youth, state of Oregon is using HCBS Transition Plan to assist in goals.
- Closed the front door to workshops.

U.S. v. Rhode Island:
- State of Rhode Island violated the ADA and *Olmstead* by failing to serve individuals with I/DD in the most integrated day activity service setting appropriate for their needs, and by placing transition-age youth at serious risk of segregation.
- Relief for 3,250 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Opportunities for real employment in the community at competitive wages, and integrated day activities for non-work hours.
- Investigation found that the state has over-relied on segregated service settings to the exclusion of integrated alternatives.
The Arc of Florida

Engaging at the State Level
The Arc of the Piedmont
Competitive Employment Work and Transition
Competitive Employment Work and Transition (CEWAT) is:

A supervised work experience program that encourages students to become responsible, successful, career-minded individuals.

The program is offered and funded through the Charlottesville City Schools, the Virginia Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services and a local Employment Service Organization.
Competitive Employment Work and Transition (CEWAT) is:

Funded by:

**Charlottesville Schools**: $100,000 pays for onsite job coaches from the ESO.

**VDARS**: Funds final second semester at the supported employment rate of $65/hr.

**ESO**: Provides job coaches during the school year and follow-along services after graduation.

Coordinated by the CCS Transition Specialist
Target Population
(Special Needs as defined in Carl Perkins)

Students who are between 16-21 years of age who:

- Receive special education or LEP services
- Repeated one or more grades and are lacking elective credits for graduation
- Are teen parents (mothers or fathers)
- Have chronic attendance problems
- And are enrolled in a career and technical education course.
CEWAT allows students to:

- Earn a competitive wage
- Earn an elective school credit
- Earn respect of family, friends, community
- Gain experience to get better jobs
- Explore career interests
- Build professional reputation
- Develop a portfolio of workplace competencies
- Develop a network to secure full-time competitive employment
**Students are Referred to CEWAT:**

- Self-Referral
- Referral by School Counselor
- Referral by Teacher or School Administrator
- Referral by Outside Agency
- Referral by Parent/Guardian
Program Goals

• To increase work-based learning opportunities for students, especially those with disabilities.

• To increase the number of students, especially those with disabilities, completing a high school program with skills that lead to competitive employment and post-secondary education and training.
Program Goals, continued

To increase the number of students, especially those with disabilities, entering postsecondary vocational/technical training and/or postsecondary education.

- To promote school and community agency collaboration and non-duplication of services.
- To coordinate the transition of students from school to post-secondary options.
Recognition of Excellence

• 1990  Seventh Annual Conference Honoring Virginia’s Innovative Education Programs, Virginia Tech, College of Education.

• 1993  National Institute for Work and Learning, a division of Academy for Educational Development, cited CEWAT in its school-to-work research.

• 1994 Spotlighted at the national Jobs for the Future Conference held in Washington, D.C
Demographics: Total Student Participation

- Total Students Referred
- Total Students Place

Number of Students

Academic Year

SUMMER LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE 2016
Special Needs Students Without Disabilities

Number of Students

Academic Year

- Students Referred
- Students Placed

SUMMER LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE 2016
Student Average Hourly Wage

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Average Weekly Hours

The chart shows the average weekly hours from 1992 to 2012. The data indicates a general trend of fluctuation in average weekly hours during this period.
Students with Disabilities Receiving Work Experience
Business Participation

• Work with over 125 employers within the local community, generally urban area, to provide placements for our students.
Student Performance Evaluation Tool

Rated on Workplace Skills by employer each grading period
Student/Parent Commitment

Training Agreement is developed and signed by Student, Parent, Employer and School
Questions?

John Santoski, MS
Executive Director
The Arc of the Piedmont
Charlottesville, VA
jsantoski@arcpva.org
Chandler Gilbert Arc

High School

Transition Partnership
Purpose

• Provide community connections and work training/experience to students during final year of school
• Support key family members in recognizing and developing post-school support strategies
• Provides an option for school districts to access community work opportunities as an aspect of the student’s transition plan
Students Served

- Students receiving Special Education services within local school districts
- Students with Transition Plans that address employment, employment training, or adult day services as post-school options
- Students interested in participating in the program
Key Attributes

• The Transition Partnership is a cooperative effort between participating schools and Chandler Gilbert Arc

• Funding for the program is private through the school

• Chandler Gilbert Arc is considered the educational placement during the transition period
Key Attributes ctd.

• **Support and outreach to promote the program is provided by Chandler Gilbert Arc and our partner agencies**

• **Chandler Gilbert Arc Board memberships include key school district personnel**

• **Family members are key stakeholders in the process**
Process

• Outreach
• Intake/Orientation
• Private Pay Contract with School
• Plan development with team
• Training and/or Placement
• Follow-along
• Post-school Planning
Advantages

• Provides students a gradual introduction to work opportunities and exploration while still in school
• Reduces apprehension and assists in the success of post-school community placements
• Provides an opportunity for a seamless continuum of services after school if the student chooses to continue with CGArc or seek resources elsewhere
Advantages ctd.

- Creative use of non-governmental funding
- Opportunities for the team to work with individuals and families in planning post-school governmental funding options
- Builds family, school, and community relationships
- Networking opportunity for coordinated support services, i.e., transportation, job exploration, housing support, etc.
Challenges

- Minimal governmental support while students are in school
- Securement of post-school funding for employment or other support
- Service system apprehension
- Outreach/Education
- School district buy-in
- Coordinated support from IDD/VR
Program Successes

• Approximately 70 students served in past 7+ years
• Over 50% community employment placement success with and without additional supports
• Provides avenue for individuals and families who may not receive necessary supports due to apprehension about “The System”
Thank You

Billy Parker
Executive Director
Chandler Gilbert Arc
Chandler, AZ

www.cgarc.org
wparker@cgarc.org
Questions?

Nicole Jorwic:  Jorwic@thearc.org
Deborah Linton: Deborah@arcflorida.org
John Santowski: jsantoski@arcpva.org
Billy Parker: barker@cgarc.org