





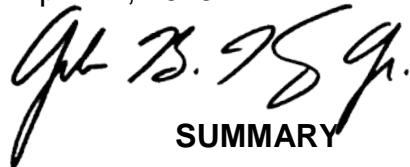
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY  
12234

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

**FROM:** Ken Slentz   
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**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**

How the implementation of the Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) standards can inform transition preparation for a post-secondary adult program.

### **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 Follow-up to December 2011 Presentation to the Regents", ACCES and P-12 outlined critical components of an effective transition plan. The

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 employment goal.

### **ACCES Data**

The following chart reflects outcome closure data for youth (under 22 years) for FFY 2010-11, FFY 2011-12 and first five months of 2012-13 with the varied credentials at time of closure:

- Youth with IEP and high school diploma
- Youth with IEP only
- Youth with IEP and post-secondary education

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
all consumers less than 22 years old	38,232		4,504	12%	5,101	13%	47%
consumers less than 22 years old with an IEP and no high school diploma at case closure	10,632	28%	1,211	11%	2,284	21%	35%
consumers less than 22 years old with an IEP and high school diploma at case closure	8,428	22%	1,450	17%	1,628	19%	47%
consumers less than 22 years old with an IEP and post secondary education	5,240	14%	1,458	28%	797	15%	65%

	Federal Fiscal Year 2011 - 2012						
	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
all consumers less than 22 years old	35,064		4,322	12%	3,442	10%	56%
consumers less than 22 years old with an IEP and no high school diploma at case closure	6,589	19%	1,063	16%	1,630	25%	39%
consumers less than 22 years old with an IEP and high school diploma at case closure	5,579	16%	1,442	26%	1,068	19%	57%
consumers less than 22 years old with an IEP and post secondary education	3,027	9%	1,451	48%	486	16%	75%

	Federal Fiscal Year 2012 - 2013 ( at 5 months)						
	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
all consumers less than 22 years old	26,897		1,862	7%	1,064	4%	64%
consumers less than 22 years old with an IEP and no high school diploma at case closure	1,849	7%	463	25%	505	27%	48%
consumers less than 22 years old with an IEP and high school diploma at case closure	1,700	6%	652	38%	324	19%	67%
consumers less than 22 years old with an IEP and post secondary education	934	3%	590	63%	147	16%	80%

ex: Federal Fiscal Year 2010 - 2011 (10/1/2010 - 9/30/2011)

School-based preparatory experiences, particularly work experiences, would lead to better employment outcomes, and will add to the success of all youth, both with and without a high school diploma.

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. Strategies to keep youth engaged, particularly through greater involvement in decision-making, would lead to better outcomes.
- Youth who engage in post-secondary education or training opportunities have a higher employment rate when compared to all youth participating in vocational rehabilitation services (as high as 75%).

ACCES data also indicate that youth (under 22 years) successfully closed in employment in the past two federal fiscal years most often found employment in one of the following three areas:

- Janitorial/Maintenance
- Cashier, Stock Order
- Retail

These employment options are consistent with options available to the general population; however, most students with disabilities are not exposed to career planning until they have separated from their academic studies. A career studies curriculum related to the CDOS standards could enable students to engage in career assessment and yield a more expansive choice of employment options.

## **Conclusion**

In the “Guide Posts for Success”, the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth) recommends that for successful transition to adulthood, all youth need:

- Access to high quality standards-based education regardless of the setting;
- Information about career options and exposure to the world of work, including structured internship;
- Opportunities to develop social, civic and leadership skills;
- Strong connections to caring adults;
- Access to safe places to interact with their peers; and
- Support services to allow them to become independent adults.

The guide further suggests a transition framework incorporating:

- 1) **School Based Preparatory Experiences** – All youth need to participate in educational programs grounded in standards, clear performance expectations, and graduation exit options based upon meaningful, accurate and relevant indicators of student learning and skills.

- 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