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Cultivating Success: Back to Basics for Thriving Transitions

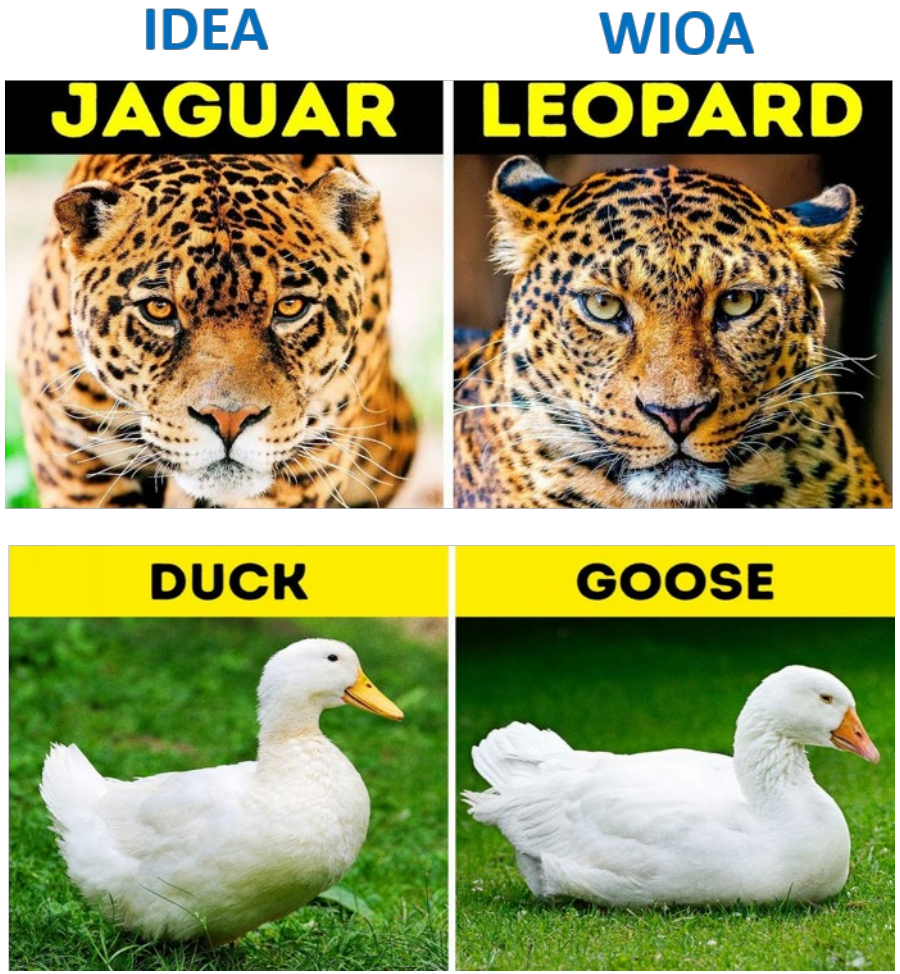
May 6, 2025

Coordinated Service Delivery is KEY

- Developing collaborative partnerships through a coordinated plan of service delivery strengthens meaningful post-secondary employment and training outcomes for students and youth with disabilities.
- Youth with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities, are capable of achieving high quality, competitive, integrated employment when provided the necessary services and supports.
- Aligning agency and community resources, including alignment of goals and services in the individualized education program (IEP) and the individualized plan for employment (IPE), decreases duplication of services and increases student/youth engagement.

Definition of Transition Services – Similar but Different

- Outcome or results oriented process
- Promotes movement from school to post school activities
- Based on student preferences, interests, strengths and needs
- IDEA Transition Services support post-secondary goals
- WIOA VR Transition Services support the employment goal or projected post-school employment outcome



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Side-by-Side View of Transition Services

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A Side-by-Side View: Transition Services

Pre-Employment Transition Services
34 CFR §361.5(c)(42)

DEFINITION

Pre-employment transition services are the earliest set of services for students with disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services.

These services are designed to be:

- short-term in nature
- based on the student's needs, and
- help students identify their career interests

VR Transition Services
34 CFR §361.5(c)(55)

DEFINITION

Transition services are outcome-oriented services for students or youth with disabilities who have been determined eligible for VR services, and facilitate the movement from the receipt of services from schools to the receipt of services from VR agencies, and/or as appropriate, other State agencies.

These services are designed:

- Within an outcome-oriented process that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, competitive integrated employment, supported employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation

Individuals With Disabilities Education Act,
20 U.S.C. § 300.43 (2004)

DEFINITION

Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) §300.43(a)(1) defines transition services as a coordinated set of activities focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of students. This set of activities are designed within a results- oriented process that promotes movement from school to post- school activities including:

- postsecondary education,
- vocational education,
- competitive integrated employment,
- supported employment,
- continuing and adult education,
- adult services,
- independent living, and
- community participation.

§300.43(a)(1)

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Blueprint for the student's special education

- Includes annual goals
- Specifies:
  - How much and what kind of special education student will receive
  - The setting in which services will be delivered
  - Accommodations

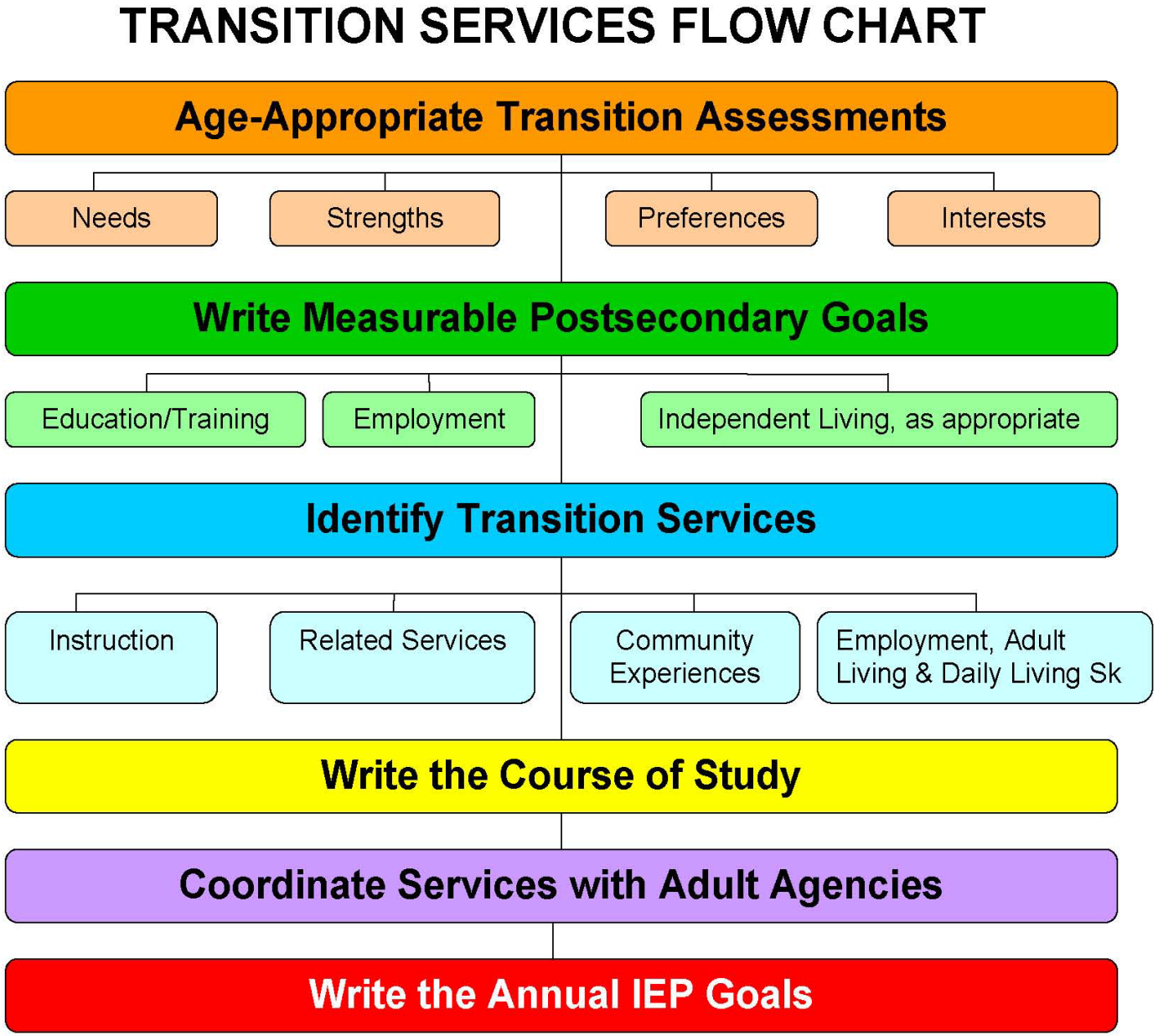
Written by a team of persons knowledgeable about the student and their needs

Must be revised at least once a year

The Secondary Transition Process

- Student/young adult driven
- Collaboration: Schools, Agencies, Families
- Age-appropriate transition assessment
- Post secondary education/training, employment and independent living goals
- Thoughtful course of study
- Transition services and activities aligned to post-secondary goals
- Measurable annual IEP goals aligned to post-secondary goals
- Ongoing secondary transition process that includes progress monitoring and assessment

IDEA Secondary Transition Services



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Age-Appropriate Assessment

- Transition Assessment is a process for gathering relevant information to plan, evaluate or make decisions.
  - Identify interests and preferences
    - Interests: a measure of opinion, attitudes, and preferences
    - Preferences: what the student values and likes
  - Set post-secondary goals
    - Post-secondary education and training
    - Employment
    - Independent Living
  - Further assess abilities, aptitudes and skills
    - Abilities: talents or acquired skills
    - Aptitudes: characteristics that inform us of a student's learning strengths or proficiency in a particular area
- Information should be gathered from multiple people and places over a period of time.

Transition Assessment Webpage

Assessment should not look the same for every student!

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Developing Meaningful Goals

- Use ongoing assessment, exploration and experience to align goals with skills, interests and preferences
- Help students learn about requirements needed for their goals
- Further exploration may indicate broader area of interest and help expand career opportunities
  - Examples: interest in veterinary medicine broadened to being in a “helping” career, interest in being a pilot broadened to working on or near air transport, etc.

Transition Services in the IEP

- Must support attainment of post-school goals in education, employment, and independent living
- Should be a coordinated set of activities based on the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's strengths, preferences and interests.
  - These are services provided by the school and should not list what the parents or student will do.
- Reviewed annually

Examples of Possible IDEA Transition Services in an IEP

Instruction: teach self-advocacy skills, interview skills, discuss accommodations and modifications with postsecondary education/training providers

Related Services: provide transportation to tour postsecondary training programs, explore access to needed OT/PT as an adult

Community Experiences: Learn about the ADA, register to vote, join a community recreation center or program, register for selective service

Employment: Interview adult worker in a career field of interest, obtain paid job in area of interest, participate in interview with HR in company in field of interest

Other Post-School Adult Living Objectives: complete online application for vocational rehabilitation services, obtain driver's license, contact Center for Independent Living for information on self-advocacy

Daily Living Skills (if applicable): learn about time and money management, files taxes, explore transportation options, apply for books on tape

Functional Vocational Evaluation (if applicable): complete/review career interest inventories and/or aptitude assessments, review career interests to insure alignment with graduation plan and IPS

Transition Planning Resources

- Quality Transition Planning is a Process
- Moving from Assessment to Practice
- Collaborative Assessment Guide for Transition Planning
- Best Practices in Transition Planning Training Module
- Indicator 13 Presenter Guide
- Indicator 13 Toolkit
- Self-Determination Presenter Guide

Transition Planning Webpage on NTACT's website

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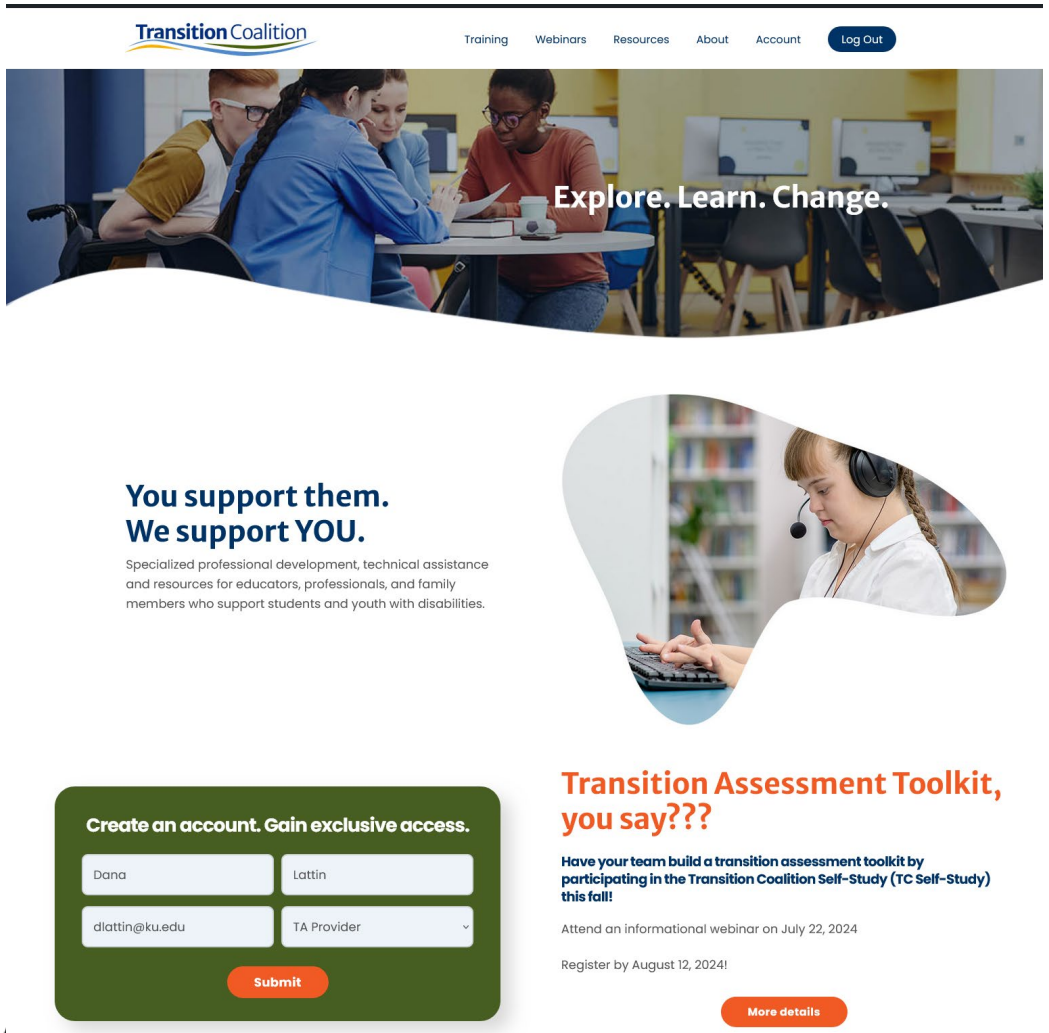
Online Modules (Universal: Take & Use)

Online Module webpage



Pre-ETS and Transition Services

VR Program Now Provides a Continuum of Services

Pre-ETS Services

- earliest set of services for **potentially eligible or eligible students with disabilities (swd)**
- **short term in nature** to help identify career interests
- specific set of five required activities provided directly to swd under Pre-ETS
- VR must reserve a minimum of 15% of federal funds to provide Pre-ETS services

Transition Services

- available for **eligible students or youth with disabilities through an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)**
- help further develop and pursue career interests through post-secondary ed, vocational training, job search, job placement, job retention, job follow-up and job follow-along services

Employment Related

- typically provided once **eligible students or youth with disabilities** have further identified, developed and pursued career interests, offered through transition services, and are **pursuing specific employment outcomes through an IPE**
- assist in preparing for, securing, retaining, advancing in or regaining an employment outcome

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[Access the VR Continuum of Services]

Continuum of VR Services

- Pre-Employment transition services offers a range of services to students with disabilities
- The expansion of services, or continuum, includes the most basic to the most individualized and intensive services
- Allows VR to meet the evolving needs of students and youth with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities, who are transitioning from school to post-secondary education or employment

Rehabilitation Act, as Amended by WIOA – Intent of Pre-ETS Legislation

- **Improve** the transition of students with disabilities from school to postsecondary education or to an employment outcome.
- **Increase opportunities** for students with disabilities to practice and improve workplace readiness skills, through work-based learning experiences in competitive integrated work settings.
- **Increase opportunities** for students with disabilities to explore postsecondary training options, leading to more industry recognized credentials, and meaningful postsecondary employment.

Pre-Employment Transition Services

Pre-employment transition services include a specific set of activities under section 113 of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 C.F.R. 361.48(a) including:

- **"Required" activities** (section 113(b) of the Act and §361.48(a)(2))
  - Job Exploration Counseling
  - Work Based Learning Experiences
  - Workplace Readiness Training
  - Counseling on Opportunities for Enrollment in Comprehensive Transition or Post-Secondary Educational Programs at Institutions of Higher Education
  - Instruction in Self-Advocacy
- **The five "required" activities are provided directly to students with disabilities who need them.**
- **Pre-employment transition services must be made available statewide to all SWD who may need such services.**
- **May begin once a student requests or is recommended for one or more pre-employment transition services**
- **Must be provided or arranged in collaboration with local education agencies (LEAs)**

Pre-Employment Transition Services (continued)

- Pre-employment transition ***"coordination"*** activities (section 113(d) of the Rehabilitation Act and §361.48(a)(4))
  - Attending individualized education program meetings for students with disabilities, when invited
  - Working with the local workforce development boards, one-stop centers, and employers to develop work opportunities for students with disabilities, including internships, summer employment and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year, and apprenticeships
  - Working with schools, including those carrying out activities under section 614(d) of the IDEA, to coordinate and ensure the provision of pre-employment transition services
  - When invited, attending person-centered planning meetings for individuals receiving services under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.)
- **The four "coordination" activities are essential for arranging and providing the "required" and "authorized" activities.**

Pre-ETS Micro Training Series

- Part 1: The Five Required Activities for Students with Disabilities
- Part 2: The VR Continuum
- Part 3: Coordination and Collaboration – We're All in it Together

Pre-ETS Micro Training Series webpage

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Pre-ETS 101: Notice of Interpretation (NOI) - Published 2.28.2020 Final Regulations Issued 3.21.2022

Purpose

- ✓ **Clarify current policy** regarding the use of Federal Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) funds reserved for the provision of pre-employment transition services to pay for auxiliary aids and services needed by all students with sensory and communicative disabilities in order to access or participate in required pre-employment transition services under section 113(b) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; and
- ✓ **Announce a change in policy** with respect to additional VR services needed by eligible students with disabilities that may be paid for with Federal VR grant funds reserved for the provision of pre-employment transition services and the circumstances under which those funds may be used to pay for those additional VR services.
  - to enable the eligible student to benefit from one or more pre-employment transition services, and
  - must be in accordance with an eligible student's approved IPE

Pre-ETS 101: Examples of Additional VR Services

VR services that may be needed by an *eligible* student with a disability in order to benefit from pre-employment transition services in accordance with their IPE, and therefore allowable to be charged to the Pre-ETS reserve funds, may include:

- ✓ Assessment Services
- ✓ Maintenance
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Personal Assistance Services
- ✓ Rehabilitation Technology
- ✓ Rehabilitation Teaching and O & M
- ✓ Family Services
- ✓ Coaching Services

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Pre-ETS 101: Identifying A Student's Progress and Outcomes

How will you identify and document the student's progress/outcomes for Pre-ETS?

Identify expected student outcomes for each of the 5 required activities

- ✓ Determine when the student has completed the activity (how do you know?)
- ✓ Determine when the student needs additional VR services?
- ✓ Document how services are individualized based on student needs

Identify methods for tracking and reporting student progress

- ✓ Curricula, progress reports, case notes, student self-reflection activities

Maintain and share a copy of student progress reports

- ✓ Document when/why no further Pre-ETS services are needed
- ✓ Share Pre-ETS information collected with the LEA and VR
- ✓ Facilitate coordination of services, and meets VR documentation requirements

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Determining A Student's Need To Apply for VR Services

- How do you determine if the student needs to apply for VR?
- How do you and the VR Counselor assigned to the high school work together to ensure students with disabilities are able to make application in a timely manner?
- How is the student's progress and participation in Pre-ETS communicated with the VR Counselor to ensure there is a smooth transition in service provision?

Remember that Pre-ETS is not a holding ground for students and should enrich, not delay the process of applying for VR services in accordance with informed choice and the need for more individualized VR services.

Review: Potentially Eligible Students with Disabilities Can Only Receive the Following Services

✓ Five required pre-employment transition services

1. Job exploration counseling
2. Work-based learning experiences
3. Counseling on opportunities for enrolment in higher ed
4. Workplace readiness training
5. Self-advocacy

✓ Auxiliary aids and services

- Auxiliary aids and services needed by a **student with a sensory or communicative disability** in order to access pre-employment transition services.

Review: Eligible Students with Disabilities In Accordance With An Approved IPE Can Receive the Following Services

- ✓ **Five required pre-employment transition services**
  1. Job exploration counseling
  2. Work-based learning experiences
  3. Counseling on opportunities for enrolment in higher ed
  4. Workplace readiness training
  5. Self-advocacy
- ✓ **Auxiliary aids and services**
  - Auxiliary aids and services needed by a **student with a sensory or communicative disability** in order to access pre-employment transition services.
- ✓ **Plus additional VR services in order to benefit from pre-employment transition services**
  - Additional VR services must fall within the nature, scope and purpose of pre-employment transition services for an eligible student, in accordance with an approved IPE.

Pre-ETS and the IPE

Student's participation in any of the five required Pre-ETS services **while they are potentially eligible** may help:

- Identify a **projected post-school employment outcome/employment goal** on the IPE, once the student applies and has been determined eligible for VR services.

Once the student has **been determined eligible** for VR services, an IPE is developed including:

- Each Pre-ETS service (purchased or provided) for the student with a disability
- Auxiliary aids or services needed by the student with a disability in order to participate
- Any additional VR services needed to either:
  - Enable the student with a disability to participate in the pre-ets service, and/or
  - Achieve the employment outcome, including a projected post-school employment outcome

Content of the IPE

- Vocational Goal
- Specific services needed to achieve the outcome, including AT and necessary training
- Timelines for achieving the outcome and for the initiation of services
- Entities that will provide the services and how purchased
- Criteria to evaluate progress toward achievement of objectives
- Terms and conditions of service
- Need for post-employment services

Transition – Beyond Compliance

What constitutes an effective secondary transition program?

Compliance	Effective Practice
Transition and employment plans that are within regulations according to Federal and State standards	Compliance + **program integrity** Building **organized** and **well-developed** transition programs and employment plans using evidence-based practices

Collaboration with Schools

The regulations redefined the meaning of collaboration between VR and education and now, more than ever, effective communication and building strong relationships are key to the successful delivery of not just Pre-ETS, but all transition services

- LEAs are obligated to provide transition services under IDEA
  - Responsible for providing and paying for any transition service that is considered special education or related services necessary for ensuring a free appropriate public education (FAPE)
- Nothing under Title 1 of the Rehabilitation Act shall be construed as reducing the LEA's obligation to provide the services described above(see Section 101(c) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 C.F.R. §361.22(c) of the VR regulations)
- Pre-ETS may not duplicate services that are already provided by schools through the IDEA

Let's Compare…

IEP vs. IPE

IEP	IPE
Present Levels Academic Achievement and Functional Performance	Strengths, Resources, Priorities, Concerns, Abilities, Capabilities, Career Interest, Informed Choice
Transition Planning Section - Post-secondary employment, training, independent living if appropriate	Employment Goal, Comprehensive Assessment of Why Services Are Required, and Steps Needed to Reach Employment Goal
Measurable Annual Goals	Measurable Service and Plan Goals on the IPE
Activities, Services and Linkages	Planned VR Services, Who and How Services Will Be Provided

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More Resources!

Collaboration

- Alignment of Performance Indicators
- Pre-ETS: A Guide for Collaboration Among State VR Agencies & Ed. Partners
- Community Rehabilitation Providers Pre-ETS Guidebook
- A Teachers Guide to Collaborating with VR
- Resource Mapping Toolkit

NTACT Interagency Collaboration webpage

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Find us on:

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IDEAs that Work

Office of Special Education Programs
U.S. Department of Education

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