Community of Practice
Bringing the Team Together

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Best Practices for Reaching out to Transition Teachers

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Best Practices: Transition Teacher Outreach

- Identifying Transitional Teachers/Staff
  - Meeting with Director of Special Education or Building Principals
  - District directory of Special Education
  - Partnering with your local disability network i.e. (Disability Network of Walla Walla or The ARC)
  - Reaching out to local union presidents
  - Time of the school year

- Advertising the Additional Work
  - Packeting applications and resources for teachers
  - Offering your assistances with obtaining resources for transition teachers
  - Building a relationship with the transition teachers and school psychologists

Janet Vaupel
Sr. DD Coordinator
Walla Walla-Columbia

Best Practices: Application Process

- Student Identification
  - OSPI List from AWA
    - Keep in mind this is NOT all the students out there
  - Talk to transition teachers
    - There are many students not on the OSPI list that would qualify for services
    - Teachers know who they are
    - Get the information in teacher's hands
  - Parent 2 Parent/Outreach groups
    - Connect with Info & Ed agency events
    - Attend Parent nights at the schools
   - Travel to them

Best Practices: Providers Choice

- Walla Walla only had <u>one</u> provider for Job Foundations in FY23.
  - Walla Walla County demographics
    - Wide range in the number of transition students each year
    - Rural, less than 65,000 residents
    - 4 employment service providers
  - Easier to connect everyone together
  - Work out a system for referral to DVR with your local office
    - County sent application form to DVR, they scheduled intake
    - Make sure to check if they are engaged in a Pre-ETS Service.
  - Visuals make it easier to understand the process

Obtaining Services after High School

Figure 2: Students Move from Services Provided through Their High Schools to Services Delivered through Multiple Programs

Across Multiple Programs
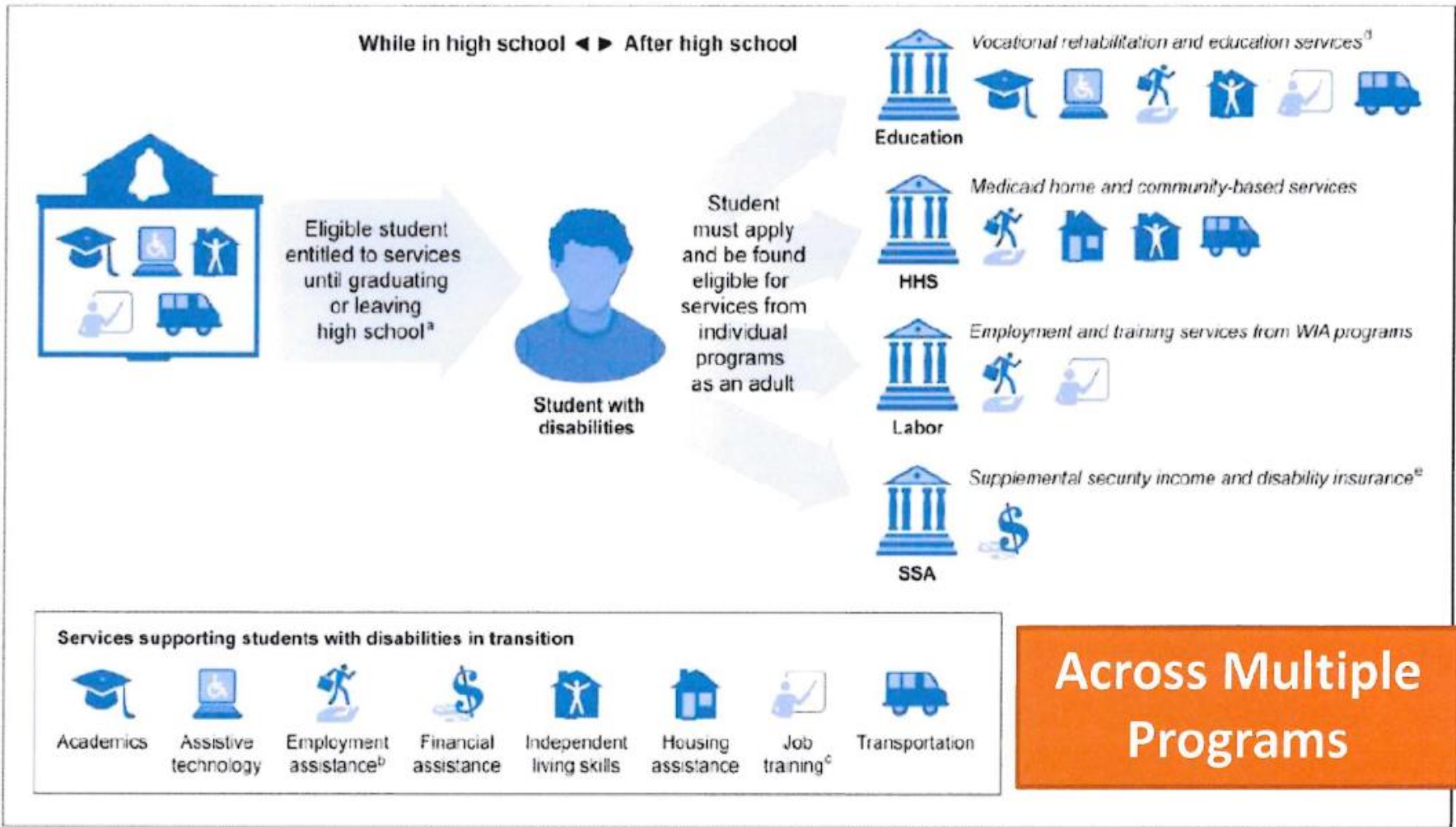
Leah Kaplan
Transition Specialist of Spokane County

Job Foundation Overview

- **Partners**

  DDA, DVR, OSPI, County DD programs, schools, families/supports, and students.

- **Purpose**

  Engage students who are DDA eligible, ages 19 to 20, in targeted employment planning and connections.

  Increase partnerships between employment providers and school staff to complete a student-centered Job Foundation Report that includes actionable next steps for employment; and

  Increase the number of students exiting the school system with a job or a connection to post-secondary education.

Job Foundation

- **Eligibility**
  - DDA eligible students actively enrolled in their second to last year of high school transition services (typically ages 19 to 20).
  - Eligibility is based on birthdate and transition year in DDA database.

- **Key Benefits**
  - Job Foundation Report
  - Earlier engagement with supported employment providers and DVR
  - Partnerships to problem solve

Job Foundation Report Components

- ☐ Communication Skills
- ☐ Interactive Social Skills
- ☐ Self-Advocacy Skills
- ☐ Task Management Skills
- ☐ Work Interest Exploration
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Critical Documents & Enrollments

Excerpt: Job Foundation report

Communication Skills	Description of capabilities and strengths	Assessment of supports needed for success
Ability to communicate with others (verbal, non-verbal, behavioral, visual, assistive technology)	Does the student have a functional way to communicate?	Are alternate modes of communication used /needed? Are certain environmental conditions more supportive or conducive to effective communication (noise level, activity level, indoors/outdoors, etc.)? Specific tools/systems/devices needed to support successful communication that would be expected in an average workplace?
Ability to express preferences and interests in particular job environments/tasks	Does the student communicate their preferences/interests verbally or with augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)? Is information on preferences gathered through observation? Is the students' communication relevant/appropriate to the setting/situation?	What tools, resources, or training can help the student communicate preferences and differentiate between choices?
Ability to participate in conversations with peers	Does the student initiate conversations? Does the student participate in conversations with their peers?	What support or tools would support the student in successfully participating in conversations with their peers?
Tools/strategies to support behavioral communication	Does the student have an effective mode of communication to express themselves (to indicate no, express concerns, need for a break, etc.)? Are anger, frustration or other behaviors an issue?	Are there specific antecedents to challenging behaviors that have been noted? What are effective strategies to prevent challenging behaviors in the future? Are there methods/techniques/tools that the individual can use in dealing with anger/frustration/behaviors?
Language access needs (interpreter, translation) N/A is an acceptable answer if none required	Are there language differences at home (other languages as the primary language)?	Will interpreters be needed for person-centered services and effective communication with the family? Will cultural navigation or other resources be helpful?
Other communication related information		

Recommendations:
Consider the following examples when writing the recommendations: Example: The student needs a communication device or system to succeed in a workplace, what are the resources the school can offer for acquiring the device or putting a system in place and training the student? If not the school, what other community resources are available (DVR, Washington Assistive Technology Act Program (WATAP), etc.) Example: The student struggles to identify preferences when given a choice. What activities or supports need to be developed to build this communication? Yes/No communication tools, visual options in an app, etc.

Brian Nichols - Spokane County DD Program Manager

Job Foundation OUTREACH EFFORTS

- Every spring, a letter is sent from Spokane County to each potentially eligible person identified in AWA.

- This is based on their birthdate and their "transition year".

- In the fall, Spokane County checks in with CRMs of folks who did not apply for Job Foundation to remind them the service is available for those on their caseload.

- Based on input from the CRM, a follow up letter may go out in the fall.

- Spokane County hosts the Spokane area transition network meetings and keeps all informed of available resources.

- Spokane County creates and circulates Job Foundation information materials widely.

- Spokane County's Transition Specialist attends school family information events, IEPs when invited.

- Spokane County's Transition Specialist does regular outreach to educators we have on our email list. This list is updated regularly.

- Spokane County and providers participate in a large resource fair each October. Many students attend.

CONNECTION TO DVR Services

Referral DVR Services

- Pre-employment transition services is a Division of Vocation Rehabilitation (DVR) program
  - Both individual and group services available
  - A release of information form for DVR is signed by participant and/or guardian as part of Job Foundation (JF) application
  - Counties provide information to DVR on who has been accepted into Job Foundation and what provider has been chosen
  - Counties will share completed JF report with DVR
  - DVR will work with persons and relevant others in determining and providing Pre-ets services which will meet the needs of each individual.

Mary Crago - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Deputy Regional Administrator - Region 1

DVR and The Job Foundation Process

- The importance of the involvement of DVR early in the Job Foundation Process.
- The role of the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) on the student's transition team
- The DVR Process – what happens once the referral is made to DVR from County Developmental Disabilities.

DVR Pre-Employment Transition Services (PreETS)

- Students can qualify for group or individualized based PreETS services if they are enrolled in a secondary, postsecondary or other recognized education program, are between the ages of 14-21, and have an IEP, 504 or a documented disability.
- Many DVR CRPs are also contracted to provide Individualized PreETS services, check with your local DVR office to check available vendors.
- PreETS help students with work readiness skills, instruction on self advocacy, on site job shadows and informational interviews, job exploration, and post-secondary education counseling.

DVR Services and Bridging the Gap

- Once the Job Foundation Report is received, the VRC determines if there is enough information to write the IPS or identifies next steps.
- Individualized Pre-Employment Transition Services are a great way to engage students and provide needed services to students during the "gap" between the time the job foundation report is completed, and students enter the School to Work program.
- For counties that do not have a School to Work Program, students will be placed into a traditional job placement contract/search through DVR.