Pre-Employment Transition Services
A Guide for Schools: Definitions, Examples, & Allowable Expenses

FIVE PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES CATEGORIES

1. Job Exploration Counseling
2. Work-Based Learning Experiences
3. Counseling for Post-Secondary Education
4. Workplace Readiness Training
5. Instruction in Self-Advocacy
Following are examples of Pre-ETS activities in the five “required” categories and how they may be provided to individual students with disabilities who are enrolled in high school (ages 14-21) in either a group or an individualized setting.

Please note: this list is not all-inclusive.

1. Job Exploration Counseling

   - **Help students complete interest inventories and explore careers using various paper and online resources.**
   - **Provide opportunities for work on career exploration tools such as the Montana Career Information System (MCIS) ([https://mtcis.intocareers.org/](https://mtcis.intocareers.org/)), the Personal Employment Plan (PEP Talk) ([https://lmi.mt.gov/Portals/135/Publications/Career-](https://lmi.mt.gov/Portals/135/Publications/Career-)**
• Assist students to explore O*NET OnLine (https://www.onetonline.org/), a tool for career exploration and job analysis.
• Provide opportunities to explore Transition-to-Work inventories and facilitate follow-up discussions afterward.
• Offer a high school course on career choices.
• Provide experience interviewing workers in the community during local business tours.
• Arrange for students to hear guest speakers talking about a variety of jobs and careers (online and/or in person).
• Coordinate a panel of entrepreneurs to speak to students.
• Coordinate a panel of Tribal Elders or an intergenerational panel on Employment and Native Trades.
• Provide a career fair or “real life fair” for high school students.
• Create virtual job shadows that students can watch online.
• Explore pre-apprenticeship programs.
• Share information about the differences between labor market employment and negotiated employment.
• Conduct a Group Discovery Class in the classroom to gather information about student skills, support needs, strengths and experiences.
• Teach a class on financial literacy, addressing questions such as: Can I work if I am receiving SSI? What would I want to spend money on from my first job? How much money do I need to earn?

$• Contract with a non-school employee to conduct a class on career exploration.
• Arrange for a group of students or an individual student to visit various community businesses to learn about different jobs in their community.
• Pay guest speakers to organize and conduct several classes on self-employment as a career choice.
• Purchase curriculum or software that supports the exploration of students' interests, aptitudes, and abilities around careers and employment.
• Pay a guest speaker to organize and conduct several classes on Group Discovery.
• Contract with an outside entity to perform the process of Discovery for students with significant impact of disabilities who will benefit from a Customized approach versus a competitive approach to employment.
• Purchase materials needed to support student activities around job exploration counseling.
2. Work-Based Learning Experiences

which may include in-school or after-school opportunities, or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an integrated environment in the community to the maximum extent possible. Work-based learning experiences in a group setting may include coordinating a school-based program of job training and informational interviews to research employers, work-site tours to learn about necessary job skills, job shadowing, or mentoring opportunities in the community. Work-based learning experiences on an individual basis could include work experiences to explore the student’s area of interest through paid and unpaid internships, apprenticeships (not including pre-apprenticeships and Registered Apprenticeships), short-term employment, fellowships, or on-the-job trainings located in the community. These services are those that would be most beneficial to an individual in the early stages of employment exploration during the transition process from school to post-school activities, including employment.

Note: Should a student need more individualized services (e.g., job coaching, orientation and mobility training, travel expenses, uniforms or assistive technology), he or she would need to apply and be determined eligible for vocational rehabilitation services and develop and have an approved individualized plan for employment.

- Coordinate with local Job Service personnel to provide in-school sessions and/or visits to the local Job Service office.
- Build a network of local community-based work experiences, including opportunities for one-day job shadows and longer term work experiences.
- Facilitate job shadowing and mentoring at local businesses.
- Identify individuals who have disabilities and can offer first-hand accounts to share with students about their work-based experiences.
- Make arrangements for students to take advantage of work-based learning experiences.
- Organize a group of community members (including parents) who can help identify and recruit work experience sites in the community.
- Provide school staff to facilitate work-based learning experiences for students.
- Develop a system for gathering information about student skills, support needs, strengths and experiences from each work experience.
- Connect students with adult agencies that provide ongoing employment supports after graduation.
- Consider adult agencies and the school co-supporting youth in work experiences and paid jobs before graduation.
- Learn about what is happening with economic development in the local community.
- Partner with One-Stop Centers and Job Service offices on work-based learning opportunities.
- Enroll students in Jobs for Montana’s Graduates.
- Help students access summer Youth Employment Programs through Workforce/HRDCs.
- Connect with other local agencies, organizations and service clubs committed to preparing workforce members, such as Chambers of Commerce, Rotary, Lions Clubs, etc.
• Explore corporate internship opportunities.
• Implement the EnvisionIT (EIT) curriculum. EIT is 21st century, standards-aligned, online curriculum for grades 8-12 that teaches English and Languages Arts, Information Technology Literacy, College & Career Readiness, and Financial Literacy. The curriculum can be accessed at: http://nisonger.osu.edu/specialed-transition/envisionIT.

• Contract with an employment agency to develop and support community-based work experience sites, internships, apprenticeships for students, and/or paid jobs.
• Expand current school staff to add a position to provide support for students in work-based learning.
• Fund training for school staff around work-based learning, Discovery, and systematic instruction, included paying their wages if done on their time off.
• Arrange for students to participate in community-based experiences.
• Cover additional costs incurred by the employer for providing the work-based learning experience.
• Pay student wages during an employment experience (must be at least minimum wage).
• Fund the creation of a summer work experience program or contract with an employment provider to provide work experiences for students over the summer.

3. Counseling on Opportunities for Enrollment in Post-Secondary Education

In a group setting may include information on course offerings, career options, the types of academic and occupational training needed to succeed in the workplace, and post-secondary opportunities associated with career fields or pathways. This information may also be provided on an individual basis and may include advising students and parents or representatives on academic curricula, college application and admissions processes, completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and resources that may be used to support individual student success in education and training, which could include disability support services.

• Support students in compiling a transition binder with relevant agency/organization contact information (for example, Vocational Rehabilitation and college support services).
• Provide opportunities to participate in “College in a Day” at local college campuses.
• Support students to participate in the “Movin’ On in Montana” campus experience.
• Invite recent graduates back to school to talk about their experiences transitioning to college and the differences between high school and college.
• Collect examples of college application paperwork and discuss needed requirements with students.
• Learn about accommodations for college entrance testing and SAT and ACT test preparation.
• Collaborate with the school counselor to provide opportunities to discuss post-secondary education options and visit local post-secondary education campuses.
• Invite the local Vocational Rehabilitation and Blind Services (VRBS) counselor to present information to students about the VRBS program.
• Offer a “Trades Rodeo” for students to learn more about practical trades, including opportunities for apprenticeships and ways of learning on the job in a trade or industry.
• Collaborate with math teachers and/or college staff to offer specific lessons on financial planning and budgeting for college and how to research financial aid opportunities such as Pell grants, ABLE (Achieving a Better Life Experience) accounts, and PASS (Plan to Achieve Self-Support) plans.
• Educate students on the differences between special education services in high school and disabled student services on campus.
• Help students learn about various supports and assistive technology used by students with disabilities at college, such as where and how to get alternative formats of textbooks.
• Provide students with resources to learn about TRIO Student Support Services, TRIO-Upward Bound, and Disability Services for Students.
• Explore statewide Job Corps options.
• Plan a visit with students to a local Job Corps campus.
• Explore electronic mentoring between high school students and college students with disabilities.
• Explore dual enrollment options at local colleges for high school and college credit.

$ • Support students to visit college and/or post-secondary education entities or participate in a “Movin’ On in Montana” session.
$ • Fund personnel to co-teach a dual enrollment (high school-college) class.
$ • Fund peer mentors (college students or graduates with disabilities) to share their experience identifying their own support needs, requesting accommodations, using Disability Student Services on college campuses and other post-secondary education opportunities.
$ • Hire someone to create and teach a get-ready-for-college class.
$ • Hire someone to train teachers and students about technology that is useful in college settings.

4. **Workplace Readiness Training** may include programming to develop social skills and independent living, such as communication and interpersonal skills; financial literacy; orientation and mobility skills; job-seeking skills; and understanding employer expectations for punctuality and performance, along with other “soft” skills necessary for employment. These services may include instruction, as well as opportunities to acquire and apply knowledge. They may be provided in a generalized manner in a classroom setting or be tailored to an individual’s needs in a training program provided in an educational or community setting.

• Offer soft skills training to facilitate awareness of social skills and personal strengths and challenges in the workplace.
• Explore existing soft skills training. For example: through local Job Service offices; Easter Seals-Goodwill Peer Connections (http://www.easterseals.com/esgw/our-programs/autism-asd-services/peer-connections.html); Missoula-based JOBS’s (Job Opportunity-Based Services) Job Ready program (http://www.jobssinfmt.com/jobreadyprogram.html); MYTransitions’ Soft Skills Academies (http://montanayouthtransitions.org/soft-skills-academies/); Centers for Independent Living; and the Office of Disability Employment Policy’s (ODEP) “Skills to Pay the Bills” curriculum (http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/).


• Teach students strategies to promote independence at work such as time management, moving from task to task, and self-monitoring production and performance.

• Support students to explore job-specific and disability-specific assistive technology, as well as how to pay for the assistive technology.

• Teach students to use assistive technology that will enable them to be independent at work.

• Teach workplace vocabulary and support students to develop competent communication for the workplace. Develop strategies for augmentative and alternative communication if needed.

• Have students participate in financial readiness classes through local banks.

• Offer financial literacy instruction addressing such topics as getting a paycheck, calculating the impact of wages on SSI, reporting wages to the Social Security Administration, applicable Social Security work incentives, saving, and budgeting.

• Provide and discuss examples of job descriptions, compensation and taxes, workplace expectations, and evaluation/performance appraisal documentation.

• Provide opportunities to practice form completion and the gathering of required documentation/verification (for example, background check applications, health information and insurance paperwork, picture identification cards, and W-9 tax forms).

• Provide opportunities for students to take the WorkKeys evaluations at registered sites either in school or at local Job Service offices.

• Teach workplace expectations such as work hours and breaks, vacation time, annual holidays, personal hygiene, maintenance of uniforms, health and safety requirements, etc.

• Offer opportunities for students to learn basic first aid for the workplace.

• Partner with the Regional Transition Committee and/or the local Center for Independent Living for ideas around workplace readiness.

• Provide “transportation and travel” training. Determine if travel trainers are available through Vocational Rehabilitation and Blind Services or the local Center for Independent Living.

• Connect students with the Summit Independent Living Center-BASE Program improvisation class.

• Connect with other schools that have Pre-Employment Transition Services ideas and information to share.

• Invite employers to present to students about what skills they are looking for in employees.
• Host practice interview sessions. Check with the local Adult Basic and Literacy Education program and/or Job Service to see if they can assist with this.
• Create opportunities to teach students customer service skills. Examples of such opportunities include a school store, concessions at school events, and school-run businesses such as the Harlo Theatre featured in the show “Backroads of Montana” (episode #134).
• Create a job club/class to practice job skills.
• Explore resources such as the Workforce Recruitment Program by visiting the ODEP website at http://www.dol.gov/odep/.
• Explore the “Working Well with a Disability” curriculum with the local Center for Independent Living and/or the Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities. What aspects of this curriculum would fit for youth?

$ • Hire or contract with someone to facilitate the MYT Soft Skills class.
• Hire someone to teach self-management strategies for students using technology.
• Contract with an employment agency, Independent Living Center or Job Service to create a Transition Class.
• Contract with an Independent Living Center or SSA Benefits Specialist to teach a class about work and Social Security benefits.
• Support students to attend a community-based financial literacy class (at a job service, local bank or credit union).

5. Instruction in Self-Advocacy in a group setting may include generalized classroom lessons in which students learn about their rights, responsibilities, and how to request accommodations or services and supports needed during the transition from secondary to postsecondary education and employment. During these lessons, students may share their thoughts, concerns, and needs, in order to prepare them for peer mentoring opportunities with individuals working in their area(s) of interest. Further individualized opportunities may be arranged for students to conduct informational interviews or mentor with educational staff such as principals, nurses, teachers, or office staff; or they may mentor with individuals employed by or volunteering for employers, boards, associations, or organizations in integrated community settings. Students may also participate in youth leadership activities offered in educational or community settings.

• Compile a library of relevant transition assessments/evaluations which focus on self-advocacy in order to support individualized education planning for activities within the Transition Services Needed section of the IEP. These may be online or paper resources.
• Encourage students to participate in the Montana Youth Leadership Forum (MYLF).
• Support students in setting one or two relevant personal self-advocacy goals for the school year (for example, keeping a calendar, making medical appointments, and participating in
required transition evaluations for moving from pediatric to adult health and/or mental health services).

- Teach specific workplace self-advocacy skills, including how to complete time cards, request leave for vacation or medical appointments, and report workplace harassment.
- Provide opportunities for students to practice discussing their individual strengths and challenges, as well as how their individual special educational needs might impact their work performance and how they can manage such impacts.
- Use the application to attend the annual MYTransitions Conference (or any such conference or activity) as a teaching exercise in self-advocacy (learning how to complete applications for scholarships and grants, arranging travel and lodging arrangements, etc.).
- Support students to participate in the youth track at the annual MYTransitions Conference.
- Engage graduated students to speak to students about their recent life experiences in self-advocacy.
- Provide opportunities for students to plan and attend visits and/or meetings with local Vocational Rehabilitation and Blind Services (VRBS) counselors and/or college-based staff to research opportunities for post-secondary employment and education.
- Teach a class about identifying support needs and asking for accommodations at college.
- Teach a class on disability disclosure using The 411 on Disability Disclosure: A Workbook for Youth with Disabilities publication available for download at: http://www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure.
- Teach a class about negotiating a customized position instead of applying for an existing position, including how to explain what the student needs in a workplace to best contribute to the employer.
- Teach students to create and use visual resumes to share their “best self”, disclose disability, explain assistive technology needs, and ask for accommodations.
- Provide opportunities for students to network with adults to learn about their experiences and what helped them succeed.
- Review “Living Well with a Disability” and “Working Well with a Disability” (http://livingandworkingwell.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/). Could portions be used with students in schools?
- Support students to develop a portfolio or file of important papers for after graduation. Contents might include Social Security card, birth certificate, employment information, references, resume, etc.
- Offer students and parents information on Supported Decision Making and alternatives to guardianship.
- Teach students about voting and other civic duties and privileges.
- Encourage and support students to lead their own IEP meetings. Identify existing resources to teach students to lead their meetings, or create visual resources to help students envision this possibility.
- Organize a school-wide Americans with Disabilities Act training.
- Organize a school-wide Disability History Day.
- Teach individuals with communication difficulties to find and use their voice.
• Connect students with the local Centers for Independent Living (CIL). Ask about their advocacy/self-advocacy curricula (for example, Summit’s “Building Advocacy and Learning Leadership Skills” or BALLS, and “Youth Opening Doors through Advocacy” or YODA; Disability History classes; etc.).
• Explore the Job Accommodation Network website (https://askjan.org/) to learn about successful accommodations used in the workplace by people with disabilities.

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• Support students to participate in MYLF, mini-MYLF programs and/or the MYTransitions Conference.
• Contract with an Independent Living Center to teach a class about self-advocacy, disability rights and responsibilities, disability disclosure, and requesting accommodations.
• Expand a current school staff position to teach and support students in classes that teach self-advocacy skills.

If you have ideas to add to the list, updates or corrections to existing list content, or suggestions for making this a more useful tool, please contact Kim Brown at kim.brown@mso.umt.edu or by leaving a message at 406-243-4852.

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Learning ABOUT work
Build awareness of the variety of careers available and the variety of jobs within career fields. Broaden students’ perspectives of personal skills to utilize, reinforce and develop for work.

Sample Student Outcome
Student can articulate some potential careers they would like to explore and what training and education are required to find success in those fields.

Experiences might include:
- Workplace tours (1)
- Guest speakers from specific fields/industries (1)
- Career fairs (1)
- Trades rodeos (1)
- Labor market and job outlook research (1)
- Career interest inventories (1)
- Discovery (1)
- Job shadows (2)

Learning ABOUT work
Explore career options for the purpose of motivating students for decision making in high school and post-secondary education.

Sample Student Outcome
Student can give at least two examples of how the student’s individual skills and interests relate to the career field and/or occupations.

Experiences might include:
- Occupation-specific informational interviews (1)
- Learning styles inventories and multiple intelligences inventories (1)
- Research on training and educational opportunities and requirements (1)
- Tour Job Service Center (2)
- Additional job shadows (2)
- Create portfolio with relevant work samples, applications, personal references, resume, etc. May add to portfolio throughout the student’s education (4)

Learning THROUGH work
Apply learning through practical experiences. Activities will have consequences and value beyond the classroom and may be applicable to a variety of careers.

Sample Student Outcome
Student builds effective working relationships with colleagues and customers; is able to contribute to a working environment.

Experiences might include:
- Complete Vocational Profile (1)
- Project-based learning or service learning opportunities with multiple interactions with professionals (2)
- Student-run enterprise/business (2)
- Paid work experience connected to the student’s employment goal(s) (2)
- Work-based learning paired with classroom instruction (2)
- Clarify any accommodation needs (4)
- Classroom instruction on topics that support employment success: Employment soft skills, financial literacy, managing and arranging transportation, personal care, etc. (4)

Learning FOR work
Train for employment and/or post-secondary education in a specific range of occupations. Some mastery of career-specific skills is evident.

Sample Student Outcome
Student demonstrates knowledge and skills specific to employment in a particular career field.

Experiences might include:
- Paid work experience developed for specific career interests (2)
- Employment-specific training for credentials, certifications or clinical experience (2)
- If applicable, connect with agencies and/or resources for ongoing support (4)

Pre-ETS Activity Categories:

1 — Job Exploration Counseling
2 — Work-based Learning Experiences
4 — Workplace Readiness Training
Counseling for Post-Secondary Education Progression

Post-Secondary Awareness

Learning ABOUT options
Build awareness of the variety of options and the role of post-secondary education and training.

Sample Student Outcome
Student can articulate the type of post-secondary education and training options available:
- Degree, non-degree, diploma or certificate program at a community college, college, university, or vocational/trade school

Experiences might include:
- Invite guest speakers in order to learn about college and trade experiences from people with and without disabilities
- Develop awareness of online post-secondary program options
- Learn about career fields and pathways through Montana Career Information Systems (MCIS)
- Discuss importance of networks of support, independent living options, and community participation
- Participate in college fairs & trades rodeo
- Add relevant info to transition binders (i.e. DSS at Montana post-secondary institutions, FAFSA website info, list of AT the students finds helpful in the school environment, etc.)
- Invite VRBS to present information about the VRBS program and post-secondary supports

Post-Secondary Exploration

Learning ABOUT programs
Explore post-secondary programs to determine best fit in meeting transition goals.

Sample Student Outcome
Student can provide a list of programs of interest and identify steps needed to meet transition needs and goals.

Experiences might include:
- “Exploration” course to learn about academic and career interests, including dual enrollment opportunities
- Explore on-the-job training and apprenticeship opportunities
- Virtual or onsite program tours - explore campus size, location, majors or degrees, student clubs, diversity of student body, living options, and availability of financial aid or scholarships
- Visit Job Corps Center and Adult Learning Programs to learn about workforce training and certificate programs
- Assess program requirements, costs, timelines, and disability-related supports and services
- Interview/mentor with current student or trades worker with disabilities
- Create lessons with Montana Colleges Interactive Guidebook

Post-Secondary Preparation

Learning THROUGH experiences
Apply learning through practical experiences that develop knowledge and skills necessary for success in post-secondary education.

Sample Student Outcome
Student takes a lead role in post-secondary transition planning and preparation.

Experiences might include:
- Work-based learning experiences to help determine program of study
- Participate in “Movin’ On in Montana” or “College in a Day”
- Practice and preparation for PSAT/PLAN
- Create application management system for deadlines, support materials, and timeline (MCIS)
- Establish eligibility for VR services
- Learn how to research financial aid - FAFSA, Pell grants, scholarships and work study
- Enroll in dual enrollment or preparation courses to develop strong study skills and learning strategies
- Collect examples of college application paperwork and discuss needed requirements with students

Post-Secondary Training

Learning FOR success
Practice skills necessary for post-secondary education success

Sample Student Outcome
Student demonstrates knowledge and skills needed to successfully enter and complete post-secondary program.

Experiences might include:
- Educate students on differences between special education services in high school and disability student services on campus
- Collaborate with math teachers and college staff to offer lessons on financial planning and budgeting
- Instruction in expanded core curriculum: communication, social skills, organization, self-regulation, self-determination and independent living
- Training in the area of reasonable accommodations and alternative formatting of course material
- Access and training in assistive technology supports
- Student led plans for Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) and Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS)
Instruction in Self-Advocacy Progression

Self-Advocacy Awareness

Learning ABOUT oneself
Build self-awareness, including interests, skills, accommodations, impact of disability, and goals. Ensure student can express needs and wants, and recognizes they have choices.

Sample Student Outcome
Student is aware of their disability, how it impacts them and why they have accommodations.

Experiences might include:
- Present to IEP team about interests and goals
- Discovery/Self-Discovery
- Career interest inventories
- Class on identifying support needs
- Teacher teaches and models vocabulary to assist in describing individual strengths and needs
- Create portfolio to capture information about accommodations
- Connect with mentors with disabilities who can share information about accommodations
- Role play describing the impact of disability to Disability Services for Students

Self-Advocacy Exploration

Learning ABOUT self-advocacy
Explore rights, responsibilities, and how to request accommodations or services and supports. Learn what self-advocacy means and why it is essential to a successful transition into adulthood.

Sample Student Outcome
Student can request accommodations they will need for use in education and/or employment.

Experiences might include:
- Develop a description of self/disability and accommodations/modifications. Share with teachers.
- Recent graduates speak to students about their self-advocacy experiences
- Class addressing disability disclosure
- School-wide Americans with Disabilities Act training, Disability History Day
- Complete the Self-Advocacy Checklist or AIR Self-Determination Form
- Explore the Job Accommodation Network website to learn about workplace accommodations
- Review the Montana Council on Developmental Disabilities Self-Determination Toolkit
- Self-advocacy workshop facilitated by the local Independent Living Center

Self-Advocacy Preparation

Learning THROUGH advocacy
Apply learning through practical experiences. Activities will have consequences and value beyond the classroom and may be applicable to both education and employment.

Sample Student Outcome
Student has self-developed goals and knows how to take the first step to achieving those goals.

Experiences might include:
- Assist with developing IEP goals; invite supportive participants to IEP meeting
- Practice disclosure in various settings
- Set one or two relevant personal self-advocacy goals for the school year
- Practice discussing individual strengths and leadership skills
- Plan and attend visits with local VR counselors and/or college-based staff to research opportunities for post-secondary education and employment
- Use a visual resume to share “best self”, disclose disability, explain AT needs, and ask for accommodations
- Explore Supported Decision Making and alternatives to guardianship
- Opportunities for making and carrying out plans based upon choices

Self-Advocacy Training

Learning FOR success
Train for self-advocacy skill demonstration across a variety of settings and in multiple situations, including but not limited to post-secondary education and employment.

Sample Student Outcome
Student demonstrates the skills to communicate their goals, support needs, interests, skills and abilities.

Experiences might include:
- Lead own IEP meeting(s)
- Participate in Montana Youth Leadership Forum or MYLF-Mini
- Attend Youth Track workshops at the Transition Conference
- Evaluate self-advocacy for effectiveness and improve strategies
- Present portfolio to an employer
- Prepare a list of needed accommodations to discuss with Disability Services for Students
- Present to the Student Council or even a Legislative Committee about Disability History and Civil Rights
- Participate in an advocacy group (KASA, People First, Youth M.O.V.E., etc.)