

# Ideas for Pre-Employment Transitional Services

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



Job exploration may be provided in a classroom or community setting and include information regarding in-demand industry sectors and occupations, as well as non-traditional employment, labor market composition, administration of vocational interest inventories, and identification of career pathways of interest to the students. Job exploration counseling provided on an individual basis might be provided in school or the community and include discussion of the student’s vocational interest inventory results, in-demand occupations, career pathways, and local labor market information that applies to those particular interests.



- 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/>) and the Montana Department of Labor & Industry Career Resources website ([www.careers.mt.gov](http://www.careers.mt.gov)).
- 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.



- 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 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 students 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 and develop a system to track the Pre-Employment Transition Services they receive as part of the program.
- 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.



- 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.
- 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.
- Hire someone to create and teach a get-ready-for-college class.



#### 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 (<https://www.esgw.org/youth-transition/>) Missoula-based JOBS’s (Job Opportunity-Based Services) Job Ready program (<http://www.jobsinfmt.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/>).
- Assist students with workplace readiness training using transition curriculum from Life Centered Education <https://www.cec.sped.org/Publications/LCE-Transition-Curriculum> or Attainment Company <http://www.attainmentcompany.com/>.
- Teach students strategies to promote independence at work such as time management, moving from task to task, and self-monitoring production and performance.
- Teach students to request and use assistive technology.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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”.
- 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 students?

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 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 materials 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.
- Support students to explore job-specific and disability-specific assistive technology, as well as how to pay for the assistive technology.
- Encourage students to participate in the Montana Youth Leadership Forum (MYLF).
- 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.
- 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).
- 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/publications/the-411-on-disability-disclosure-a-workbook-for-youth-with-disabilities/>
- 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?
- 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.
- 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.
- Introduce students to the Montana Council on Developmental Disabilities Self-Determination Toolkit at <https://www.mtcdd.org/self-determination-toolkit>.



- 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.