

Planning for the Future FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES



Transition planning services begin while students are in school. Compared to their nondisabled peers, students with disabilities – as well as those with chronic achievement problems – are more likely to experience unemployment or underemployment, lower pay, and job dissatisfaction. High schools and middle schools can better engage and support these students by helping identify their strengths and interests and providing them with the skills (or a plan for gaining them) they need to succeed in the workplace.

The **WEST VIRGINIA PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES GUIDE** is designed to advance efforts in ensuring all students and youth with disabilities are equipped with the skills and knowledge to be engaged in the 21st Century workforce. Its purpose is to provide information for students, families, school staff, and community agencies to use as students with disabilities are preparing for school-to-work transition and post-school life.

The Planning Guide can serve to improve home-school communication by increasing families' understanding of course and graduation requirements and ways to monitor and support their student's progress. It can also increase families' awareness of the steps they can take to help their students graduate high school and make the transition to post-school activities. For families of students in middle school it can help create a seamless pathway into high school so families remain engaged throughout their teens' high school grades. Connect with the students prior to reaching out to families. When the student is approached and understands how he/she can be supported to be on track for graduation, families will perceive this as interest in the student and will be more likely to become engaged in supporting his or her school success. Reach out to families even when their children are in middle school.

The **WEST VIRGINIA PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES GUIDE** includes:

- » **INTRODUCTION**
- » **TRANSITION ACTIVITIES** correlated with the age group (grades 6-8, grade 9, grade 10, grade 11, grade 12, post-secondary)

The Planning Guide can be used to reach out to families and students:

- » **SCHOOL DISTRICT** – College- and Career-Readiness transition planning for ALL students – Use at Personalized Education Plan (PEP), Individualized Education Program (IEP), and Section 504 Plan meetings.
- » **AGENCY** – Use in development of Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) and Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) meetings.
- » **FAMILY/STUDENT** – Provide family and student with a step-by-step guide and timeline outlining transition planning activities.

