



Effective Strategies for Transition Planning between Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) Providers and Schools

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Acknowledgments

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How to use this guide

This guide is a compilation of three different teams of schools and Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) providers who have come together in order to provide transition activities and services for students. The purpose of this guide is to assist Transition teams in establishing a partnership in order to coordinate quality transition activities and services for students with disabilities.

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Establish a Partnership for Success

Setting up Intake Protocols

Pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) providers have specific guidelines they must follow when a student is beginning to receive Pre-ETS services. Vocational Rehabilitation is tasked with tracking how many students and what types of services students are receiving through Pre-ETS. It is important to establish a protocol for determining which student should be considered first when having students receive Pre-ETS services, how students will be referred to Pre-ETS, and how families will be informed about the intake process and what services will be provided.

Determining Student Eligibility

Students who are fourteen years of age or older who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a section 504 plan (504s) are eligible for Pre-ETS services. This does not mean all students with IEPs or 504s should receive Pre-ETS services. Each school and Pre-ETS provider team needs to establish what Pre-ETS services are the most important for students at the school and which students will benefit from these services.

Intake Protocol

Different schools have a different number of Teachers of Record within the school. Through the 2019-2020 Cohort it has been recommended not every Teacher of Record be responsible for submitting students to the Pre-ETS Career Coach. Instead, teams reported it was better to have a central person such as a transition coordinator or department chair be responsible for taking teacher requests/recommendations and then determining who would be forwarded on to the Career Coach based on services being offered and capacity of the Career Coach to work with student's already receiving services versus adding additional students to their caseload.

Case Conference Committee (CCC) Requirements

Pre-ETS needs to be discussed with families at the Annual Case Review (ACR) conference on an annual basis. This is because Pre-ETS providers are an outside agency providing transition activities and services. Families need to agree to have Pre-ETS services be provided to their students as well as be in agreement with what the activities and services are.

Setting up Communication Protocols and Systems

Protocols

It is important to determine how information will be communicated to families, students, teachers, and career coaches throughout the year to ensure everyone is working together. Establishing clear modes of communication will assist teams in being able to provide high quality opportunities for students.

When creating communication protocols, keep the following things in mind:

- How will students know when they are working with their career coach?
- How will teachers know when students are working with the career coach?
- How is a student supposed to access their career coach?
 - Does the career coach have a designated location within the school for students to go to?
 - Does the coach have a way to communicate directly with students using the same modes of communication the school uses? If not, how is the new mode set-up and how does the team ensure the student has access to this form of communication?
- How are teachers supposed to access the career coach?
- How does the career coach access the teachers?
- How is information shared between teachers and the career coach?

Systems

Once protocols are in place, developing a system to execute the protocol is key to ensuring that the protocol will be implemented correctly.

The following systems need to be established in order for Transition teams to be able to work together effectively:

- A shared calendar stating when and where students are working with the career coach
- A policy for collecting data to be shared with families, students, teachers, and career coach

Take-aways from the 2019-2020 Pilot

- Several of the Transition teams in the 2019-2020 pilot cohort shared they struggled with having a consistent way for students to access their career coach. It's important to implement Pre-ETS services with fidelity as they are a part of the student's IEP.
- There was a split between the pilot sites as to who should be responsible for maintaining data collection for transition activities and services. Some teams felt strongly that it should be a shared responsibility and set up a means in which both Career Coach and Teacher of Record could upload and share data through a shared folder (utilizing Google). Other teams felt it was important to have the Teacher of Record be responsible for compiling the data for students and established a means for the Career Coach to be able to share or have the student share information from the sessions the Career Coach had with the student.

Transition Team Set-up Examples

Batesville Community School Corporation and New Horizons

Intake Process

One point of contact for the intake process should be determined for each school building. The point of contact will typically be the TOR. Students can be enrolled in Pre-ETS at the beginning of the school year or on a day to day process. Meetings should include the Pre-ETS Career Coach, TOR, School Counselor or Principal, and student.

- Verify if the student has a 504 or IEP
- Determine if the student will have time in their schedule to participate
- Determine grade level and expectations around graduating

Provide an intake packet to the student to take home to the parents.

- Gather a phone number so you can contact parents
- Call parents and explain services and answer any questions

Gather returned documentation for Portal

- Submit required documents in Pre-ETS Portal

Determine schedule with the student, TOR, Counsellor, and School system.

Communication

Google Drive:

The google drive is used to collect and distribute information from Pre-ETS Provider to School System. The ownership of the drive should be the school system with them providing access to the student's folder. The Pre-ETS provider can have their own Drive and folder system to hold the shared folder of the student. This is dependent on the TOR comfort level with Google Drive.

- Determine shared naming convention, example: YYYYMMDD HIPPA NAME
- Set permission so nothing gets edited that shouldn't

Google Site Transition Portfolio:

Batesville Community School Corporation and New Horizons made some modifications to the format of the original Transition Portfolio Google Site Template. The team thought it was too difficult to navigate, so the team decided to simplify the site down to 5 main pages: Home, About Me, Learning Characteristics, Academic Skills, and Employability Skills. The Transition Portfolio Google Site should

be owned by the TOR. This is important because of staff turnover in the Pre-ETS program. The TOR is responsible for actual completion with the student before graduation.

Indiana Career Explorer:

Batesville Community School Corporation is using Indiana Career Explorer. Pre-ETS staff will need to determine the school system administrator for Indiana Career Explorer. The administrator will need to help Pre-ETS staff with passwords and usernames for students.

Delivery of Services:

The Career Coach will follow the five core competencies. The Pre-ETS curriculum has been shared with the TOR. This allows the teacher to have an understanding of what is being done in Pre-ETS. The Pre-ETS Career Coach is to deliver curriculum objectives with each student. The Career Coach is to partner with the TOR to ensure the services reflect the IEP goals. The Career Coach will work to give each student experiences with their local community. The Career Coach will tailor services to match each student's skills, interests, and aptitude. The Career Coach will assist in the development of a resume and cover letter.

The TOR and Career Coach will communicate each week to ensure that services and training align with the student's IEP goal. TOR has access to the Pre-ETS curriculum to review and provide feedback on overlap with class plans.

Communication expectations:

The Career Coach will update the TOR each week on the goals for the week, via email, chat, or phone conversation. The TOR is welcome to provide feedback and suggestions on individual students and services rendered. Any documents created by Career Coach will be put into the student's shared google drive. The TOR will communicate any IEP meeting they want the Career Coach to attend. New Horizons will work to attend if invited and if our schedule allows us to participate.

Hamilton Southeastern Schools and Easterseals Crossroads

Intake Process

It is critically important to have one primary point of contact at the school who coordinates Pre-ETS referrals. The career coach will have communication with all of the TORs about their students. However, when determining capacity and priority for referrals to Pre-ETS, one person (often the transition coordinator or spec ed dept chair) takes responsibility. In most schools currently served by Pre-ETS, this point of contact has already been established.

Communication

The team sees the importance of frequent, written communication in order to keep all parties informed of a student's progress toward completion of the planned Pre-ETS activities. The career coach maintains frequent communication with the TOR via email. This is critical in maintaining a clear picture of what services the student needs and who is responsible for which specific tasks.

Division of Responsibilities

The Pre-ETS coach will play a supporting role in assisting students and teachers in completing the required activities for Employability Skills as well as providing items for the Graduation Portfolios. The team acknowledges educators need to be the experts in Graduation Pathways. Only a TOR or school counselor will be in a position to know each student's progress toward meeting all of the requirements (which include academics and other areas unrelated to Pre-ETS). Additionally, given the various platforms being considered for the Graduation Portfolios (IN Career Explorer, Naviance, Google Sites, etc.) this eliminates the need for the career coach to maintain information about how to access students' Portfolios themselves. The team anticipates that best practice will be for the career coach to complete the Portfolio artifacts as requested and then send those documents to the TOR or counselor to be uploaded into the Portfolio. This also ensures that the primary person responsible for the Portfolio's contents will be able to keep accurate track of what has/has not been completed. Therefore, when a student is already participating in Pre-ETS, or it is determined that s/he will benefit from referral to Pre-ETS, the TOR can request assistance with the specific activities that

- 1) fall within one of the 5 areas of service and
- 2) can reasonably be completed by the career coach (the career coach cannot take responsibility for a work experience in which a student will need significant on-site support over an extended time, for example).

The team plans to create a specific checklist of appropriate Pre-ETS activities for a TOR to request, and then the career coach can respond with any questions or concerns about the activities or time frame expectations.

Key Take-aways and Advice to Other Teams

As the team continues to look ahead to how Graduation Pathways will be implemented, we see great potential for Pre-ETS to be a valuable resource to schools in helping to meet the graduation and portfolio requirements for some students. The team is excited to be a part of this new initiative. However, it is important to bear the following in mind:

- Pre-ETS is a program in its own right, and has its own service requirements. A student should be referred for Pre-ETS services if they will benefit from the program as a whole, and not simply in order to complete a specific portfolio artifact or activity. It is clear that the service areas of Pre-ETS nicely complement the requirements of Graduation Pathways, but the program does not exist solely for that purpose. In other words, the available services of

Pre-ETS should not be seen as an “a la carte menu” from which teachers can pick and choose specific activities.

- Pre-ETS does not have the capacity to serve every student with a disability, nor to assist every student with meeting their graduation requirements. Other school services and programs will continue to play a vital role. Pre-ETS should not be seen as the primary means to these requirements.

Knox County Special Education Services and KCARC

Intake Process

The team divided the identification of students into middle school and high school students. Once middle school students are identified they stay enrolled in Pre-ETS programming. Some students may shift to a more consultative model with just occasional check ins to see how the student is doing. The team further divided students into three groups that are typically identified at each level. There is some overlap between the groups. Focus and priority are on students with special education eligibility. Students with Section 504 plans would be considered upon recommendation.

Middle School

Behavior

- Social Needs (weak coping skills, problem solving, no goal setting, weak attachment to important adults)
- Not Delinquent/probation involved
- Priority for students enrolled in Alternative Education programs or students only accessing Special Education settings

Social Emotional

- Teacher Recommendation
- Building principal approved
- Have social needs: weak coping strategies, lack of friends or attachments, lack of experiences or opportunities
- Lack of future goals
- Limited involvement in school activities such as sports, band, clubs, etc.

High School

Behavior

- Students who are enrolled in Multi-Cat Room
- Students on partial day- due to behavior
- Lack of desire to be at school

Social Emotional

- Pathway/Non-Diploma/Guidance

- Focus on Students Grade 10 and higher
- Limited connection to school activities or adults
- No work/ volunteer experiences or does not exhibit work readiness

Referral Process

- Principal is notified of anticipated referral
- Once the principal has approved the student their name is forwarded to KCSEC Office
- Paperwork goes into a Google Drive and Folder
- Pre-ETS staff will review information to determine appropriateness of referral
- Pre-ETS staff is invited to the case conference(s)

Division of Responsibilities

Middle School

Provider works with the Knox County Special Education Cooperative and teachers to determine curriculum/activities implemented at middle school level. The following are possible options:

- Fast Track Curriculum
- Budget management/money
- Career Exploration
- Living Cost/budgets/career

High School:

- Fast Track
- Indiana Career Explorer
- Google Doc
- Hospital Internship
- Freshman- in school jobs
- Maintain Bookstore/sales
- Coordinate with job coach
- Functional skills

Provider coordinates with Knox County Special Education and teachers for work experiences outside of the school to ensure a balance of academic needs and work experiences.

Communication

- Email
- Phone
- Text

- Indiana Career Explorer - Assessments and other relevant documents/activities are uploaded into a shared Google Drive in order to give access to students, parents, providers, teachers and Special Education Cooperative.
- Google Drive- Assessments and other relevant documents/activities are uploaded into a shared

Key Take-aways, Advice, and Next Steps

- Conversation and Collaboration is key to success.
- Regular and frequent communication between providers and teachers is necessary.
- Teachers are encouraged and given coverage to visit work sites on a regular basis.
- It has been helpful for us to have a clear vision with goals (short and long term).
- Interventions and lessons taught need to be consistent between providers and school staff.
- Provider time with students needs to focus on meaningful activities to justify the time spent.
- Providers and school staff need to plan so that the loss of instructional time is limited.
- **Parent Involvement: How do we include parents in the process?**
 - BDDS Waiver Workshop
 - Financial Planning workshop
 - Every other year- transition fair

Needs for the Future: What we would like to explore for the future?

- Curriculum map for providers. What skills to teach at what times of the year?
- Parent Involvement. How else can parents be involved?
- How do we coordinate assessments?
- Schedule for staff and providers so TOR and Special Education Cooperative know when/where students are located.
- Continue with celebrations: End of the semester celebrations for students and mentors to celebrate successes.
- Utilize teacher input/collaborate. Be more consistent in paths of communication.