

# **Promoting Work Experiences for Students: Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)**

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# Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) From Referral to Delivery



## **Work Force Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014**

- The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) set VRBS and the rest of our nation's public vocational rehabilitation agencies on a new path.
- The new path requires VRBS to serve high school youth with disabilities much earlier than before with a new set of services called Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS).
- The WIOA wants schools and VRBS to work together to deliver Pre-ETS within the educational setting.
- High school students with disabilities do not have to be VRBS clients.
- Pre-ETS are open to all students with disabilities, even those who have no intention of applying to VRBS.



- VRBS is currently contracting with school districts to deliver Pre-ETS in high schools.
- These in-school Pre-ETS may be supplemented by traditional VRBS case services.
- At all times, Pre-ETS must be delivered in the spirit of work in the community for livable wages and without the use of subminimum wages.



## Pre-ETS School Contract

- School is awarded a specified dollar amount based on the number of students being served with Pre-ETS and who have a Pre-ETS form signed.
- School submits billing invoice after each quarter that details the number of eligible students served and the services provided.



## Who Should Be Referring and How

- Special Education case managers, school counselors, 504 coordinators, parents, outside providers, and CSCT MH staff.
- Prioritize the referrals based on significance of disability, student age/grade level in school.
- Highest priority going to those with most significant disabilities and 12<sup>th</sup> graders
- Lowest priority- 9<sup>th</sup> graders to try to ensure that all 12<sup>th</sup> graders have an opportunity to meet prior to graduation.

NOTE: The prioritization applies to referrals for VR application, any student with a disability should be provided with the choice to apply, and students can start receiving pre-ETS at age 14 in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.



## Process for Gathering Pre-ETS Referral Forms

- Discussion of Pre-ETS during VR intake meeting, and if student is interested a Pre-ETS form is completed.
- Pre-ETS form presented by special education case manager during IEP.
- Pre-ETS form discussed and presented to 504 students by the 504 coordinator.
- Pre-ETS forms provided and discussed with parents and students by the CSCT staff.
- Letter and Pre-ETS form mailed to parents that explains Pre-ETS and the steps required for the student to receive Pre-ETS.
- Student can be scheduled to meet with pre-ETS Specialist during times the specialist is at the school.



## Pre-ETS Services/Activities Provided in School

- Vocational Preparation Courses, on campus and off campus Work Based Learning Experiences.
- Pre-ETS Summer Camps
- Interest Inventories.
- Presenters-MYT Student led IEP, Movin' On, ILCs, Job Corps, Job Service.
- Employer presentations in classes.





## Intake Meeting

- Participants include parent, student, teacher , VR counselor (occasionally other staff).
- Initial meeting happens at the school to provide students and parents with familiar surrounding.
- Application and other VR paperwork is reviewed and signed.
- Pre-ETS form is reviewed and signed by those interested in receiving Pre-ETS services while on the VR waitlist.
- Student interests, experiences, and goals are discussed.
- Opportunity to build rapport and for the parent to see how the school and VR partner together.
- Opportunity to provide other pertinent information (such as referral for DDP, Summit Independent Living Center).



## Eligibility for Pre-ETS

Must be

- A student with a disability
- Between 14-21 years old
- In high school, college, or another recognized training program

**NOTE: Do not make the determination yourself and choose not to refer because you assume that the student won't be eligible. If they fit the description above, please refer and the VR counselor will make the determination**



## Pre-ETS Services

### **Job Exploration Counseling**

- We help the student choose a job that matches their interests, strengths and abilities.

### **Work-Based Learning Experiences**

- We can help setup informational interviews, job site tours, and paid work experiences.

### **Counseling on Postsecondary Programs**

- We provide information about college and setup campus tours to help students decide if college is right for them. If it is, we help students enroll, get the accommodations they need, and apply for financial aid.



## Pre-ETS Services Continued

### **Workplace Readiness training**

- We help teach students how to apply for a job and teach the work habits employers expect.

### **Instruction in Self-Advocacy**

- We teach the student about their rights and responsibilities, how to ask for accommodations and services they need, and how to be a leader in their own life.



## Delivery of Pre-ETS

- **School Contracts**-School utilizes funding through contract to provide Pre-ETS to eligible students.
- **Counselor Provided**-Counselor provides Pre-ETS to students individually or in groups. Attend IEPs and assist with transition planning and vocational goals. Work with schools to increase and improve delivery of Pre-ETS to students.
- **Counselor Purchased**-Counselor contracts with CRP to provide Pre-ETS services.
- **Special Projects**-VR provides funding assistance for MYLF, MYLF minis, MYT, Movin' On in Montana.



## Various Case Types

- Active VR case with IPE, receiving VR and Pre-ETS services.
- VR Waitlist case not receiving pre-ETS services.
- Pre-ETS only case not on the VR waitlist.



## Success Stories

- AH-Did job shadow with software/web design company, found it interesting, tried WBLE, then was hired. Working PT there while in college.
- LT-In IPE, VR assisted with various Pre-ETS activities while he was in high school. He attempted to drop out of school 2 months before graduating. Due to strong relationship developed throughout H.S. VRC was able to problem solve with him and the school. He ultimately decided to continue to attend and graduated. Still working with VR.
- GS-Multiple Job shadows/info interviews with architects. Assistance with researching and info interviews with the U of Idaho/MSU programs. Discovered that MSU is a 5 year program. Led to starting there rather than MC and saved her from taking many unnecessary classes.
- TL-Exploration in welding, connected with Rev Up MT, researched programs with him. He decided on Great Falls CC. had less than 2.0 in high school, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading level. Completed program in 1 year with 3.50, secured job.



## Why is All of This Important

- Individuals with disabilities tend to
  - Graduate at a lower rate than their non-disabled peers
  - Are less likely to go on to post secondary education
  - Are unemployed at a higher rate
- By getting them started with Pre-ETS as early as possible it can help
  - Decrease unemployment rates for individuals with disabilities
  - Provide motivation to graduate high school
  - help these students live a more fulfilling and independent life beyond high school.





## Discovery and Customized Employment

- A service and approach that can be really beneficial for determining interests and employment goals for students with the Most significant disabilities.
- Can be really beneficial to start the discovery process while the student is in high school.
- Can work in combination with pre-ETS services.



## Coming Off the Wait-List

- Access to far more services and activities
  - Those with Significant Needs get more one-on-one
  - Combination of VR and Pre-ETS services
  - Access to more funding
- Collaboration with Team
  - VR Counselor and Pre-ETS Specialist
- More Opportunities Available
  - More funding, means less restrictions on which activities you can participate in
- Apply as Early as Possible!



## Working with Students with Significant Needs

- Students who are Non-Verbal and Family Outreach
  - Met for 4 weeks
  - Consisted of 4 students
  - Most had severe needs including low mobility, low-cognitive functioning, and were non-verbal
  - 4 adults to provide 1:1 ratio
- Weekly Outline
  - Week 1: Introductions and Learning Students Unique Verbalizations
  - Week 2-4: Focused on learning each individual students' skill set in order to look at which jobs would be a good fit with those skills
  - Tried the Pictorial Interest Inventory as a group



## Students who are Non-Verbal Class (Continued)

- Family Outreach staff provided opportunity for each student to attempt tasks
  - Following Directions, sorting (different objects), shredding
- Young man followed all directions and completed all activities well
  - Went on to complete a WBLE at 406 Recycling
    - Even offered him a JOB!

And then... COVID-19 Happened



## Other Examples of Our Work with Students with Significant Needs

- Great Falls Public Schools
  - Secondary Life Skills
    - Students who graduate High School, but decide they want more adult skills to be prepared
    - Learn everyday tasks, such as riding the bus, cooking, cleaning, and being independent
      - Each of these tasks are individualized to the student and what they and their team believe they need to work on
    - Get work experience in WBLE as well as work-site assistance from school staff
    - Get to continue in this program until the age of 21



## Other Examples of Our Work with Students with Significant Needs

- Inter-agency collaboration
  - Developmental Disability Program
    - Students with significant needs can utilize their cost plan
    - This allows payment of more one-on-one job coaching that Pre-ETS doesn't cover
    - Work with their case managers to see what other experience they may have had
- Utilizing School Staff
  - Having Para-educators or other personnel join on work experiences to do job coaching
  - Utilize CRP's to set up WBLE's
- ORI and Job Clubs
  - Teach students about mock interviews, professional attire, role-playing, and their elevator speech for interviews



## Working with Students with Significant Needs

- We know it can be challenging, and that's what we are here to help with!
- Get creative!
  - Every student is unique... One method won't work for everyone
- Always reach out with questions or to bounce ideas around!
  - We have worked with many students of varying disabilities, and we love sharing our thoughts with you!
- As always, all your work with these students is much appreciated
  - THANK YOU!



## Serving Students with Visual Impairment, Deaf Hard of Hearing, and Deaf Blind

- Building collaboration between VRBS Rehabilitation Counselor and Pre-ETS Specialist
- School contract with Montana School for Deaf and Blind (MSDB)
- Coordinate summer work experiences in home communities
- Assist with off-campus job opportunities
- Assist classroom teachers
- Connect with MSDB outreach workers





## Using VRBS Orientation & Mobility Specialist and Vision Rehabilitation Therapist

- Share curriculum to support learning in the classroom and at home
  - Workplace Readiness Training: modules include home management, self management, food management, and clothing management
- VRT involvement
  - Assistive technology for job accommodations and accessing job applications
  - Disability skills training
  - Self-Advocacy
- O&M Specialist involvement
  - Organizational skills
  - Work site orientation
  - Transportation assistance
  - Self-Advocacy



## Other Programs and Resources

- [VirtualJobShadow.com](https://VirtualJobShadow.com) – online platform to access job shadows and employment information
- Putting Your Best Food Forward-student training workshop
- Northwest Association of Blind Athletes – 8-week Homerun course



# Questions



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## Resources

- National Research & Training Center on Blindness & Low Vision  
Mississippi State University
- Norwest Association for Blind Athletes  
[www.nwaba.org](http://www.nwaba.org)
- Putting Your Best Foot Forward  
[blind.mssstte.edu](http://blind.mssstte.edu)  
[ntac.blind.misstate.edu](http://ntac.blind.misstate.edu)
- [Virtualjobshadow.com](http://Virtualjobshadow.com)



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## MT Deaf-Blind Project

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RESOURCES EVENTS & TRAINING

EARLY IDENTIFICATION & REFERRAL FAMILY ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT, PLANNING & INSTRUCTION TRANSITION  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NATIONAL CHILD COUNT

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