

Work Based Learning and Progressive Employment

EWDS Webinar 8

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MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF
LABOR

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

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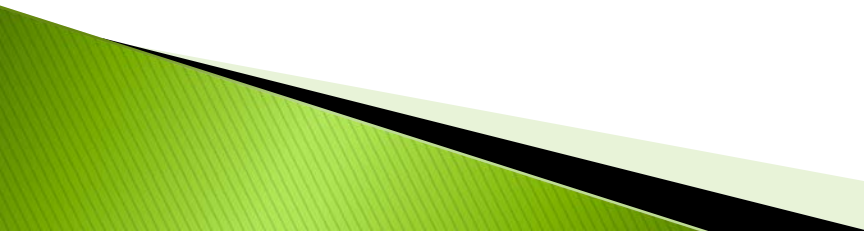
Today's Agenda

- ▶ Provide an update on recently-implemented DVR initiatives to promote work-based learning for youth
 - ▶ Share early data and lessons learned
 - ▶ Discuss what's coming next!
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What is Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)?

- ▶ Vocational Rehabilitation is a statewide program that helps eligible people with disabilities of all ages (and potentially eligible students) prepare for, find, and keep employment.
- ▶ To be eligible, you must have a disability that keeps you from getting and keeping a job – and – you must need VR services to overcome disability-related barriers.


Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Pre Employment Transition Services

1. Job Exploration Counseling
 2. Work-based Learning Experiences
 3. Counseling on Opportunities for Post-Secondary Training and Education
 4. Workplace Readiness Training to Develop Social Skills and Independent Living
 5. Instruction in Self-Advocacy
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What We Know - Paid Work Experience Matters

- ▶ From the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth) – Practice Brief: *Engaging Youth in Work Experiences* (Sept. 2011)
 - “Families who learn about and begin the career development process with their youth early will be **better prepared** to support them in choosing and building a bright future.”
 - “Students who participated in work-based learning were **more likely to attend college or go to work** compared to their peers (Jobs for the Future, 2007).”
 - “One of the most important findings from the research shows that work experiences for youth with disabilities during high school (paid or unpaid) help them **acquire jobs at higher wages** after they graduate (Colley & Jamison, 1998).”
 - “In addition, research studies suggest that work-based learning may **increase school attendance, decrease dropout rates**, reduce school suspensions, and increase school engagement (Medrich, Calderon, & Hoachlander, 2002)”

Pressing Issues for Maine

- ▶ Who will be the next generation of workers?
 - ▶ What will work look like?
 - ▶ How can jobseekers with disabilities be part of the solution?
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Progressive Employment

- ▶ “Everyone is ready for something”
 - Early engagement
 - Informational interviews, job shadows, paid work experience
 - Different way of partnering with the business community
 - Serving transition-age youth and young adults in Portland and Lewiston
 - Partnering with Community Rehabilitation Providers
 - Over 500 Progressive Employment activities to date!

Progressive Employment Stories

- ▶ Examples from the Portland and Lewiston offices


Early Progressive Employment Evaluation – Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) – Jan 18

- ▶ The successful closure rate of PE transition youth was nearly 48%
- ▶ Reducing early exit : Preliminary data suggest that this approach is very promising
- ▶ Approximately 89% of 363 PE work exposures were classified as low dose, as the experience lasted one day or less.
 - Median successful closure = 4 activities
 - Median unsuccessful closure – 2.5 activities

The Transition Work Based Learning Model Demonstration Grant

- ▶ What: **Disability Innovation Fund: Transition Work-Based Learning Model Demonstration Grant (CFDA Number: 84.421B)**
- ▶ Length of Grant: **5 years** (began October 1, 2016)
- ▶ Amount of Funding: **\$9 million**
- ▶ Funder: **Rehabilitation Services Administration** (part of the US Department of Education – Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services)
- ▶ Purpose: Provide **effective work-based learning experiences** (at least 2 per student) in coordination with other transition services, including pre-employment transition services and customized employment, to students with disabilities to ensure that those **students are prepared for postsecondary education and competitive integrated employment.**

TWBL Partners


- ▶ Jobs for Maine's Graduates
 - ▶ Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI)
 - ▶ American Institutes for Research (AIR)
 - ▶ Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation
 - ▶ Center for Workforce Research and Information
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Grant Purpose/Goals

- ▶ Serve students who are within two years of high school graduation or exit
 - Bangor and Augusta catchment areas

 - ▶ Evaluate the effectiveness of two interventions
 - “Enhanced” Jobs for Maine’s Graduates programming
 - Progressive Employment


 - ▶ Develop replicable, sustainable and collaborative ways to provide pre-employment transition services to youth with disabilities

 - ▶ Within 1 year after graduation at least 90 percent of study participants will enter postsecondary education/training or competitive integrated employment.
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Strategies

- ▶ Expand JMG programs to five new high schools in the Bangor area
- ▶ Cross-train all JMG Specialists as ACRE-certified Employment Specialists
- ▶ Launch “Progressive Employment” in the Augusta and Bangor catchment areas
 - Build new relationships with local employers
- ▶ Provide additional transition resources (Rehabilitation Counselor I’s) to provide direct services to students and coordinate with VR Counselors as well as provide support to JMG Specialists on disability and inclusion

TWBL in Action

- ▶ JMG Programs Launched
 - Students Served
 - ▶ Progressive Employment Launched
 - Students Served
 - ▶ Partnerships and successes
 - ▶ Next Steps
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More Work Based Learning!

- ▶ Summer Employment
 - ▶ More Pilot Projects
 - Goodwill – Belfast
 - Aroostook County Adult Education
 - Alpha One Peer Mentoring
 - And More!
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Questions?

The Maine Department of Labor provides Equal Opportunity in employment and programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available to individuals with disabilities upon request

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