

**THE THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE
APPLICATION FOR GRANTS
CHAPTER 42F, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES**

Type of Grant Request:

Operating

Capital

Legal Name of Requesting Organization or Individual: Db:

Friends of Waipahu High School

Amount of State Funds Requested: \$ 250,000

Brief Description of Request (Please attach word document to back of page if extra space is needed):

The Friends of Waipahu High School Foundation is requesting \$250,000.00 via the State Grant in Aid to support how Waipahu High School's (WHS) Ohana of Excellence Academy (OEA) will dramatically advance the way they prepare students with disabilities for post-high school careers and education opportunities. Through an innovative work-based learning component not currently provided by the Department Education or other Workforce Innovation Opportunities Act (WIOA) partners, WHS plans to change the status quo for our most vulnerable target group by providing industry-standard job training opportunities off campus, in high-demand careers in the private sector.

Amount of Other Funds Available:

State: \$ 0

Federal: \$ 0

County: \$ 0

Private/Other: \$ 119,112.07

Total amount of State Grants Received in the Past 5 Fiscal Years:

\$ 200,000.00

Unrestricted Assets:

\$ 88,638.49

New Service (Presently Does Not Exist):

Existing Service (Presently in Operation):

Type of Business Entity:

501(C)(3) Non Profit Corporation

Other Non Profit

Other

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 971363

City:

Waipahu

State:

HI

Zip:

96797

Contact Person for Matters Involving this Application

Cesceli Nakamura

Name:
Cesceli Nakamura

Title:
Secretary

Email:
cesceli.nakamura@k12.hi.us

Phone:
808-226-4325

Federal Tax ID#:

State Tax ID#



Cesceli Nakamura - Secretary

January 14, 2022

Authorized Signature

Name and Title

Date Signed

Application for Grants

If any item is not applicable to the request, the applicant should enter "not applicable".

I. Certification – Please attach immediately after cover page

1. Certificate of Good Standing (If the Applicant is an Organization)

If the applicant is an organization, the applicant shall submit one (1) copy of a certificate of good standing from the Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs that is dated no earlier than December 1, 2021.

See Appendix A

2. Declaration Statement

The applicant shall submit a declaration statement affirming its compliance with [Section 42F-103, Hawaii Revised Statutes](#).

See Appendix B

3. Public Purpose

The applicant shall specify whether the grant will be used for a public purpose pursuant to [Section 42F-102, Hawaii Revised Statutes](#).

The public purpose is to get students ready for employment by bridging the gap between school and work, and to become confident, independent individuals able to navigate life in the public sector with zero to minimal need for public assistance.

4. Disclosure Statement for Friends of Waipahu High School

Explanation of The Friends of Waipahu High School's and Waipahu High School Ohana of Excellence Academy's roles in this proposed grant.

See Appendix C

II. Background and Summary

1. Brief Description of the Applicant's Background

The Friends of Waipahu High School (FOWHS) Foundation is requesting \$250,000.00 via the State Grant in Aid to support how Waipahu High School's (WHS) Ohana of Excellence Academy (OEA) will dramatically advance the way they prepare students with disabilities for post-high school careers and education opportunities. Through an innovative work-based learning component not currently provided by the Department of

Education or other Workforce Innovation Opportunities Act (WIOA) partners, WHS plans to change the status quo for our most vulnerable target group by providing industry-standard job training opportunities off campus, in high-demand careers in the private sector.

The Friends of Waipahu High School, incorporated on June 9, 2017, is a Hawai'i non-profit 501(c)(3) established to operate exclusively for charitable, literary, educational and scientific purposes, to provide educational support to the students and faculty of Waipahu High School. The Corporation is designed to promote the learning experiences and opportunities available to the students of Waipahu High School by providing financial support to these students, faculty, and programs. The Corporation shall maintain, receive and accept funds, gifts and contributions for and on behalf of such activities, and to participate in such other activities and programs which, in the opinion of the Board of Directors, will exclusively in furtherance of the foregoing purposes and in furtherance of the education of the students of Waipahu High School.

While the primary mission of the Friends of Waipahu School is to provide educational support to the students and faculty of Waipahu High School, the non-profit corporation also supports increasing educational opportunities to all programs that partner with Waipahu High School by providing logistical support to their students, faculty, and programs.

The FOWHS received its first GIA grant in 2018 on behalf of a district-wide media consortium.

This current application is to further develop a transition program specifically for Waipahu High School students served in the Ohana of Excellence Academy for Fully Self-contained (FSC) students with disabilities. The FOWHS will be serving as the fiscal agent for this grant proposal and funds. The WHS OEA team will be responsible for implementing the services detailed in this proposal and sharing reports, related documents and information with FOWHS for purposes of monitoring, measuring the effectiveness, and ensuring proper expenditure of the grant.

2. Goals and Objectives Related to the Request

Our goal is to support Waipahu High School's Ohana of Excellence Academy to prepare their students with disabilities for the 21st Century by engaging them in rigorous and relevant learning opportunities. In doing so, they can realize their individual goals and aspirations by becoming gainfully employed independent individuals.

Waipahu High School's "Ready-to-Work" (RTW) transition (from school to employment) program shares the Department of Education General Learner Outcomes.

The GLOs guide student development as:

1. Self-Directed Learners
2. Community Contributors
3. Complex Thinkers
4. Quality Producers
5. Effective Communicators
6. Effective and Ethical Users of Technology.

In addition, the OEA RTW program develops lifelong servers, who live with Aloha.

3. The Public Purpose and Need to be Served

This application is unique because it is requested on behalf of our most vulnerable students who face the greatest employability barriers after leaving high school. Students with disabilities must learn to deal not only with self-doubt but with the preconceived attitudes of future co-workers and employers who may view them as being less capable.

According to the [Policy Brief on Preparing Transition-Age Youth with Disabilities for Work: What School Leaders Need to Know About the New Legal Landscape](#) (Appendix D), the Institute for Educational Leadership's President Johan Uvin stated that, *"Too many youth with disabilities have been employed at subminimum wages as well as placed in segregated sheltered workshops while in school, often leading to job placements in the same sheltered adult workplaces after graduation. This is one of the most egregious inequities of our times. Students with disabilities need to be given access to mentorships, paid work experiences, and internships, all of which could help prepare them for competitive, integrated employment."* (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2018)

For parents, the thought of their children transitioning from the familiar and supportive school environment to the unfamiliar workplace is of great concern. This becomes more troubling the closer the student gets to exiting high school, whether it is at age 18 or 22.

The OEA listened to parents and restructured its program to gently but deliberately prepare students for post high school life and the world of work. Their purpose is to get students ready for employment by bridging the gap between school and work.

Parent buy-in is a critical component of the program's success. By partnering with the UH Center for Disabilities Studies, who conducts informational sessions with parents on benefit planning, the OEA was able to alleviate parent concern on how their child's stipends would or would not affect their current Social Security benefits. The Center's on-going partnership provides vital benefit planning resources for our families and as members of the OEA Advisory Board, adds additional oversight and research based perspective for the Ready to Work Program.

As an external measure of program excellence, we are happy to share that the OEA recently joined the school's other five academies as a national program of distinction by earning certification from the National Career Academy Coalition (NCAC). This distinction was due in large part to how OEA maximizes opportunities for every student.

4. Target Population

The restructured OEA has a service continuum ranging from the "Max-X" Pathway for the medically fragile, to the "Program" Pathway for students who function best with supervision, and to the "Competitive" Pathway for students who can work independently and safely. The Ready-to-Work program is the final bridge for this latter group to the world of work.

5. Geographic Coverage

Waipahu High School serves families living in a six square mile region of a former plantation community that is now a growing suburb. Economic levels range from low to moderately high incomes with predominantly Filipino, Hawaiian, Samoan and then other ethnicities. Their geographic coverage area includes Waipahu, Waikele, Waipio and parts of Pearl City. The OEA has also served students (by parent choice) from Kalihi and Kapolei in recent years.

III. Service Summary and Outcomes

The Service Summary shall include a detailed discussion of the applicant's approach to the request. The applicant shall clearly and concisely specify the results, outcomes, and measures of effectiveness from this request. The applicant shall:

1. Describe the scope of work, tasks and responsibilities

The scope of work is to maintain and continuous refinement of the RTW program. This recent addition to the OEA continuum has brought value to our students by forming an

innovative two-way bridge from school to and from the workplace. After mastering soft job seeking and job sustaining skills, students are immersed in authentic work experience for up to four days a week, with quality on-site monitoring and coaching support.

The students return to school weekly for debriefing, reflecting and deconstructing positive and negative experiences. Workplace or personal issues that may result in a student giving up, are instead immediately addressed and resolved. This quick intervention is one key to the program's success in keeping students employed. The ability to make corrective responses is an essential action that many schools are not able to perform due to staffing limitations.

Successful implementation of the RTW program requires two critical budget items. The first is paid stipends at minimum wage for the students. This is a foundational requirement based on U.S. Department of Labor reports that the strongest indicator of post-secondary employment is paid employment while in high school.

The second is for staffing above and beyond what the school system can provide. The RTW program hires seasoned educators who are cross-trained to perform in-school teaching, on-site monitoring, job coaching and counseling. The private provider also seeks out grant opportunities and most importantly, does the searching and vetting of prospective job site hosts.

This careful vetting requires approaching job sites as future employers, with a message of mutual benefit, advocacy and civic purpose. The host is also briefed on protective laws and procedures that will shield and protect their companies from workplace liability. This Worksite Safety Survey of the host site is conducted yearly by trained school safety surveyors to ensure that students are placed in a safe work environment for their work-based experience.

Although OEA has tested this concept for the past three years, it envisions opening more career pathways in the agriculture sector to explore ways to engage OEA students in the ways of sustainable food production and food security. As the visitor industry resets, OEA is also considering revisiting hospitality sector training.

We believe that the unique process can be replicated and that other schools can benefit from OEA's growing knowledge base. The OEA is evolving into a one-stop transition service center with support from a private provider as a linker to services that the school is unable to quickly provide.

2. Provide a projected annual timeline for accomplishing the results or outcomes of the service

The Ready to Work Program is an extension of the OEA Competitive Pathway Training Centers, as described below:

<i>Ready to Work</i>			
Desired Outcome	Enabling Activities	Timeframe	Accountable Lead(s)
<u>Ready-to-Work Program</u>			
1. Identification and selection of students	1. Participating Competitive Pathway students in 11th or 12th grade, recommended by their teachers	By end of May of previous SY 2021-2022	RTW Team: Academy Principal Academy Director Private Provider
2. Parent Orientation	2. Program description, expectations, goals & resources are shared	By end of August 2022	UH Center on Disabilities Studies
3. Classroom Instruction and Job Preparation	3. Curriculum modules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction ● Communication ● Self Advocacy ● Safety ● Literacy & Numeracy ● Employability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Resume -Interview skills 	Ongoing for SY 2022-2023	
4. Work monitoring, retraining, on-going curriculum instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Site visits ● Immediate on-site intervention ● Cohort sharing, debriefing and problem solving of employment questions, concerns and successes 	2nd quarter through end of Summer 2023	

<u>OEA Training Centers</u> 1. Core Modules 2. Cane Training Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial Literacy• Employability• Personal Health/ Hygiene• Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cane Cafe• Cane Services• Cane Printing & Bookstore	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ongoing for SY 2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Academy Principal • Academy Director
---	---	--	---

3. Describe its quality assurance and evaluation plans for the request. Specify how the applicant plans to monitor, evaluate, and improve their results

The success of this Ready-to-Work (RTW) program will be based on how students are provided with the skills and abilities to seek and retain competitive integrated employment and be self-reliant for their living needs. The project will be evaluated by teachers, students, the RTW Team, and the OEA Advisory Board. The findings of the evaluation will be shared with the Friends of Waipahu High School for further review and input. The private provider will monitor the progress of the project components and student mastery timelines, and provide feedback to address challenges and student needs, to ensure that each participant meets the project's goals of employment and self-reliance.

Teachers will collect classwork and workplace performance data, which will be maintained by the private provider, to monitor student progress. Teachers will look at data and reflect on outcomes to plan for additional student support. Evaluation will be continuous and ongoing.

The RTW team will provide updates and progress in completing the identified tasks needed to achieve the program outcomes. Based on monitoring data collected and shared monthly, the RTW Team will analyze results, identify deviations from the work plan and discuss corrective actions. Results of corrective actions will be assessed during each succeeding meeting and adjustments made as needed to address identified issues in implementation or changes in circumstances. As appropriate, representatives of relevant stakeholder groups will be invited to help address barriers in their areas of expertise.

At the inception of the project, the advisory board will meet with the RTW team to agree on how performance related to outcomes will be measured. The team will measure the skills students learned using performance evaluation protocol from each worksite partner. Evaluation will focus on adherence to the master timeline and on the achievement of intended outcomes.

The team will report to the FOWHS with updates on participating students. The FOWHS feedback will be used by the team to make adjustments to ensure that the program continues to meet industry standards.

4. *List the measure(s) of effectiveness that will be reported to the State agency through which grant funds are appropriated (the expending agency). The measure(s) will provide a standard and objective way for the State to assess the program's achievement or accomplishment. Please note that if the level of appropriation differs from the amount included in this application that the measure(s) of effectiveness will need to be updated and transmitted to the expending agency.*

Our measures will show the number of program entrants and completers, with detailed explanations on any non-completers. Also included will be information on students' ability to secure a part or full-time job after exiting from WHS on or before their 22nd birthday.

Measure 1

Job retention (consecutive months students have remained on the job assignment).

Measure 2

Employer satisfaction of student performance based on the evaluation tool used by individual employers.

Measure 3

Number of students that have attained permanent part or full time employment (where the job site host puts the student on the company payroll). This is the "gold standard" proof of Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) where the student functions as an equal to workers without disabilities.

IV. Financial

Budget

1. *The applicant shall submit a budget utilizing the enclosed budget forms as applicable, to detail the cost of the request.*
 - a. *Budget request by source of funds - see Appendix E*
 - b. *Personnel salaries and wages - see Appendix F*
 - c. *Equipment and motor vehicles (Not Applicable to this proposal)*
 - d. *Capital project details (Not Applicable to this proposal)*
 - e. *Government contracts, grants, and grants in aid (Not Applicable to this proposal)*

On behalf of the OEA Ready-to-Work transition program, the Friends of Waipahu High School is seeking \$250,000.00 in funding.

2. *The applicant shall provide its anticipated quarterly funding requests for the fiscal year 2023.*

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total Grant
\$95,332	\$51,556	\$51,556	\$51,556	\$250,000

3. *The applicant shall provide a listing of all other sources of funding that they are seeking for fiscal year 2023.*

The RTW program plans to seek funding for fiscal year 2023 from the following:

- Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, Agriculture Workforce Program
- Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, yet to be announced Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) grant application

4. *The applicant shall provide a listing of all state and federal tax credits it has been granted within the prior three years. Additionally, the applicant shall provide a listing of all state and federal tax credits they have applied for or anticipate applying for pertaining to any capital project, if applicable.*

On June 9, 2017, the Friends of Waipahu School received official confirmation and approval of their exemption from federal tax under the Internal Revenue Code (IRC)

Section 5021(c)(3). The FOWHS has not applied for any additional tax credits pertaining to any capital project.

5. The applicant shall provide a listing of all federal, state, and county government contracts, grants, and grants in aid it has been granted within the prior three years and will be receiving for fiscal year 2023 for program funding.

To date, the Friends of Waipahu High School received one GIA grant in School Year 2018-19 on behalf of a district-wide media consortium.

6. *The applicant shall provide the balance of its unrestricted current assets as of December 31, 2021.*

As of December 31, 2021, the Friends of Waipahu High School has \$88,638.49 in unrestricted current assets.

V. Experience and Capability

1. Necessary Skills and Experience

The applicant shall demonstrate that it has the necessary skills, abilities, knowledge of, and experience relating to the request.

The applicant has successfully administered a State of Hawaii GIA in School Year 2018-19.

This current application is for a promising Waipahu High School program specifically for Fully Self-contained (FSC) SPED students.

The FOWHS does not possess a license and is not accredited to provide the services outlined in the Ready to Work Program grant proposal. This includes instruction in the field of work readiness for special needs students. However, the partners and affiliates who are working with the Friends of Waipahu High School to implement this program come from accredited institutions with the license and authority to not only provide instruction in the field of work readiness, but also award a high school diploma or certificate of completion. Partners in this grant proposal include Waipahu High School and the University of Hawaii at Manoa Center for Disabilities Studies. (Appendix C)

The necessary skills and experience for the foundational program comes from the school's educational core group in the "Competitive" Pathway. This group includes four highly qualified special education teachers and four educational assistants.

In the article, [Improving Graduation and Employment Possibilities for Students with Disabilities: Predictive Factors and Student Perspectives](#) (Appendix G), contracting a private provider is recommended for schools to utilize, as a "mechanism for delivering transition services". The FOWHS will disburse grant funds to Waipahu High School's OEA Competitive Pathway RTW Team to secure a private provider to add value to the existing academy pathway and RTW programs by assisting with transition services, employment based curriculum development, worksite development, and to partner on project oversight.

Transition services also include job seeking through referral to outside agencies that provide extended work training for adults, continued education opportunities, and/or job placement will also be provided.

This provider will develop community business partnerships that will welcome and provide on-site work experience training for OEA Ready-to-Work participants.

State your experience and appropriateness for providing the service proposed in this application.

The Ready-to-Work program that this application will support has a three-year record of bringing extraordinary value to students with disabilities in the Ohana of Excellence Academy.

The applicant shall also provide a listing of verifiable experience of related projects or contracts for the most recent three years that are pertinent to the request.

The FOWHS successfully implemented a district-wide media consortium GIA in SY 2018-2019. All grant reports were completed and submitted on time.

2. Facilities

The applicant shall provide a description of its facilities and demonstrate its adequacy in relation to the request. If facilities are not presently available, describe plans to secure facilities.

WHS will provide in-kind facility use for in-school instruction including the “Competitive” Pathway portable classrooms and meeting rooms in Buildings V and Q.

Facilities for work sites include:

- Taco Bell (Pearl City and Waipahu)
- Hawaiian Building Maintenance (Pearl Highlands and Waimalu Shopping Center)
- Dunkin Donuts (Pearl Ridge Shopping Center)
- McDonalds (Waipio and Waipahu)
- Little Caesars (Waipahu)
- J-Lynn’s Beauty Shop

As part of the proposed project, the private provider will seek to expand partnership worksites to more closely align to student career interests and job opportunities. We will also add more agriculture sector pathways and prepare to restart the hospitality pathway as hotel industry jobs open up.

All WHS OEA partnership worksites have been inspected by school safety surveyors and received satisfactory ratings to ensure that students have a safe environment for their workplace learning. HRS 302A-430 Coverage for Workers’ Compensation states that whenever a student participating in a school-approved work-based learning program sponsored by the department of education or the University of Hawaii undertakes to perform work for a private or public employer as part of the student’s work-based learning program, whether paid or unpaid, the State shall be deemed to be the responsible employer for the purposes of workers’ compensation coverage, that shall be the student’s exclusive remedy to the same extent as provided for in Chapter 386 as against the State and the private employer participating in the program.

VI. Personnel: Project Organization and Staffing

1. Proposed Staffing, Staff Qualifications, Supervision and Training

The applicant shall describe the proposed staffing pattern and proposed service capacity appropriate for the viability of the request. The applicant shall provide the qualifications and experience of personnel for the request and shall describe its ability to supervise, train and provide administrative direction relative to the request.

The OEA Administrator provides supervision over WHS SPED teachers and Educational Assistants currently on staff. He will also hire and supervise four part-time teachers (PTT) with teaching degrees and prior work experience with special needs students. These teachers will also be able to deliver a scaffolded instructional

curriculum and differentiate their instruction in real-time, in order to fully address the learning styles and needs of the students.

The FOWHS will disburse grant funding to Waipahu High School's OEA Competitive Pathway RTW Team to secure a private provider for the purpose of assisting with RTW transition services, employment based curriculum development, worksite development, grant seeking and writing to sustain the program, and to partner on project oversight.

Private Provider Responsibilities:

- Seek funding and grant sources; serves as principal grant writer
- Serve as primary liaison between OEA, Academy Leadership and Employers
- Perform outreach to employers individually or at job fairs
- Vet and secure work sites
- Provide job site monitoring and coaching
- Manage payroll and work site timesheets
- Collaborate with PTTs to improve curriculum content and delivery
- Collect and package evaluative data
- Coordinate inter-academy projects and school service projects
- Develop and continuously improve soft skills lessons, including professionalism and time-management
- Provide career counseling
- Compile student and parent testimonies on program efficacy

Operational costs: In addition to the above, costs cover administrator salary, professional development, coordinating national conference proposals and presentations, educational research, fiscal management, and future program expansion planning.

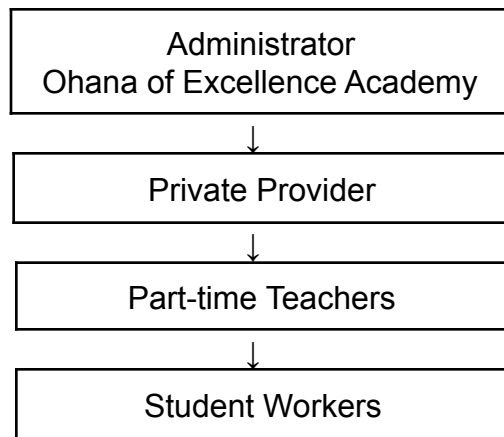
Waipahu High School's OEA will assume responsibility for the implementation of all program deliverables, and ensure fidelity in adhering to the program objectives as outlined in this Grant in Aid proposal. This includes, but is not limited to:

- identifying supplies needed for the implementation of the for the OEA RTW program; and communicating with vendors in regard to the purchasing of said supplies,
- overseeing the procurement and distribution of supplies,
- hiring of any personnel for the purposes of delivering and meeting the objectives of this Grant in Aid proposal, following hiring procedures as prescribed by the State Department of Education system, and
- processing of personnel payment for services rendered.

As such, the Friends of Waipahu High School Foundation, its affiliates, successors, officers, partners, agents or representatives will not be held liable for any disputes, demands, damages or claims arising out of or relating to the delivery and implementation of this Grant in Aid proposal. In the highly unlikely event the program goes over budget, the Friends of Waipahu High School Foundation is also guaranteed financial indemnity, as Waipahu High School will cover any expenses that exceed the proposed budget.

The FOWHS will complete and submit the required grant reports and documents. All grant reports for the previous GIA grant were completed and submitted on time.

2. Organization Chart



The applicant shall illustrate the position of each staff and line of responsibility/supervision. If the request is part of a large, multi-purpose organization, include an organization chart that illustrates the placement of this request.

3. Compensation

The applicant shall provide an annual salary range paid by the applicant to the three highest paid officers, directors, or employees of the organization by position title, not employee name.

FOWHS will disburse grant funding to Waipahu High School's OEA to cover the following expenses:

Student stipends = \$10.10 per hour with fringe; students work between 15-19 hours per week from October to May and through winter and spring breaks; 34 weeks

PTT pay = \$23.60 per hour with fringe; PTTs work 17 hours per week from August to May and during winter and spring breaks; 43 weeks

The private provider budget is for ad hoc contracted services.

Description and Rationale of Expenses

a. RTW PTT/Student stipends	\$147,301.60
b. Administrative Overhead (FOWHS)	\$ 25,000.00
c. Private Provider (Sec.VI, 1.Personnel)	\$ 76,698.40
d. Supplies	<u>\$ 1,000.00</u>
Total:	\$250,000.00

VII. Other

1. Litigation

The applicant shall disclose any pending litigation to which they are a party, including the disclosure of any outstanding judgement. If applicable, please explain.

There are no current or pending litigations.

2. Licensure or Accreditation

The applicant shall specify any special qualifications, including but not limited to licensure or accreditation that the applicant possesses relevant to this request.

The FOWHS is applying for this grant on behalf of Waipahu High School (WHS), which employs licensed educators and is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) until the year 2024. WASC recommendations for areas to focus on include supporting all students with curriculum and instruction programs that improve student achievement of content and industry standards. Evidence of curriculum and instruction, assessment and student support are required to continue accreditation status.

WHS also received the highest level of national recognition by the National Coalition of Career Academies as being the only high school with wall-to-wall academies in School Year 2020-2021, when the Ohana of Excellence Academy was recognized as a National Model Academy.

3. Private Educational Institutions

The applicant shall specify whether the grant will be used to support or benefit a sectarian or non-sectarian private educational institution. Please see [Article X, Section 1, of the State Constitution](#) for the relevance of this question.

Not applicable to this proposal.

4. Future Sustainability Plan

The applicant shall provide a plan for sustaining after fiscal year 2022-23 the activity funded by the grant if the grant of this application is:

- (a) Received by the applicant for fiscal year 2022-23, but*
- (b) Not received by the applicant thereafter.*

This project will pursue multiple strategies including other funding sources, build industry partnerships, or obtain long term support through an appropriation from the State. We will continue to seek and apply for funding opportunities that align with our program purpose and support our academy's mission.

After grant funds have been expended, Waipahu High School will continue to build industry partnerships to help keep the program operational. It is hoped that this innovative project will encourage the Department of Education to consider ways to fund and support our population of students with disabilities to become successful citizens in society.

Our primary goal is to sustain funding to support training and paid student employment at minimum wage for our students with special needs because this is the gold standard for future employment.

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Certificate of Good Standing

Appendix B - Declaration Statement

Appendix C - Friends of Waipahu High School Disclosure Statement

Appendix D - Policy Brief on *Preparing Transition-Age Youth with Disabilities for Work: What School Leaders Need to Know About the New Legal Landscape*, the Institute for educational Leadership, 2018

Appendix E - Budget Request by Source of Funds

Appendix F - Personnel Salaries and Wages

Appendix G - *Improving Graduation and Employment Possibilities for Students with Disabilities: Predictive Factors and Student Perspectives*; Exceptional Children, Vol. 66, No. 4, pp 509-529

Appendix A

Certificate of Good Standing



Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

CERTIFICATE OF GOOD STANDING

I, the undersigned Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs of the State of Hawaii, do hereby certify that

FRIENDS OF WAIPAHU HIGH SCHOOL

was incorporated under the laws of Hawaii on 04/24/2017 ; that it is an existing nonprofit corporation; and that, as far as the records of this Department reveal, has complied with all of the provisions of the Hawaii Nonprofit Corporations Act, regulating domestic nonprofit corporations.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, at Honolulu, Hawaii.

Dated: January 11, 2022

Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

To check the authenticity of this certificate, please visit <http://hbe.ehawaii.gov/documents/authenticate.html>
Authentication Code: 417437-COCS_PDF-277523D2

Appendix B

Declaration Statement

**DECLARATION STATEMENT OF
APPLICANTS FOR GRANTS PURSUANT TO
CHAPTER 42F, HAWAII REVISIED STATUTES**

The undersigned authorized representative of the applicant certifies the following:

- 1) The applicant meets and will comply with all of the following standards for the award of grants pursuant to Section 42F-103, Hawaii'i Revised Statutes:
 - a) Is licensed or accredited, in accordance with federal, state, or county statutes, rules, or ordinances, to conduct the activities or provide the services for which a grant is awarded;
 - b) Complies with all applicable federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, creed, sex, age, sexual orientation, or disability;
 - c) Agrees not to use state funds for entertainment or lobbying activities; and
 - d) Allows the state agency to which funds for the grant were appropriated for expenditure, legislative committees and their staff, and the auditor full access to their records, reports, files, and other related documents and information for purposes of monitoring, measuring the effectiveness, and ensuring the proper expenditure of the grant.
- 2) If the applicant is an organization, the applicant meets the following requirements pursuant to Section 42F-103, Hawaii'i Revised Statutes:
 - a) Is incorporated under the laws of the State; and
 - b) Has bylaws or policies that describe the manner in which the activities or services for which a grant is awarded shall be conducted or provided.
- 3) If the applicant is a non-profit organization, it meets the following requirements pursuant to Section 42F-103, Hawaii'i Revised Statutes:
 - a) Is determined and designated to be a non-profit organization by the Internal Revenue Service; and
 - b) Has a governing board whose members have no material conflict of interest and serve without compensation.

Pursuant to Section 42F-103, Hawaii'i Revised Statutes, for grants used for the acquisition of land, when the organization discontinues the activities or services on the land acquired for which the grant was awarded and disposes of the land in fee simple or by lease, the organization shall negotiate with the expending agency for a lump sum or installment repayment to the State of the amount of the grant used for the acquisition of the land.

Further, the undersigned authorized representative certifies that this statement is true and correct to the best of the applicant's knowledge.

Friends of Waipahu High School
(Typed Name of Individual or Organization)


(Signature)

January 14, 2022
(Date)

Cesceli Nakamura
(Typed Name)

Secretary
(Title)

Appendix C

**Friends of Waipahu High School
Disclosure Statement**

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

FRIENDS OF WAIPAHU HIGH SCHOOL

The Friends of Waipahu High School, a 501©(3) non-profit corporation, will be serving as the fiscal agent for the grant funds. For this specific grant, the Friends of Waipahu High School does not have the by-laws or policies that describe the manner in which the activities or services for which the grant is awarded shall be conducted or provided. However, the description of the activities and services detailed in the grant proposal will be adhered to, if the grant is awarded.

As Friends of Waipahu High School will be serving only as the fiscal agent of the grant funds, grant proposal section III.3 (Service Summary and Outcomes - Describe its quality assurance and evaluation plans for the request) will be met through Waipahu High School who will allow Friends of Waipahu High School access to their records, report files, and other related documents and information for purposes of monitoring, measuring the effectiveness, and ensuring proper expenditure of the grant.

With respect to the grant proposal sections V.1 (Experience and Capability - Necessary Skills and Experience) and VI.1 (Personnel: Project Organization and Staffing - Proposed Staffing, Staff Qualifications, Supervision and Training), the Friends of Waipahu High School Foundation does not possess a license and is not accredited to provide the services outlined in the Ready to Work Program grant proposal. This includes instruction in the field of work readiness for special needs students. However, the partners and affiliates who are working with the Friends of Waipahu High School to implement this program come from accredited institutions with the license and authority to not only provide instruction in the field of work readiness, but also award a high school diploma or certificate of completion. Partners in this grant proposal include Waipahu High School and the University of Hawaii at Manoa Center for Disabilities Studies.

The projected budget total of \$250,000 is subject to a 10% fee designated to the Friends of Waipahu High School General Fund with the remaining 90% credited to the specific program and purposes as described in this application.

APPENDIX D

Policy Brief on *Preparing Transition-Age Youth with Disabilities for Work: What School Leaders Need to Know About the New Legal Landscape*



Preparing Transition-Age Youth with Disabilities for Work: What School Leaders Need to Know About the New Legal Landscape

By Eve Hill, Regina Kline, and Curtis Richards

This policy brief is intended to inform school leaders about their responsibilities under recent case law to prepare youth with disabilities for work and careers. It may also be helpful to students, families, vocational rehabilitation and developmental disability agency personnel, and community rehabilitation providers.

In recent years, the landscape of law and policy regarding transition from school to postschool life for students with disabilities has changed in significant ways. These changes have come not through traditional legal avenues like the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), but through important legal developments in the enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Supreme Court's decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

School Transition Programs and "Train Then Place" Models

Many students with disabilities leave secondary school each year having secured neither employment nor placement in postsecondary education. In fact, despite significant advancements in the civil rights of students with disabilities over the past three decades, there remains a startling disparity between the postsecondary outcomes of students with and without disabilities (Sanford et al., 2011). Moreover, a significant number of students with disabilities leave school and directly enter segregated institutions, including sheltered workshops and day programs. In these institutions, they interact only with other people with disabilities and paid staff, and they often earn subminimum wages. Such outcomes raise the important question of whether schools bear responsibility for the efficacy of youth transition programs that pipeline such students from school directly to segregated institutionalized settings.

POLICY BRIEF

FEBRUARY 2018

IEL Institute for
Educational
Leadership
Leading Across Boundaries

Recent legal developments have clarified that state and local governments, including their education agencies, may be liable under the ADA and *Olmstead* if they place students with disabilities at serious risk of unnecessary segregation in postsecondary settings.

Despite the enactment of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in 2014, which placed several new limitations on the use of subminimum wage employment for youth with disabilities, some schools continue to be officially licensed to employ students with disabilities at subminimum wages to engage in manual tasks. The U.S. Department of Labor currently licenses approximately 105 School Work Experience Programs nationwide. These certificates allow school programs to pay between approximately 3,000 and 7,000 student workers with disabilities subminimum wages for their labor under Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (United States Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, 2017). Students typically perform piece-rate jobs in School Work Experience Programs where, contrary to their non-disabled peers, they are paid based on their rate of production with no minimum floor on their wages. As a result, students can earn just pennies on the dollar fulfilling private contracts during the school day for outside companies.

Other students work in segregated adult sheltered workshops for one or more class periods per day, performing some of the same tasks as adults with disabilities. Many such students are ultimately placed as adults in the very sheltered workshops where they worked during school, without first having the opportunity to be informed about or try competitive integrated employment. In Missouri, for instance, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and not the adult developmental disability agency, is the state agency that licenses and administers the adult sheltered workshop system, as a natural extension of its special education programs (Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, 2016).

I. WHY MANY SCHOOL TRANSITION PROGRAMS FAIL TO LEAD TO COMPETITIVE INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT

a. They are often modeled upon, and prepare students for, sheltered workshops.

Historically, school transition programs that serve 14- to 21-year-old students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, autism, and other disabilities have relied on “work readiness” and “pre-vocational” skills training models to help students plan for their postsecondary employment goals. Such transition models bear no causal relationship to, or even substantial track record of, assisting students with obtaining competitive integrated employment. Pre-vocational training models adhere to the principle that students with disabilities should be trained first and demonstrate proficiency in various tasks before they are placed into competitive integrated employment.

To this end, many students with disabilities perform manual, and sometimes menial, tasks alongside only other students with disabilities, often to fulfill the contractual demands of an outside business or the school itself as part of the transition curriculum. Students typically perform this work without compensation or for subminimum wages. Such programs thus model, and prepare students for, the adult sheltered workshops that many of them will transition to after exiting school. In these workshops, workers with disabilities continue to be segregated from non-disabled peers and continue to receive subminimum wages for decades at a time. Having been designed upon the same model as sheltered workshops, should it surprise anyone that these programs lead students with disabilities to work in such workshops after they leave school?

b. They typically do not prepare students with disabilities for competitive integrated employment.

Students with disabilities typically engage in pre-vocational training at the precise

stage in their academic careers when their non-disabled peers are participating in paid work experiences, internships, and mentorship programs in the community with real-world employers.

Contrasting the transition experiences of non-disabled students with those provided to students with disabilities illustrates the deficiencies of the pre-vocational transition approach.

c. They often do not give students with disabilities marketable skills.

Nationally, many transition-age students with intellectual, developmental, or significant disabilities perform routine “training” tasks during the school day in classrooms, on school campuses, or in adult sheltered workshops. These tasks include sorting, shredding, folding, recycling, serving food, cleaning, maintaining flower beds, doing laundry, and handling trash with mostly only other students with disabilities. Students who perform pre-vocational tasks as part of transition often do not have access to updated machinery, equipment, or technology to perform such tasks. These tasks typically do not correspond to learning a marketable skill. In addition, students do not progress to new skills or responsibilities, but continue to “practice” these routine tasks long after they have mastered a skill.

d. At times, they segregate, stigmatize, and set low expectations.

Participation in such programs can often be stigmatizing, and even counter-productive, for students with disabilities. Students in these programs are segregated from their peers, taken out of educational programs and general education curricula, and placed on an altogether separate track, often not even resulting in an option for a high school diploma or a “special” limited diploma or certificate. Furthermore, in many school districts across the country, students with disabilities perform pre-vocational tasks for the direct benefit of students without disabilities, like cleaning

up cafeteria tables after non-disabled students’ lunch breaks or taking out school trash. This creates an unequal or subservient relationship that is likely to shape attitudes and expectations in adult life for both students with and without disabilities.

e. They often do not start early enough and are not individualized.

Transition planning for students with disabilities often begins in students’ final years of high school, through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process, if at all. By contrast, their non-disabled peers are often cultivated from as early as elementary school to visualize, prepare for, and actually experience a wide range of employment and career options in the community before leaving school. Transition experiences, such as internships and paid work, and education programs, such as vocational or advanced placement classes, are then individualized or tailored to students’ interests and preferences. By contrast, employment-related transition plans for students with disabilities in pre-vocational training programs are often not individualized.

f. They frequently do not address students’ disabilities.

Pre-vocational transition programs for students with disabilities thus fail to use the tools available to students without disabilities to support school-to-work transition. However, they also fail to use the tools uniquely available to support students with disabilities. For example, students with disabilities in pre-vocational programs typically are not given reasonable accommodations or assistive technology to allow them to succeed. In fact, in many states, students with disabilities lack access to federally-subsidized vocational rehabilitation counselors and caseworkers from the general disability service system. Therefore, such students are never evaluated or assessed to receive integrated supported employment services prior to school exit.

Informed Choice, Competitive Integrated Employment, and “Place Then Train” Models

Students with disabilities across the country often face the difficult task of identifying their employment preferences in settings where they are isolated from non-disabled co-workers, customers, and peers, lack adequate supports and accommodations, and work in exchange for little or no compensation. Without prior participation in integrated employment, many students exit school transition programs with exceedingly low expectations of themselves and their employment skills and no realistic assessment of whether, with the right supports, competitive integrated employment is attainable.

Thirty years of research in the field of supported employment services, however, has firmly established that even individuals with the most severe disabilities can work in competitive integrated employment (Office of Disability Employment Policy [ODEP], n.d.). It is widely recognized in the field of supported employment that the most effective method to drive successful integrated employment outcomes is for individuals with disabilities to be placed first in competitive integrated employment and provided with the individualized training, services, supports, and accommodations necessary to succeed in that environment. Research also firmly supports that paid work while in high school is a key predictor of a student’s likelihood of obtaining competitive integrated employment after leaving school (Carter, Austin, & Trainor, 2012). By contrast, participation in pre-vocational training is not (Carter et al., 2012). Students who have worked in integrated settings while in school have a benchmark for, and understanding of, working in a typical workplace. They also have had a greater chance to identify their own preferences, interests, abilities, and needs, and they have the information that they need to make meaningful and informed choices about working in postsecondary employment.

Over the past few decades, several transition models have emerged and demonstrated

higher postsecondary employment outcomes as a result of their reliance on paid work in integrated settings while students are in secondary school. Examples of such models include Seamless Transition, The Guideposts for Success, Project SEARCH, and intensive paid internships. In addition to the prevalence of paid work, these programs demonstrate adherence to current professional standards in the field of transition including, among other things, person-centered career and transition assessment approaches in integrated settings, participation in supported and customized employment services, and qualified and trained school personnel. They also demonstrate adherence to professional standards in career development strategies, like career awareness, exploration, and development and, importantly, interagency collaboration between vocational rehabilitation and developmental disability service agencies.

The ADA and *Olmstead v. L.C.*

The ADA requires public entities to administer services, programs, and activities in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of qualified individuals with disabilities. ADA regulations explain that “[t]he most integrated setting” is one that “enables individuals with disabilities to interact with nondisabled persons to the fullest extent possible...” (Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990). In 1999, through *Olmstead v. L.C.*, the United States Supreme Court held that Title II of the ADA prohibits the unjustified segregation of people with disabilities in the following instances: when community-based services are appropriate; when the affected persons do not oppose community-based services; and where they can be reasonably accommodated, taking into account the resources available to the entity and the needs of others who receive disability services from the entity (*Olmstead v. L.C.*, 1999). Therefore, schools and education agencies that unnecessarily segregate students with disabilities in their pre-vocational transition programs may be liable under the ADA for discrimination.

The *Olmstead* decision also explained that individuals do not need to wait until the harm of unjustified segregation occurs to receive the protections of the ADA and that it violates the statute to place people with disabilities at serious risk of unnecessary segregation, including in employment settings (*Olmstead v. L.C.*, 1999). In recent years, the Department of Justice (DOJ), the agency designated by Congress to enforce the ADA, has clarified that the ADA and *Olmstead* apply to youth transition services. For example, a state or local education agency may be liable for the failure to make available transition services and supports, including caseworkers and school transition specialists. Moreover, state or local education agencies may be liable for the failure to collaborate and coordinate with vocational rehabilitation agencies to promote the use of vocational rehabilitation counselors, which allow students with disabilities to prepare for and transition to competitive integrated employment.

State and local education agencies may place students at serious risk of unnecessary segregation by failing to allow students with disabilities to make informed choices about working in competitive integrated employment prior to being referred for admission to segregated sheltered workshops. The failure to support informed choices may include the lack of timely transition services, which allow students with disabilities to understand and experience the benefits of work in an integrated setting prior to school exit. Other factors relevant to the risk analysis include whether a school, as part of the school curriculum, trains students with disabilities in tasks similar to those performed in sheltered workshops; encourages students with disabilities to participate in sheltered workshops; and/or routinely refers students to sheltered workshops as a postsecondary placement without offering such students opportunities to experience integrated employment.

Significantly, the Department of Justice has been involved in three federal court cases brought under Title II of the ADA and *Olmstead* that alleged that public entities



violated the rights of students with disabilities by placing them at serious risk of segregation. In [United States v. Rhode Island and the City of Providence \(2013\)](#), the DOJ found that Rhode Island and the Providence Public School District violated Title II of the ADA and *Olmstead* when 85 students with intellectual and developmental disabilities were placed at serious risk of entering adult sheltered workshops. The case resulted in a court-ordered settlement agreement between the parties. The 85 students had participated in an in-school sheltered workshop as part of the school's transition program. In this workshop, they were cultivated, trained, and prepared to perform sheltered workshop tasks, and the work that they performed was similar to the work performed by a nearby adult sheltered workshop. Many of the program's students were eventually referred to that same nearby adult sheltered workshop program in a direct pipeline to segregation. Students in the in-school sheltered workshop worked for one or two 55-minute periods per school day



and were paid between 50 cents and \$2.00 per hour, no matter what job they performed or how productive they were. Few, if any, opportunities existed for these students to try or participate in competitive integrated employment prior to leaving school.

The following year, in 2014, the DOJ resolved its statewide investigation of Rhode Island's day activity service system through a consent decree in [United States v. Rhode Island](#) (2014). The investigation found that the state, including its state education agency (SEA), had placed hundreds of students with disabilities at serious risk of unnecessary segregation in sheltered workshops and day programs. Specifically, the DOJ found that, among youth with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities who transitioned out of Rhode Island secondary schools between 2010 and 2012, only about five percent transitioned into jobs in integrated settings, even though many more of these youth were able to work in integrated employment and were not opposed to doing so. Among other things, the United States alleged that Rhode Island had failed to ensure that the SEA set standards for school districts about the timely introduction and

coordination of transition services, including access to the vocational rehabilitation and developmental disability service systems, as well as opportunities to experience work in integrated settings prior to school exit.

As a result of these 2013 and 2014 settlements, the Providence Public School District became the first local education agency (LEA) in the country to adopt an Employment First policy, making work in integrated employment settings a priority service option for youth who can and want to work after leaving school. Moreover, Rhode Island state agencies, including the SEA, vocational rehabilitation, and developmental disability agencies, have committed to the implementation of a concrete school-to-work transition planning process for all youth between the ages of 14 and 21. As part of that process, transition planning efforts begin at age 14, through which transition-age youth receive vocational and situational assessments, trial work experiences in integrated settings, and an array of individualized services during each year of secondary school. The trial work experiences provide students with the opportunity for integrated work-based learning experiences outside of the school setting. These work-based learning experiences are based on person-centered planning, where the placements are individually tailored to a given student in typical places of employment. All this is designed to ensure that these students have meaningful opportunities to work in competitive integrated employment after leaving school. Under the statewide Rhode Island Consent Decree, over 1,000 youth ages 18-21 are guaranteed evidence-based transition services provided in integrated settings. Moreover, evidence-based transition models like Project Search have been adopted in Rhode Island and have proven to be effective.

In 2015, the DOJ and private plaintiffs entered into a consent decree to resolve litigation with the State of Oregon pertaining to its statewide employment service system for people with disabilities. In [Lane v. Brown/](#)

[*United States v. Oregon*](#) (2015), the DOJ found that Oregon, including its SEA, had placed hundreds of students each year at serious risk of unnecessary segregation in sheltered workshops. Specifically, the United States found that Oregon failed to establish the presence and availability of caseworkers, vocational rehabilitation counselors, and other supports in Oregon's secondary school system necessary to assist youth in transition with the formulation of career-related goals that include integrated employment. The DOJ also found that Oregon had no formal plan to transition students to competitive integrated employment and that the agreement between its SEA and vocational rehabilitation program had been ineffective because it lacked specific actions or benchmarks. As a result of this failure to provide effective transition planning and services, referral to a sheltered workshop was the most common outcome for students with disabilities upon leaving school in Oregon. In some cases, like in Rhode Island, Oregon students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities were even prepared for the tasks typically performed in sheltered workshops; this was demonstrated by students performing mock-sheltered workshop activities in school or participating in adult sheltered workshops as part of the curriculum.

Many changes have taken place in Oregon since the initiation of the sheltered workshop litigation. In 2015, Oregon publicly committed to stop purchasing or funding sheltered workshop placements for youth in transition, becoming one of the first states in the country to do so. Moreover, the Oregon SEA supported, and the State Board of Education adopted, a rule that prohibits LEAs from including sheltered workshops on the continuum of alternative placements and supplementary aids and services provided to students with disabilities, a rule likely to be replicated by states across the country (Oregon Department of Education, 2013). Since the 2015 settlement, Oregon has established a statewide Transition Technical Assistance Network run by the SEA. Through the Transition Technical Assistance Network,

As a result of these 2013 and 2014 settlements, the Providence Public School District became the first local education agency (LEA) in the country to adopt an Employment First policy, making work in integrated employment settings a priority service option for youth who can and want to work after leaving school.

transition network facilitators are positioned throughout the state to promote the statewide coordination of employment-related transition planning efforts.

Under the settlement agreement, over six years, Oregon will ensure that at least 4,900 youth ages 14 to 24 years old will be provided with the individualized transition services necessary for them to obtain competitive integrated employment. At least half of those youth will receive an Individual Plan for Employment through the vocational rehabilitation system. Importantly, "mock-sheltered workshop activities" and pre-vocational/transition activities are prohibited during the school day. The state is also calling on Oregon school districts to expand models of evidence-based transition practices (e.g., the Seamless Transition Model, Project Search, Youth Transition Program) to achieve competitive integrated employment for students with disabilities.

Department of Justice Guidance

In 2016, the DOJ issued guidance explaining that youth with disabilities who are at serious risk of unnecessary segregation in sheltered workshops are protected by the ADA and *Olmstead* and that public entities, including state and local education agencies, may be

held accountable for creating that risk (United States Department of Justice [DOJ], 2016, available at https://inclusivity.consulting/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/olmstead_guidance_employment.pdf). For example, the 2016 Guidance detailed how a state or local education agency may be liable for failing to make transition services and supports available to students with disabilities and failing to work with vocational rehabilitation agencies to help such students prepare for competitive integrated employment.

On December 20, 2017, the Justice Department rescinded the guidance. This rescission, however, has no impact on the force and effect of the already established law on the subject. In rescinding the guidance, the Justice Department noted on its website that the withdrawal “does not change the legal responsibilities of State and local governments under [T]itle II of the ADA, as reflected in the ADA, its implementing regulations, and other binding legal requirements and judicial precedent, including the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Olmstead* decision.” More specifically, the guidance’s withdrawal did not eliminate the applicability of the ADA’s integration mandate, the Supreme Court’s decision in *Olmstead v. L.C.*, court rulings including in *Lane v. Kitzhaber* (*Lane v. Brown*)/ *United States v. Oregon*, or the Department of Justice’s Letters of Finding and Consent Decrees to employment services.

Section 511 WIOA

As mentioned, WIOA places several new limitations on the payment of subminimum wages to youth with disabilities that are consistent with and complementary to the requirements of the ADA and *Olmstead* as applied to employment service systems. Among them is the requirement that, before beginning subminimum wage employment, under Section 511(a) of WIOA, a youth 24 years old or younger must first receive pre-employment transition services. These pre-employment transition services can include job exploration counseling, integrated work-based learning experiences, opportunities

for enrollment in postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education, social skills and independent living training, and self-advocacy training (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act [WIOA], 2014).

Moreover, youth must meet the following criteria before they can begin subminimum wage employment:

- They must have applied for and been found eligible or ineligible for vocational rehabilitation services;
- They must have been on an Individual Plan for Employment with appropriate services, such as supported employment services, for a reasonable period of time without success; and
- Their vocational rehabilitation case must be closed (WIOA, 2014).

Also, prior to being paid subminimum wages, the youth must be provided career counseling, information and referrals to federal, state, and other programs, and resources to obtain competitive integrated employment (WIOA, 2014).

Importantly, under Section 511(b)(2), WIOA prohibits any SEA or LEA from entering into “a contract or other arrangement with an entity that holds a 14(c) certificate for the purpose of operating a program for an individual who is age 24 or younger under which work is compensated at a subminimum wage” (WIOA, 2014). SEAs and LEAs can no longer contract with segregated sheltered workshops for youth to participate in employment-related transition programs. The vigorous enforcement of WIOA Section 511, including Sections 511(a) and (b), is necessary to ensure that students with disabilities are able to access pathways to competitive integrated employment. The U.S. Departments of Education and Labor as well as others must demonstrate robust active enforcement efforts for the promise of WIOA to be fully realized.

Conclusion

It is important that public entities, including state and local education, vocational rehabilitation, and developmental disability agencies, understand the changing legal landscape pertaining to transition services for students with disabilities. More than thirty years of research provides a concrete playbook for how to mitigate, if not eliminate, the risk of unnecessary segregation. Students must be provided with the individualized transition services and supports they need in order to experience work in competitive integrated employment prior to exiting school. For instance, the WIOA statute and regulations and *Olmstead* case law, letters of finding, and consent decrees make clear that state and local governments that have traditionally relied on segregated work settings for transition should take affirmative steps to ensure that students have a meaningful opportunity to make an informed choice to work in integrated employment settings after leaving school.

Such affirmative efforts may include the following:

- Providing information about the benefits of working in competitive integrated employment;
- Providing vocational and situational assessments, career development planning, and discovery in integrated employment settings;
- Arranging peer-to-peer mentoring; facilitating visits; providing opportunities for work-based learning experiences in integrated job settings; and
- Providing benefits counseling and planning to explain the impact of competitive work on an individual's public benefits.

More than thirty years of research provides a concrete playbook for how to mitigate, if not eliminate, the risk of unnecessary segregation. Students must be provided with the individualized transition services and supports they need in order to experience work in competitive integrated employment prior to exiting school.

Moreover, under Section 511 of WIOA, youth with disabilities are required to receive many of these same vital services before they are allowed to work in subminimum wage employment. Given these requirements, most, if not all, 14(c) licensed School Work Experience Programs must be critically reviewed for compliance with the ADA, *Olmstead*, and WIOA. Now is the time for state and local governments to advance these practices and boost students with disabilities into the mainstream of the economy.

References

- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12131-12134 (2012).
- Carter, E. W., Austin, D., Trainor, A. A. (2012). Predictors of postschool employment outcomes for young adults with severe disabilities. *Journal of disability policy studies*, 23(1), 50-63. doi: 10.1177/1044207311414680
- Guidance on ADA Regulation on Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services, 28 C.F.R. pt. 35 app. B (October 31, 2016) (Withdrawn December 21, 2017).
- Lane v. Brown*, No. 3:12-CV-00138 (D. Or. Sept. 8, 2016)
- Lane v. Kitzhaber*, 841 F. Supp. 2d 1199 (D. Or. 2012).
- Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education. (2016, April). Sheltered workshops. Retrieved from <https://dese.mo.gov/special-education/sheltered-workshops>
- National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth. (2005). *Guideposts for success*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/guideposts>.
- Office of Disability Employment Policy (n.d.). Integrated employment toolkit. Retrieved from <https://www.dol.gov/odep/ietoolkit/employers.htm>
- Olmstead v. L.C. ex rel. Zimring*, 527 U.S. 581 (1999).
- Olmstead v. L.C.*, 527 U.S. 581, 607 (1999).
- Or. Admin. R. 581-015-2245 (2015).
- Perez, T.E. (2012, June 29). [Letter of Findings from Assistant Attorney General Thomas Perez of the Civil Rights Div. of the U.S. Dep't of Justice to Attorney Gen. for the State of Oregon John Kroger]. United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, Washington, D.C.
- Project SEARCH. (2012). Project SEARCH. Retrieved from <http://www.projectsearch.us/>
- Sanford, C., Newman, L., Wagner, M., Cameto, R., Knokey, A.-M., and Shaver, D. (2011). The Post-High School Outcomes of Young Adults With Disabilities up to 6 Years After High School. Key Findings From the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2) (NCSE 2011-3004). Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), 29 U.S.C. §§ 701 *et seq.*, (2014).
- United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division. (n.d.). Fact Sheet: Rhode Island Supported Employment and Integrated Day Services Consent Decree. Retrieved from: https://www.ada.gov/olmstead/documents/usbri_%20fact-sheet.pdf
- United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division. (2017). *Olmstead Enforcement*.
- United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division. (n.d.). Rhode Island supported employment and day services interim settlement agreement fact sheet. Retrieved from: <https://www.ada.gov/olmstead/documents/ri-providence-fact-sheet.pdf>
- United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division. (2016, October). Statement of the Department of Justice on Enforcement of the Integration Mandate of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and *Olmstead v. L.C.* to State and Local Governments' Employment Service Systems for Individuals with Disabilities. Retrieved from https://www.ada.gov/olmstead/olmstead_guidance_employment.htm
- United States Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division. (2016). *School work experience programs (SWEPs) list* [Data file]. Retrieved from <https://www.dol.gov/whd/specialemloyment/SWEPlist.htm>
- United States v. Rhode Island and City of Providence*, No. 1:13-cv-00442 (D.R.I. June 13, 2013)
- United States v. Rhode Island and City of Providence*, No. 1:13-cv-00442 (D.R.I. June 11, 2013)
- United States v. Rhode Island*, No. 1:14-cv-00175 (D.R.I. Apr. 9, 2014)

About the Authors

Eve Hill (EHill@browngold.com) and Regina Kline (RKline@browngold.com) are Co-Leaders of Inclusivity, a strategic consulting practice dedicated to supporting businesses, organizations, and government agencies that want to achieve real inclusion of people with disabilities in their workforces and communities.

Curtis Richards (RichardsC@iel.org) is the Director of the Center for Workforce Development at the Institute for Educational Leadership, which is the home of the National Collaborative on Workforce Development for Youth (www.ncwd-youth.info).

This policy brief was produced with support under a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (Number OD-23804-12-75-4-11). The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Department of Labor. Nor does the mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement of the U.S. Department of Labor.



4301 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20008
202-822-8405 | www.iel.org | iel@iel.org



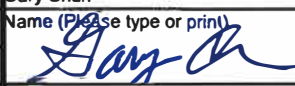
APPENDIX E

Budget Request by Source of Funds

BUDGET REQUEST BY SOURCE OF FUNDS

Period: July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023

Applicant: Friends of Waipahu High School

BUDGET CATEGORIES	Total State Funds Requested (a)	Total Federal Funds Requested (b)	Total County Funds Requested (c)	Total Private/Other Funds Requested (d)
A. PERSONNEL COST				
1. Salaries	143,000			
2. Payroll Taxes & Assessments				
3. Fringe Benefits	4,301			
TOTAL PERSONNEL COST	147,302			
B. OTHER CURRENT EXPENSES				
1. Airfare, Inter-Island				
2. Insurance				
3. Lease/Rental of Equipment				
4. Lease/Rental of Space				
5. Staff Training				
6. Supplies				
7. Telecommunication				
8. Utilities				
9. Friends of Waipahu HS (10% fee)	25,000			
10. Private Provider	76,698			
11. Supplies	1,000			
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
TOTAL OTHER CURRENT EXPENSES	102,698			
C. EQUIPMENT PURCHASES				
D. MOTOR VEHICLE PURCHASES				
E. CAPITAL				
TOTAL (A+B+C+D+E)	250,000			
SOURCES OF FUNDING		Budget Prepared By:		
(a) Total State Funds Requested	250,000	Gary Chun 808-307-9551		
(b) Total Federal Funds Requested		Name (Please type or print) Phone		
(c) Total County Funds Requested		 1/14/2022		
(d) Total Private/Other Funds Requested		Signature of Authorized Official Date		
TOTAL BUDGET	250,000	Gary Chun WHS OEA Administrator Date		
		Name and Title (Please type or print)		

APPENDIX F

Budget Justification - Personnel Salaries and Wages

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - PERSONNEL SALARIES AND WAGES

Period: July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023

Applicant: Friends of Waipahu High School

POSITION TITLE	FULL TIME EQUIVALENT	ANNUAL SALARY A	% OF TIME ALLOCATED TO GRANT REQUEST B	TOTAL STATE FUNDS REQUESTED (A x B)
Part-time teacher #1	1	\$16,747.85	100.00%	\$ 16,747.85
Part-time teacher #2	1	\$16,747.85	100.00%	\$ 16,747.85
Part-time teacher #3	1	\$16,747.85	100.00%	\$ 16,747.85
Part-time teacher #4	1	\$16,747.85	100.00%	\$ 16,747.85
Student Stipends (12)	1	\$76,008.98	100.00%	\$ 76,008.98
Fringe	1	\$4,301.22	100.00%	\$ 4,301.22
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
				\$ -
TOTAL:				147,301.60
JUSTIFICATION/COMMENTS: Positions are needed to implement the various components of the program which includes instruction, job placement, and worksite management. Stipends are paid compensation for student work experiences.				

APPENDIX G

**Improving Graduation and Employment
Possibilities for Students with Disabilities:
Predictive Factors and Student Perspectives**

Exceptional Children, Vol. 66, No. 4, pp. 509-529.
©2000 The Council for Exceptional Children.

Improving Graduation and Employment Outcomes of Students with Disabilities: Predictive Factors and Student Perspectives

MICHAEL R. BENZ
LAUREN LINDSTROM
PAUL YOVANOFF
University of Oregon

ABSTRACT: *This article reports on findings from two studies that examined secondary and transition practices. The first study examined student and program factors that predicted participants' graduation with a standard high school diploma and placement in employment and continuing education. The second study examined participants' perceptions of the program and staff characteristics that were most important in helping them achieve their education and transition goals. Findings from these studies indicate that career-related work experience and completion of student-identified transition goals were highly associated with improved graduation and employment outcomes. Individualization of services around student goals and personalized attention from staff were highly valued by participants. Recommendations for policy and practice are discussed.*

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendments of 1997 (Public Law 105-17) make clear that improved postschool outcomes are the driving force and focal point of a free appropriate public education for students with disabilities. The transition mandates contained in the 1997 IDEA Amendments strengthen existing transition concepts and mandates that have been in

effect since IDEA was passed originally in 1990 by focusing attention on how students' entire high school programs can be planned to foster success in high school and in their transition to postschool employment, continuing education, and independent living.

The continuing national attention being directed at secondary and transition policies and practices is due in part to research documenting

that students with disabilities lag far behind their peers without disabilities on school (e.g., graduation rates) and postschool (e.g., employment rates and postsecondary attendance) achievement indicators (Blackorby & Wagner, 1996). The percentage of youth with disabilities graduating with a high school diploma has remained constant at about 30% over the past 10 years (U.S. Department of Education [DOE], 1998). A study of school exit patterns in eight states documented that 51% of all youth with disabilities exiting school in the 1994/95 school year required alternative education services to complete their basic secondary education; 80% required further case management to achieve their employment, continuing education, and independent living goals (U.S. DOE, 1996).

What dimensions of students' secondary education experiences contribute to success in high school and improved postschool outcomes? Would the secondary and transition program components *suggested* by research as associated with better secondary and postsecondary outcomes *actually produce* improved outcomes for students with disabilities if they were implemented by schools? Would students who received such services find them to be helpful and meaningful? This article provides a partial answer to these questions using findings from two complementary studies of a transition program for youth with disabilities that we have been conducting over the past decade in schools across Oregon: The Youth Transition Program (YTP). The first study used logistic regression procedures to examine student and program factors that predicted participants' receipt of a standard high school diploma and placement in employment or continuing education upon exit from the program. The second study used focus group procedures to examine the program factors and staff characteristics identified by a statewide sample of former participants as most useful in helping them achieve their education and transition goals. To establish a context for this article we first (a) review briefly previous research on factors associated with secondary and postsecondary outcomes, and (b) describe the essential components of the YTP upon which the research presented in this article is based.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY OUTCOMES

Research suggests that the following programmatic factors contribute to better postsecondary employment and education outcomes for students with disabilities:

- Participation in vocational education classes during the last 2 years of high school, especially classes that offer occupationally-specific instruction;
- Participation in paid work experience in the community during the last 2 years of high school;
- Competence in functional *academic* (e.g., reading, math, writing, and problem-solving); *community living* (e.g., money management, community access); *personal-social* (e.g., getting along with others); *vocational* (e.g., career awareness, job search); and *self-determination* (e.g., self-advocacy, goal setting) skills;
- Participation in transition planning;
- Graduation from high school; and
- Absence of continuing instructional needs in functional academic, vocational, and personal-social areas after leaving school (e.g., Benz, Yovanoff, & Doren, 1997; Blackorby & Wagner, 1996; Halpern, Yovanoff, Doren, & Benz, 1995; Heal & Rusch, 1995; McGrew, Bruininks, & Thurlow, 1992; Wagner, Blackorby, Cameto, & Newman, 1993; Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1997).

Several organizational factors also have been identified as associated with exemplary secondary and transition programs and better outcomes for students, including (a) the use of written interagency agreements between schools and adult agencies to structure the provision of collaborative transition services, and (b) the establishment of key positions funded jointly by schools and adult agencies such as vocational rehabilitation to deliver direct services to students in transition (e.g., Hasazi, Furney, & DeStefano, 1999; Kohler, 1993).

If students are to participate in and benefit from the instruction and services identified above they must be enticed to stay in and com-

plete their secondary education. One of the more comprehensive examinations of the "holding power" of secondary programs was conducted by Wagner and her colleagues as part of the National Longitudinal Transition Study (Wagner, Blackorby, Cameto, & Newman, 1993; Wagner, Blackorby, & Hebbeler, 1993). Several student-related factors were *negatively* associated with school performance and completion, including (a) being identified as emotionally disturbed, (b) having a prior history of absenteeism or course failure, and (c) being 3 or more years behind grade level in reading and math. Several school-related factors were *positively* associated with school performance and completion rates, including (a) direct, individualized tutoring and support to complete homework assignments, attend class, and stay focused on school; (b) participation in vocational education classes, particularly during Grades 11 and 12; and (c) participation in community-based work experience programs, again especially during the last 2 years of high school.

Research on the relationships between dimensions of secondary education programs and school completion is supported by research examining students' perceptions of their secondary education programs. A majority of the high school students with learning and behavioral disabilities interviewed by Guterman (1995) said their placement in special education had not helped them academically, and they objected to what they viewed as the low-level, irrelevant, and duplicative (with regular education) instruction they received. At the same time, all the youth in this study acknowledged that they had not mastered basic academic skills and their placement in special education was warranted. Moreover, these youth did not want to be supported by special education staff in the general education classroom as that would draw attention to their academic difficulties. What these youth *did* want was instruction in a challenging and relevant curriculum that would prepare them for life after school. It did not matter to these youth where this instruction was delivered as long as it was meaningful and did not require a special education label to participate. Lack of relevancy of the high school curriculum appears repeatedly as a main reason given by students

with and without disabilities for dropping out of school or for pursuing alternative education services (Kaufman, Klein, & Frase, 1999; Lange & Ysseldyke, 1998; Lichtenstein, 1993).

YOUTH TRANSITION PROGRAM

The YTP is a transition program for youth with disabilities operated collaboratively by the Oregon Department of Education, the Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation Division, the University of Oregon, and local schools statewide. The YTP began in seven schools in 1990 under the auspices of a federal grant. The program now operates in 80% of all high schools across the state and is funded annually through a combination of state and local funds from the participating education and rehabilitation agencies. For the past decade, our role at the University of Oregon has been to provide model development, training, technical assistance, and evaluation services to staff in local sites statewide. The research on promising practices reviewed above has provided the foundation and framework for the development and revision of YTP services over the past decade.

The YTP serves youth with disabilities who require support beyond the services typically available through a district's traditional general education, special education, and school-to-work programs to achieve their secondary and postsecondary employment and continuing education goals. Although youth participating in the YTP are representative of all secondary youth with disabilities with respect to primary disabling condition, students typically are referred to the program by school staff because of additional barriers to secondary completion and transition success (e.g., at risk of dropping out of school, limited or negative job experiences, teenage parenting responsibilities, unstable living situation).

The goal of the YTP is to improve participants' postschool outcomes and prepare them for meaningful competitive employment or career-related postsecondary training. Three key personnel provide direct services to students in each local community: (a) a certified special education teacher who serves as a Teacher-Coordi-

nator, (b) one or more Transition Specialists (district classified positions) who work under the supervision of the Teacher-Coordinator, and (c) a Rehabilitation Counselor from the local Vocational Rehabilitation field office. These personnel work as a team with the student through all stages of the program. The Teacher-Coordinator and Transition Specialists operate as part of the districts' special education services. Typically they have offices in the high schools or alternative education settings in which they operate in order to collaborate with building staff, but the majority of their work with students occurs in the community.

The YTP provides services to students beginning during the last 2 years they are in high school and continuing, if needed, during the early transition years after leaving school. Through the YTP students receive (a) transition planning focused on postschool goals and self-determination, and help to coordinate school plans with relevant adult agencies; (b) instruction in academic, vocational, independent living, and personal-social content areas, and help to stay in school and obtain a completion document; (c) paid job training while in the program, and help to secure employment or enter postsecondary training upon leaving the program; and (d) follow-up support services for up to 2 years after leaving the program, provided on an as-needed basis, to help students negotiate the vagaries of the transition years more effectively and build on the successes they have already achieved.

The effectiveness and impact of the YTP has been assessed through an external evaluation conducted under the auspices of the U.S. DOE (Horne & Hubbard, 1995; Rogers, Hubbard, Charner, Fraser, & Horne, 1995). This evaluation included on-site visits to local YTP sites, interviews with key stakeholders, and review of data on program services and results including the methodological procedures used to collect and analyze findings. Highlights from this study documented that (a) 90% of YTP participants obtained a high school completion document; (b) 82% of participants were placed successfully in a competitive job, postsecondary training, or a combination of both at the point of program exit; and (c) rates of engagement in employment

or education remained consistently above 80% for program completers during the first 2 years after leaving the program. Outcomes for YTP participants were educationally and statistically significant improvements over outcomes achieved by two comparison groups—a statewide sample of students who received special education services in Oregon but who were not in the YTP, and a statewide sample of transition-aged youth who received Vocational Rehabilitation services but who were not in the YTP.

STUDY 1

METHOD

The purpose of our first study was to examine relationships between education and transition outcomes for students with disabilities and factors that have been suggested by research and implemented over time as part of the YTP. In Study 1 we used logistic regression procedures to examine student and program factors that predicted (a) receipt of a standard high school diploma at program exit, and (b) placement in employment or continuing education at program exit. We selected a standard high school diploma as our educational outcome of interest because it is recognized as a highly desirable completion document for all students and because there are increasing concerns about its accessibility to many high school students, especially those with disabilities (Thurlow, Shin, Guy, & Lee, 1999). We selected engagement in work or schooling activities as our postschool outcome of interest because it has long been recognized as a desirable achievement indicator for students with and without disabilities (Benz et al., 1997; DeStefano & Wagner, 1991).

Procedures

Data for Study 1 were obtained from a database we maintain on students who have participated in the YTP. The database contains information on student characteristics, program services received, and outcomes achieved at exit and during 2 years after exiting the program. Data on students are provided by local YTP staff. Standardized forms structure the collection of information across sites, and across four phases of student participation: (a) at program entry, (b)

at 6-month intervals throughout the time students are in the program, (c) at program exit, and (d) at 6-month intervals for 2 years after students exit the program.

By agreement with the state and local education and rehabilitation agencies participating in the project, we collect data from local staff only on students who participate in the program during a local site's first 2 years of operation. For example, staff in a local site that began operating a YTP during the 1993/94 school year would provide data on all students who entered the local program during the 1993/94 and 1994/95 school years. Data collection on these students would continue until all follow-up data had been collected or until a student no longer wished to participate in data collection efforts.

We follow several procedures to ensure the accuracy and consistency of data collection activities across staff in local sites and across local sites statewide. First, local staff provide data through standardized forms that include instructions and operational definitions of data elements. Second, local staff receive training and technical assistance annually related to data collection. Third, all submitted data are reviewed for accuracy and completeness by a technical assistance staff person at the university who has been assigned to the local site. Any questions about the data are resolved with local site staff prior to entry into the database. Fourth, the database has been programmed with several features (e.g., delimiters on response options, requirements that all fields contain a valid response) to reduce the likelihood of human error during data entry. Finally, the database includes several preprogrammed reports that allow state technical assistance staff and local YTP staff to monitor the timeliness and accuracy of data entered into the database.

Participants

We included students with disabilities from our database who exited high school up through the 1997/98 school year ($n = 917$). Given our interest in examining student and program factors associated with obtaining a secondary completion document, and especially a standard high school diploma, we excluded students who entered the YTP after graduating from high school and ob-

taining a secondary completion document ($n = 110$). Across the 10 years the program has been operating, on average 12% of participants have entered the program after graduating high school to address continuing transition needs and goals. An additional 98 students were deleted through the listwise deletion procedures we used during data analysis to ensure that all participants had data present on *all* predictor and outcome variables.

Demographic information on the final sample of participants ($n = 709$) is presented in Table 1. The final sample is similar to the population of YTP participants in the database ($N = 1,611$) with respect to gender, ethnicity, and primary disability. The final sample also is similar with respect to gender and primary disability to the population of students with disabilities aged 15 to 21 ($N = 13,160$) who were served in Oregon's high schools during the 1997/98 school year (Oregon Department of Education, 1999).

Outcome and Predictor Variables

The outcome and predictor variables examined in this study are summarized in Table 2 and described in the following sections.

Outcome Variables. We examined two outcomes related to the purposes of this article: (a) graduation with a standard high school diploma, and (b) engagement in employment or continuing education at time of program exit. In the sample of YTP participants we examined in this study ($n = 709$), 439 students (62%) graduated from high school with a standard high school diploma, 199 students (28%) left high school with an alternative completion document (e.g., modified diploma, GED), and 71 students (10%) left high school with no completion document. During data analysis, we assigned a score of "1" to the 439 students who graduated with a standard diploma and a score of "0" to all remaining students. With regard to engagement in work or continuing education at program exit, in the final sample of 709 participants, 248 students (35%) were engaged in full-time employment (35+ hr per week), 99 students (14%) were engaged in full-time continuing education, and 149 students (21%) were engaged both in part-time work and school. During data analysis, we assigned a score of "1" to these 496 students

TABLE 1

Comparison of Participants in Study 1 to YTP and Oregon Student Populations

<i>Demographic Characteristics</i>	<i>Study Sample</i>		<i>YTP Population</i>		<i>State Population^a</i>	
	<i>n(709)</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N(1,611)</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N(13,160)</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender						
Male	440	62	1,106	63	8,291	63
Female	269	38	595	37	4,869	37
Ethnicity						
Caucasian	617	87	1,426	88	—	—
Hispanic	37	5	74	5	—	—
African American	23	3	36	2	—	—
Asian/Pacific Islander	21	3	44	3	—	—
Native American	11	2	31	2	—	—
Primary Disability						
Specific learning disability	432	61	1,040	65	7,967	61
Mental retardation	81	11	148	9	1,502	11
Emotional disability	74	10	123	8	1,170	9
Other health impairment	30	4	91	6	748	6
Speech language impairment	27	4	66	4	793	6
Hearing impairment	21	3	44	3	300	2
Orthopedic impairment	20	3	49	3	194	1
Traumatic brain injury	13	2	25	2	97	1
Autistic	6	1	19	2	287	2
Visual impairment	5	1	6	<1	102	1

^a Population data on ethnicity was not available.

(70% of sample). The remaining 213 students (64 [9%] working parttime only and 149 [21%] not engaged at all in work or school) were assigned a score of "0" during data analysis.

Predictor Variables. Predictor variables were selected from our database in both student and program-related areas. Student-related vari-

ables included basic demographic variables (i.e., gender, minority status, and primary disability) and student barriers to transition success identified at program entry by the student and the school and rehabilitation staff (e.g., independent living or social skill instruction needs, transportation needs, history school problems, unsta-

TABLE 2

Percentage of Participants Scoring 1 on Outcome and Predictor Variables

Variables	Sample of Participants (n = 709)	
	N	%
Outcome Variables		
Graduated with High School Diploma (1 = yes)	439	62
Engaged in Work/School at Exit (1 = yes)	496	70
Student-Related Predictor Variables		
Gender (1 = female)	269	38
Ethnic Minority (1 = yes)	92	13
Learning Disability (1 = yes)	432	61
Emotional Disability (1 = yes)	74	10
Mental Retardation (1 = yes)	81	11
No Prior Job Experience (1 = yes)	340	48
Unable to Maintain Jobs (1 = yes)	184	26
Independent Living Instruction Needs (1 = yes)	262	37
Social Skill Instruction Needs (1 = yes)	248	35
No Means of Transportation (1 = yes)	347	49
History of School Absenteeism/Suspension (1 = yes)	151	21
High School Dropout (1 = yes)	44	6
Unstable/Difficult Living Situation (1 = yes)	292	41
Prior Arrest/Time in Jail (1 = yes)	38	5
History of Substance Abuse (1 = yes)	36	5
Pregnant/Parenting Responsibilities (1 = yes)	26	4
At-Risk Barriers Scale (1 = 1 + barriers)	332	47
Program-Related Predictor Variables		
Rural Community (1 = yes)	362	51
Months in Program (1 = 12 + months)	418	59
Number of Paid Jobs (1 = 2 + jobs)	489	67
Employment Goals Met (1 = 1 + goals)	545	77
Continuing Education Goals Met (1 = 1 + goals)	387	55
Independent Living Goals Met (1 = 1 + goals)	368	52
Transportation Goals Met (1 = 1 + goals)	339	48
Financial Goals Met (1 = 1 + goals)	328	46
Leisure/Recreation Goals Met (1 = 1 + goals)	214	30
Family/Social Relationship Goals Met (1 = 1 + goals)	249	35
Total Number Transition Goals Met (1 = 4 + goals)	356	50

ble living situation). Program-related variables included location of the program (rural versus nonrural), length of time in the program, and various program services (e.g., number of paid jobs, completion of student-identified transition goals).

Previous research (Dryfoos, 1990; Jessor, Donovan, & Costa, 1991; Wagner, Blackorby, & Hebbeler, 1993) indicates that "at-risk" behaviors in adolescents tend to be exhibited in clusters, and that the presence of one or more of these at-risk behaviors is often a strong predictor

of school or community failure. As such, we created an at-risk scale comprised of eight individual variables that research suggests often constitute barriers to success: (a) identification of emotional disorders (ED) as the primary disability, (b) history of school absenteeism or suspension, (c) high school dropout, (d) unstable living situation, (e) prior arrest or time in jail, (f) history of substance abuse, (g) prior or current pregnancy, and (h) parenting responsibilities. Students received a score of "1" on this at-risk barriers scale if they experienced one or more of the individual barriers. An analysis of the internal consistency (reliability) of our barriers scale resulted in Cronbach's coefficient alpha of .61, which is quite acceptable for research purposes given the length of the scale (Nunnally, 1978).

Analysis

The relationships between predictor and outcome variables were explored using logistic regression procedures. Logistic regression is akin to the more familiar multiple regression technique, but is especially suited to nominal or ordinal scaled data that deviate from multivariate normal distributions (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 1989), as was the case in this study. The goal of logistic regression procedures is to find an optimal linear function of independent variables for predicting the probability of the outcome variable (Hosmer & Lemeshow). Each variable in the equation is optimally weighted with coefficients estimated from the data such that the linear combination makes the observed data *most probable*.

Along with the regression coefficients, it is also possible to compute odds ratios from this procedure. The odds ratio is usually the parameter of interest in a logistic regression due to its ease of interpretation (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 1989). As a measure of association, odds ratios allow statements to be made about *how much more or less likely* it is for the outcome variable to occur when the predictor variable is present. An odds ratio of "1" suggests there is no relationship between the predictor and outcome variables. The greater the departure from an odds ratio of "1" the greater the relationship between the predictor and outcome variables. For

example, if the odds ratio for predictor variable X_1 is 5.0, then it is 5 times *more likely* that the outcome variable will occur when variable X_1 is present; if the odds ratio for predictor variable X_2 is .20, then it is 5 times *less likely* that the outcome variable will occur.

A 3-step process was used to select predictor variables to include in each logistic regression model: (a) examination of the bivariate relationships between our *theoretically* relevant predictor variables and each outcome variable; (b) exploration of possible 2-way interactions between theoretically relevant predictor variables (e.g., at-risk status x number of transition goals completed); and (c) examination of logistic regression models for each outcome variable to identify final models based on interpretability and statistical significance.

RESULTS

Table 3 presents findings for our final graduation and productive engagement logistic regressions models.

Graduation with a Standard Diploma

Five of the variables we examined predicted students' graduation with a standard high school diploma. One measure of how well the predictor variables in a logistic regression model "fit" the observed data can be obtained by examining how well the overall model classifies participants on the outcome variable, and then testing whether the overall model is a significant improvement over the null model with only the constant (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 1989). The final model correctly classified the graduation status of students with disabilities in our study 72% of the time, and represented a significant improvement over the null model with only the constant ($-2 \log \text{likelihood} = 799.11$; χ^2 (df = 5) = 128.61, $p = .000$).

There was a strong relationship between graduation and three of the program-related factors we examined. Students who were in the YTP for 12 or more months were almost *two times more likely* to graduate with a standard diploma than were students who were in the program less than a year. Similarly, students who

TABLE 3

Parameter Estimates for the Graduation and Productive Engagement Logistic Regression Models

Predictor Variable	Graduation			Productive Engagement		
	B	SE	Odds Ratio	B	SE	Odds Ratio
At-risk status (1 = 1 + barriers)	-1.27	.52	.28*			
Months in program (1 = 12 + months)	.64	.24	1.90**			
Number of paid jobs (1 = 2 + jobs)	.83	.25	2.29***	.58	.17	1.80***
Transition goals met (1 = 4 + goals)	.78	.34	2.17*	1.34	.25	3.82***
At-risk Status by transition goals met	.56	.51	1.75*			
Constant	-.59	.35		-.51	.39	

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (all tests two-tailed).

held two or more paid jobs while in the program and students who completed four or more transition goals while in the program were *over two times more likely* to graduate with a standard high school diploma.

With regard to the student-related factors we examined, there was a strong relationship between graduation with a standard diploma and experiencing one or more of the barriers included in our at-risk scale. Students experiencing one or more at-risk barriers were *more than three times less likely* (odds ratio = .28) to graduate with a standard diploma than students who did not experience any of these at-risk indicators. There was a relationship, however, between graduation and the *interaction* between at-risk status and completion of transition goals. As can be seen in Table 3, the odds of graduating with a standard high school diploma for at-risk students who completed four or more transition goals was 1.75, a substantial positive increase over the odds (.28) for at-risk students in general.

Engagement in Productive Work/School Activities

Two program-related variables predicted student engagement in productive work or continuing education at the time of program exit (see Table 3). Students who held two or more jobs while in the program were *almost two times more likely* to be engaged in work or continuing education at exit than students who held fewer than two jobs. Students who completed four or more transition goals while in the program were *almost four times more likely* to be productively engaged at

program exit than students who completed fewer than four goals. The final model correctly classified the productive engagement status of students with disabilities in our study 68% of the time, and represented a significant improvement over the null model with only the constant ($-2 \log \text{likelihood} = 786.78$; $\chi^2_{(df=2)} = 100.62$, $p = .000$).

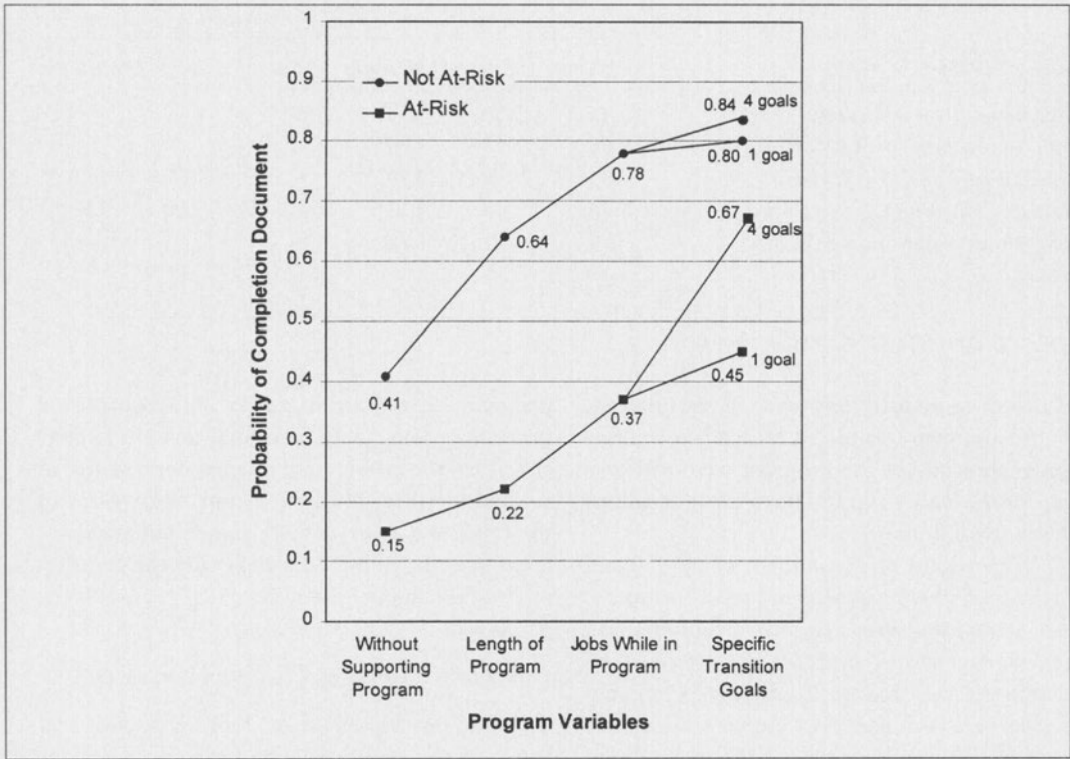
Cumulative Effect of Predictor Variables

The findings presented in Table 3 provide evidence of the significance and magnitude of the relationship between individual predictor variables and the outcome variable for each of the logistic regression models we examined. While potentially interesting for researchers, by themselves these findings fall short of providing administrators, teachers, and other practitioners with information that could be useful for program planning and implementation. Understanding the cumulative effect of predictor variables on the outcome variable often is of more interest to these audiences (e.g., understanding the cumulative impact of obtaining jobs and completing transition goals on graduation). It is possible to examine these issues through logistic regression, and in fact these analyses are strongly suggested when final models contain interactions such as in our graduation logistic regression model (Hosmer & Lemeshow, 1989).

Figure 1 presents graphically the cumulative effect of our significant predictors on the probability of graduating with a standard high school diploma. The probabilities presented in Figure 1 were computed using the odds ratios re-

FIGURE 1

The Cumulative Effect of Program Variables on the Probability of Graduating with a Standard High School Diploma



ported in Table 3. Given the interaction effect for at-risk status, we present separate graphs for at-risk and not-at-risk students. Student profiles are hypothesized based on the three program factors included in the final logistic regression model, and corresponding probabilities are computed. These probabilities are cumulative as they result from the sequential observation of additional program variables. First, we assume that a student received zero program variables; the probability of graduating with a standard diploma is .15 for at-risk students and .41 for not-at-risk students. Next, we add the effect of staying in the YTP for 12 or more months. The effect of a longer program is greater for not-at-risk students (.41 to .64) than it is for at-risk students (.15 to .22), suggesting that time in the program alone is insufficient for students who are at-risk of school or community failure. Next, we add the effect of holding two or more jobs while in the program; the effect of number of jobs held on probability of graduating is similar

for both groups. Finally, we observe the effect of adding the completion of specific transition goals to the accumulating set of program variables. Adding one goal has a modest effect on the probability of graduating for both groups. Adding four goals, however, has a substantial effect on the probability of graduation, especially for the at-risk group. The cumulative effect of staying in the program for a year or more, holding two or more jobs while in the program, and completing four or more transition goals results in a two-fold increase in the probability of graduating with a standard diploma for the not-at-risk group (.41 to .84), and a four-fold increase for the at-risk group (.15 to .67).

STUDY 2

METHOD

The purpose of our second study was to examine the program factors and staff characteristics perceived by former YTP participants to be most

important and meaningful in helping them achieve their education and transition goals. In addition to being important in their own right, we believed the perceptions of former participants were important for understanding and interpreting the quantitative findings from Study 1. We utilized focus group procedures for Study 2. A focus group is an interview with a group of carefully selected participants and is structured around topics supplied by the researcher, who typically serves as the moderator. Developed initially as a market research tool, focus groups are now used commonly by social scientists interested in obtaining information about attitudes, perceptions, and opinions (Krueger, 1994; Morgan, 1988). Focus groups are particularly useful for exploratory research when little is known about a topic, and offer a cost-efficient means to collect direct participant data. "The hallmark of focus groups is the explicit use of the group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in the group" (Morgan, p 12).

Participants

We used purposive sampling procedures (Patton, 1990) to select communities and student participants. Purposive sampling allowed us to choose communities and young adults who were representative of the diverse characteristics of the study population. We used three criteria to select six communities for participation. First, we selected only sites that had been providing YTP services for at least 4 years. Second, sites chosen to participate were considered to be operating a successful program (e.g., evidence of a collaborative service delivery system involving schools and community agencies, follow-up data collected from the site indicated that a high percentage of youth were achieving positive postschool outcomes). Lastly, sites were chosen to represent the diversity of geographic regions and rural/nonrural communities in Oregon.

Within each of the six sites, we selected YTP participants who had completed their secondary program and who were living in the local community. Second, we attempted to select focus group participants within and across communities that represented the general demo-

graphic characteristics (i.e., gender, primary disability, at-risk status) and program outcomes (i.e., graduation status, engagement status) experienced by the general population of youth who have participated in the YTP over the past decade. Table 4 provides a summary of the demographic characteristics and program outcomes of the focus group sample. The final sample of focus group participants ranged in age from 17 to 26, reflecting our desire to talk with young adults who had left the program and who could speak reflectively about their experiences.

Procedures

We conducted six focus groups involving a total of 45 young adults with disabilities. Group size ranged from 4 to 12 participants. Focus groups were scheduled in the early evening in a local school or community facility that was centrally located and easily accessible for all participants. We provided pizza and soft drinks prior to the interview, and we paid each participant a \$10 stipend at the conclusion of the interview.

In order to collect common information across the six groups we utilized a written interview guide to structure the focus group sessions. The interview guide was pilot-tested and revised prior to data collection. Pilot test data were not included in the study. Although the moderator was allowed flexibility in responding to any concerns and asking individualized follow-up questions, all of the participants were asked the same set of questions. Questions were organized to elicit students' perceptions of their (a) barriers to school and transition success and their reasons for participating in the program, (b) experiences in the YTP and the aspects of participation that were most meaningful to them, and (c) major accomplishments and the lessons they learned about succeeding as an adult.

Each focus group was conducted by a team of three project staff. The team member who served as moderator was responsible for asking the open-ended questions in the protocol, probing for additional details, and monitoring group discussions. Other team members operated the audio cassette recorder, kept track of time, and recorded field notes. The first or second author was present at all focus group inter-

TABLE 4
Demographic Characteristics of Participants in Study 2

<i>Demographic Characteristic</i>	<i>n(45)</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender		
Male	27	60
Female	18	40
Ethnicity		
Caucasian	38	85
Hispanic	2	4
African American	0	—
Asian/Pacific Islander	3	7
Native American	2	4
Primary disability		
Specific learning disability	25	55
Mental retardation	5	12
Emotional disability	4	9
Other health impairment	5	12
Speech/language impairment	2	4
Hearing impairment	1	2
Orthopedic impairment	1	2
Attention deficit disorder	2	4
At-risk status		
At risk	22	49
Not at risk	23	51
Graduated with standard high school diploma		
Yes	36	80
No	9	20
Engaged in work or continuing education		
Yes	29	64
No	16	36

views to ensure consistency of data collection procedures.

Data Analysis

All focus group interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. After the transcripts were completed, we used a multilayered coding process for analyzing the data (Ely, 1991; Miles & Huberman, 1994). First, we developed an initial list of codes that were structured by the interview guide and relevant transition literature. After reviewing the first three focus group interviews, we revised the list of codes to reflect themes from the data and other emerging questions of

interest. Using the final list of codes we followed a 2-step coding process for all six transcripts. The first level of coding involved assigning specific demographic codes to each participant response, including identifying each participant by at-risk status and postschool engagement status. The purpose of this first level of coding was to allow us to compare our findings across subgroups.

Next, we reviewed each transcript and assigned our second level or "pattern" codes. The purpose of this second level of codes was to allow us to examine broad thematic constructs of interest (e.g., student perceptions of barriers,

services, or accomplishments). A theme is commonly defined as a "statement of meaning that runs through all or most of the pertinent data" (Ely, 1991, p. 150). In our analysis procedures, we adopted a rule that key themes had to be supported by data from at least five of the six focus groups.

To facilitate data analysis, we entered all coded data into QSR NUD*IST, a qualitative software program designed to store and sort large amounts of text-based data (Qualitative Solutions and Research, 1997). Using QSR NUD*IST we produced a series of reports from our first- and second-level codes to (a) identify initial themes within focus groups, (b) compare information across groups to develop common patterns or themes, and (c) examine the veracity of themes for subgroups of participants (i.e., at-risk status, engagement status).

Credibility Procedures. The first and second authors coded all transcripts using a "check-coding" procedure (Miles & Huberman, 1994). All transcripts were coded independently and then compared. If there was disagreement on any data analysis unit the researchers met to reach consensus. In addition, we maintained a clear data trail with supporting documentation across all phases of data coding and analysis to ensure that an outside audit could be conducted to verify all coding and analysis procedures, and to determine independently the veracity of our themes and conclusions (Kreuger, 1994; Miles & Huberman).

RESULTS

Although each focus group had unique insights, across all six groups several common themes emerged. We collapsed these themes into three broad categories related to the issues being examined in this article: (a) reasons for participating in the program, (b) differences between the YTP and "regular" high school, and (c) benefits of participating in the program. We found no differences in the responses of engaged and unengaged youth. With the exception of the theme we called "persistence of YTP staff," we also found no differences in the responses of at-risk and not-at risk youth.

Reasons for Participation

Both at-risk and not-at-risk youth in our focus groups shared similar frustrations with the traditional high school program. They reported a variety of problems including (a) struggling to meet academic requirements, (b) skipping classes, and (c) feeling "bored" with school. The following comment reflects the perceptions of many of these young people:

I guess I didn't like going to school at all. I was ready to drop out my senior year because I wasn't passing my classes. I didn't understand the homework. I had no interest in going to school at all and when I went there it was like why bother?

Some youth also felt that the high school curriculum was not preparing them to meet their postschool goals:

And I thought school was the most boring place in the world just because I didn't want to learn what they wanted to teach me. I wanted to learn what I wanted to do. I had my own goals.

Overall, these youth were motivated to participate in the YTP because they recognized that they were not making progress in their current high school program. Many of them were looking for an opportunity to gain functional skills that might help them succeed in the adult world.

Differences Between the YTP and "Regular School"

When we asked the focus group youth how YTP was different from "regular school," they identified several key differences that they felt were essential to their success. We categorized these student perceptions into three distinct themes including (a) the provision of individualized services to achieve educational and transition goals, (b) the availability of consistent support from the staff, and (c) persistent reminders from YTP staff to complete requirements.

Individualized Services. Most young adults in the focus groups reported that being part of the YTP was quite different from participating in traditional academic programs. Regular school for focus group participants was marked

by large classes and teachers with too little time to provide the personal attention students wanted and felt they needed to succeed. In contrast, YTP staff usually had flexible schedules allowing them to offer more intensive one-on-one tutoring and individualized support. The following comments illustrate these differences:

Well in regular school the teachers they'll get you to do your work but not like in YTP. They (YTP staff) sit one-on-one with you. Just really help you and work with you.

The other teachers, if you couldn't do it (school work), it wasn't the fact that you didn't want to do it—it was the fact that you couldn't comprehend it. And you just needed the extra help and they didn't have the time. There are so many students that you sort of got pushed to the side. This program made sure you didn't.

At the regular high school they put you in a classroom with 31 students. They don't really help you work through your disability and learn from it and YTP does.

The individualized education and transition services students received were based around individual student goals and desires. Participants reported a great deal of satisfaction with these student-centered services, commenting: "This program is a lot better because you choose yourself what path you want to take." "At least with YTP you made yourself some goals and said this is what I would like to achieve."

Consistent Support From Staff. For the focus group youth, another key feature of YTP was the support system provided by YTP staff. Many participants commented on how important it was to them that YTP staff were willing and able to make time to listen to their problems with school, family, and friends. Having a trusted adult to talk with as they faced the difficult realities of finding employment or enrolling in postsecondary training programs made these daunting tasks somehow more manageable. The following comments from students illustrate this theme:

The support. Having someone there you know if you went out on an interview and you totally bombed it you could call them up and say 'I

bombed this interview.' And they would talk to you about maybe how you did, what you did, what you could do to make it better next time.

Well there's countless things. I mean I couldn't sit here and name them all. They just helped me. I mean more than one way. Every way. I mean it's like a foundation of support as far as I am concerned.

They were always there for me ... problems over home, they were always there. I mean they would stop anything. They would have stacks of papers and I would go in and say 'I have a problem' and they would just talk about it.

Staff Persistence. Focus group participants also talked about the persistent reminders that YTP staff provided. Sometimes it seemed as though the staff "never let up," prodding students to attend classes and complete assignments:

They also when you are trying to do something, instead of them just giving up on you because you can't do it, they push you and say don't give up on yourself.

Sometimes I thought they went to school just to hammer on me. Try to keep you focused on one thing until you got it done. Then as soon as you thought you were done they would bring something else over to you. Work on that for a while.

This theme of staff persistence was significantly more important to the youth who were identified as at-risk of school failure. Several of these young adults gave credit to the YTP staff for making them complete the requirements needed to graduate from high school. Although this may have been frustrating at the time, in retrospect they recognized that they needed this "positive pushing" to stay on track and complete their requirements.

They helped me with my school and everything. I don't think I would have graduated if it wasn't for them. They kept me going, made me stay there. They wouldn't let me be.

It was really hard for me to go because I hated school. I'd always come out to her car and cry and everything. She pushed me to go back

every day and to be the person that I am today. They pushed me to be, go out and do things.

During my last year of school I was so close to graduating. I needed one more credit. And she (YTP teacher) forced me to go on and finish. She dragged me to every class I went to in school.

They were like having me on a leash. It was very frustrating at that time but I am happy they did that to me. If they didn't do that I probably wouldn't have finished.

Benefits of the Program

Young adults participating in the focus groups identified many benefits of the YTP, including opportunities to explore career options and learn specific skills such as goal setting.

I don't think I would have ever tried to go through with my career goal if it weren't for YTP. Because I had no idea about what I wanted to do and had no idea where to get advice about opportunities and choices.

At that time I really considered myself unemployed. So there was a lot of uncertainty. Having the job helped me grow up and mature a lot. That's the way I see myself now and the way others see me.

They would have you set goals to fulfill your goals. To make the important goals in your life what you want to fulfill at the end of your career. They help you get out on your own and support you and your decision.

Many focus group participants felt they were shy and lacked self-confidence during high school. Students perceived that YTP staff helped them gain confidence in their skills and abilities by focusing on students' strengths and by providing support for self-identified goals. Students' confidence in their own abilities grew out of these experiences.

I would describe it (YTP) as a key that's opened up the locked door that you are trying to get past. I call high school that locked door. Getting out of there and then being outside, helping you make the decisions in real life to take action on your goals.

I think they helped me to solve problems. I didn't want to solve problems for myself but they taught me it would come sooner or later. Taught me self-confidence, believing in yourself and believing you can do something if you really want to.

The most important thing I did in YTP? I got into college. And I learned that I can do anything if I put my mind to it. He (the YTP Teacher) helped me figure that one out.

DISCUSSION

This article contributes empirical information to the national discussion of effective secondary and transition practices by examining student and program factors that predicted positive graduation and employment outcomes for secondary students who participated in a statewide transition program, and by exploring students' perceptions of the relevance of these services for encouraging them to stay in and complete school.

In summary, we found that graduation with a standard high school diploma and engagement in work or schooling activities were each strongly predicted by student participation in two or more career-related, paid jobs while in school and by completion of four or more student-identified transition goals. Students who entered the YTP experiencing one or more barriers to transition success were substantially less likely than not-at-risk students to graduate with a high school diploma. The probability that these youth would graduate with a standard diploma increased 400%, however, through the combination of time in the program, paid work experiences, and completion of transition goals—with completion of four or more transition goals having an especially powerful effect for these youth (see Figure 1). The importance of these and other program services were confirmed by the former YTP students who participated in our focus group study. The individualization of program services around student-identified goals, the accomplishment of personally meaningful activities, and the emergence of self-awareness and self-confidence as a foundation for future accomplishments were identified by students as important benefits of the program,

and as characteristics of the YTP that stood out as most different from "regular" school.

Focus group participants also identified the important roles YTP staff played as trusted adults who were available to (a) discuss problems with school, family, and friends; (b) provide specific support for education and transition goals (e.g., one-to-one tutoring, setting up and debriefing career and independent living activities); (c) assist with other issues that affect transition success (e.g., accompanying youth to court to resolve legal problems); and (d) provide general support to problem-solve the real-life issues that arose during the early transition years after leaving school. The "foundation of support" YTP staff provided to students took an added dimension when it came to helping these youth stay in and complete their education, especially for the at-risk youth in our study. Phrases such as "hammering on me," "never letting up," and "positive pushing" were used by students to describe the variety of activities staff engaged in to ensure these youth went to class, completed assignments, and earned the credits necessary for graduation. In discussing these activities, the focus group participants were quite clear about two things. First, at the time they occurred, the hammering, prodding, and positive pushing activities of staff were viewed as undesirable, but they were tolerated given the personal relationships that existed with staff. Second, reflecting back from the vantage point of their early 20s, almost universally these young adults credited these staff activities as essential in helping them stay in school and graduate.

Given that our quantitative and qualitative findings emerged from studies conducted in one state, caution should be exercised in generalizing these results to other contexts. At the same time, our findings are consistent with those from earlier research, and in some cases our results embellish and extend current knowledge about effective and promising practices that improve secondary and postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities.

School Completion and Postschool Preparation

Previous research suggests there is a moderate relationship between graduation with a diploma

and postsecondary outcomes, and smaller relationships exist among postschool outcome domains such as employment, continuing education, and independent living (Blackorby & Wagner, 1996; Halpern, 1993). From the perspective of secondary and transition practice, these findings suggest that educators must address specifically and directly the instructional requirements associated with school performance, secondary completion, and postschool preparation. Our findings add to existing research documenting the secondary program components and transition services associated with improved secondary performance and postschool outcomes for youth with disabilities. These components and services include (a) direct support for students in general education classes delivered in a manner that does not highlight students' affiliation with special education; (b) participation in paid work experiences that are related to students' emerging career interests; (c) instruction in vocational education, functional academic, and other transition content; and (d) completion of student-identified transition goals.

If graduation with a high school diploma and preparation for adult roles in continuing education, employment, and independent living are equally important outcomes for students with disabilities and equally necessary targets for the delivery of secondary and transition services, then future research should examine the impact of special and general education policies regarding graduation with a standard high school diploma. Students with disabilities have long found it difficult to incorporate a functional transition education with community-based instruction into a curriculum that also satisfies the academic requirements for a standard high school diploma (Benz & Kochhar, 1996; Hasazi et al., 1999). Graduation with a completion document other than a standard high school diploma (e.g., modified diploma, certificate of attendance) has been viewed as less than desirable by many students, parents, and teachers because of the limited value of these alternative completion documents to postsecondary providers such as college personnel, military recruiters, and employers (Benz & Kochhar). General education policies promoting increased

credits in core academic classes and use of exit exams as conditions for graduation, and continuing special education policies that view receipt of a standard high school diploma as the termination of a school district's obligation to provide free appropriate public education (FAPE), may be exacerbating this dilemma for students with disabilities (Thurlow et al., 1999). There appears to be value in examining the intended and unintended consequences of these policies through further research and policy analysis.

Curricular Relevance and Student Self-determination

Our findings add to research documenting positive relationships between student-centered planning practices, student self-determination, and improved secondary and postsecondary outcomes (e.g., Hasazi et al., 1999; Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1997), and to research examining secondary and transition issues directly through the perceptions of high school students, graduates, and dropouts with disabilities (e.g., Guterman, 1995; Lichtenstein, 1993). We are struck by three words that appear again and again in this literature: rigor, relevance, and relationships. What adolescents with disabilities want is instruction in a challenging and relevant curriculum that will prepare them for life after school. Relevance, of course, is defined in the eyes of the beholder. As one of the young adults in our study said, "I wanted to learn what I wanted to do. I had my own goals." Identification of education and transition goals that are personally meaningful, and receipt of support to accomplish those goals, appears to be a key to the perceived relevance of school for students. Accomplishment of student-centered transition goals had an especially powerful effect for the at-risk students in our study.

Furthermore, what adolescents with disabilities appear to want, *and what many adolescents desperately need*, is a personal relationship with a trusted adult who will be available to encourage their efforts, validate their fears, and celebrate their accomplishments. In addition to this general foundation of support, what appears to be needed and desired (in retrospect of course) by adolescents at risk of school and community failure is the "hammering and positive

pushing" that is necessary to encourage these students to stay in and complete their education, and that will be tolerated by these students only when a personal relationship of mutual trust and respect has been established. In terms of future research related to secondary and transition practice and policy, it appears important to continue supporting model demonstration and research initiatives that examine the power of student-centered transition services to encourage students to stay in and complete school. Models that contribute simultaneously to graduation and postschool preparation, that provide increased personal attention through creative staffing arrangements, and that focus on at-risk and other vulnerable student populations would appear especially fruitful areas for future research.

Collaborative Transition Programs

Previous research has documented the critical role of interagency collaboration for providing transition services to youth with disabilities (Benz & Lindstrom, 1997; Hasazi et al., 1999; Kohler, 1993). The characteristics of effective interagency collaboration include written agreements that structure the roles and responsibilities of participating agencies, and cross-agency professional development to support the collaborative activities of school and agency staff. Establishment of specific individuals with designated responsibility for providing transition services also has been identified as critical to quality service delivery (deFur & Taymans, 1995; Hasazi et al.). Our experiences over the past decade providing transition services through the YTP support the value of collaborative service delivery models. Organizational features of the YTP that are consistent with existing research include the use of (a) contracts among schools, vocational rehabilitation, and other community agencies specifying administrative and programmatic responsibilities of the partner agencies; (b) shared financial responsibility for staff who deliver transition services; (c) cross-agency training and technical assistance to support the professional development of school and community staff; and (d) information on student outcomes and program changes as a means to refine services. Despite the benefits of

collaborative transition service delivery models for schools and students, their implementation is not yet commonplace in communities across the country (U.S. DOE, 1998). Continued examination of federal and state policies that create fragmented services in local communities and financial disincentives to collaboration is needed. Model demonstration efforts and research on professional development strategies that address local "policy barriers" to collaboration (e.g., "that isn't how we do business") also are needed.

Secondary School Reform

Standards-based reform efforts of the past decade have produced initiatives aimed at raising standards of academic performance in core content classes, increasing requirements for graduation, and establishing educational accountability systems to determine whether schools and students are achieving desired outcomes. Special education advocates have worked hard to ensure that youth with disabilities are included in these general reform efforts (U.S. DOE, 1998). Rigorous instruction in core academic classes delivered in a manner that meets the needs of students with disabilities is a worthy goal that holds promise for improving the secondary and postsecondary outcomes of these youth. Research documents, however, that achievement of academic skills (e.g., reading, math, writing, and problem-solving skills) alone is insufficient for improving postschool outcomes in continuing education, employment, and independent living. To succeed in school and be adequately prepared to assume valued adult roles in the community, students with disabilities must also (a) possess knowledge and skills in functional academic and transition content areas (e.g., vocational, independent living, personal/social content); (b) be aware of career opportunities that match their interests and abilities, and (c) possess strategies for pursuing opportunities in employment and postsecondary education settings (e.g., Benz et al., 1997; Wagner et al., 1993).

The general secondary education curriculum operates either to limit or increase opportunities for students with disabilities to receive an inclusive education that is rigorous, relevant to their postschool goals, and based on a personal

relationship with at least one trusted adult. Research suggests that the somewhat exclusive focus on increasing rigor and results in core academic classes may be producing unintended and undesirable consequences for schools, teachers, and students in terms of the curricular options and staff supports that are available to address the comprehensive educational needs of high school youth, especially youth with disabilities and other special needs. Issues appearing in research that may be limiting curricular opportunities and supports for students with disabilities and that may benefit from further examination include (a) increased pressure on general secondary education teachers to "cover content" in their classes, and reduced time to deliver instruction and provide support in a manner that would help students with disabilities and other diverse learning needs who are in their classrooms (e.g., Schumm et al., 1995; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996); (b) increased pressure on secondary special education teachers to provide remedial instruction to support students who are in highly academic classes, and reduced time to provide functional skill instruction (e.g., Sands, Adams, & Stout, 1995); and (c) reduced number of elective courses and school-sponsored community work experiences in the general curriculum, and, even when these options are available to students, decreased time and flexibility to participate in these opportunities once students have placed all of the classes required for graduation into their daily schedules (e.g., Hershey, Silverberg, & Haimson, 1999). Youth in our study experienced several of these issues as reported in the reasons they gave for wanting to participate in the YTP and in the ways they contrasted the YTP with regular school.

Alternatives to traditional public education such as school choice plans, alternative education programs, and charter schools are developing in communities across the country. High school students with and without disabilities and their parents are participating in these options with increasing frequency because their needs are not being met by the secondary general and special education curriculum (Berman et al., 1999; Lange & Ysseldyke, 1998). Personal attention from teachers, more flexible educational options, and individualized education en-

vironments are among the reasons given by both parents and students for choosing these various educational alternatives (Berman et al.; Lange & Ysseldyke). Establishing a secondary general education curriculum that addresses the comprehensive educational needs of adolescents (e.g., academic, career, life-skill, and affective domains) through school and community-based activities is the goal of general education reformers concerned about the 50% of the high school population who, like the majority of students with disabilities, have instructional needs that extend beyond core academic classes (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1995; Hodgkinson, 1993; William T. Grant Foundation, 1988). Our findings and those from other research document that students with disabilities need and desire the kind of comprehensive secondary curriculum being advocated by these general education reform voices.

What must we do to partner with like-minded advocates in general education to place a comprehensive secondary education agenda at the center of the reform discussion? What changes in policy and practice are needed to create options for students within general education to provide all students with a challenging and relevant curriculum that prepares them for important adult roles, and a standard diploma that will be valued by postsecondary providers (e.g., college personnel, military recruiters, employers)? What changes in policy and practice are needed to give general and special education staff the time to provide the personal, individualized education that students would like to receive and staff would like to offer? What changes in policy and practice are needed to bring exemplary comprehensive secondary education models to scale in schools and sustain these models over time? Research, model demonstration, and policy development efforts that answer questions such as these may be helpful if students with disabilities are to receive an inclusive secondary education that improves their graduation rates and postschool outcomes.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The findings from our studies provide some concrete implications for secondary and transi-

tion practice and policy. Several of these implications are offered here.

- Focus secondary and transition services concurrently on the two goals of school completion and postschool preparation.
- Promote curricular relevance and student self-determination through student-centered planning and individualized services.
- Expand the use of collaborative service delivery programs as a mechanism for delivering transition services.
- Extend secondary school reform efforts to include career development, applied learning in the community, and transition planning as a central part of the regular education curriculum for all students.

These implications flow directly from our research findings and discussion. They are based on the identification of secondary and transition program components that actually produced improved outcomes for students with disabilities.

REFERENCES

- Benz, M. R., & Kochhar, C. A. (1996). School-to-work opportunities for all students: A position statement of the Division on Career Development and Transition. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 19*, 31-48.
- Benz, M. R., & Lindstrom, L. E. (1997). *Building school-to-work programs: Strategies for youth with special needs*. Austin, TX: PRO-ED.*
- Benz, M. R., Yovanoff, P., & Doren, B. (1997). School-to-work components that predict postschool success for students with and without disabilities. *Exceptional Children, 63*, 151-165.
- Berman, P., Nelson, B., Perry, R., Silverman, D., Soloman, D., & Kamprath, N. (1999). *The state of charter schools: Third-year report of the National Study of Charter Schools*. Washington, DC: RPP International. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 430 323)
- Blackorby, J., & Wagner, M. (1996). Longitudinal postschool outcomes of youth with disabilities: Findings from the National Longitudinal Transition Study. *Exceptional Children, 62*, 399-413.
- Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. (1995). *Great transitions: Preparing adolescents for a new century*. New York: Carnegie Corporation of New

- York. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 388 458)
- deFur, S. H., & Taymans, J. M. (1995). Competencies needed for transition specialists in vocational rehabilitation, vocational education, and special education. *Exceptional Children, 62*, 38-51.
- DeStefano, L., & Wagner, M. (1991). *Outcome assessment in special education: Lessons learned*. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 327 565).
- Dryfoos, J. (1990). *Adolescents at risk*. New York: Oxford University Press.*
- Ely, M. (1991). *Doing qualitative research: Circles within circles*. New York: Falmer Press*.
- Guterman, B. R. (1995). The validity of categorical learning disabilities services: The consumer's view. *Exceptional Children, 62*, 111-124.
- Halpern, A. S. (1993). Quality of life as a conceptual framework for evaluating transition outcomes. *Exceptional Children, 59*, 486-498.
- Halpern, A. S., Yovanoff, P., Doren, B., & Benz, M. R. (1995). Predicting participation in postsecondary education for school leavers with disabilities. *Exceptional Children, 62*, 151-164.
- Hasazi, S. B., Furney, K. S., & DeStefano, L. (1999). Implementing the IDEA transition mandates. *Exceptional Children, 65*, 555-566.
- Heal, L. W., & Rusch, F. R. (1995). Predicting employment for students who leave special education high school programs. *Exceptional Children, 61*, 472-487.
- Hershey, A. M., Silverberg, M. K., & Haimson, J. (1999). *Expanding options for students: Report to Congress on the national evaluation of school-to-work implementation: Executive summary*. Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 430 094)
- Hodgkinson, H. (1993). American education: The good, the bad, and the task. In S. Elam (Ed.), *The state of the nation's public schools: A conference report*. (pp. 13-23). Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Foundation.*
- Horne, R. L., & Hubbard, S. (1995). *The Youth Transition Program: Case study report*. Washington, DC: National Institute for Work and Learning, Academy for Educational Development.*
- Hosmer, D., & Lemeshow, S. (1989). *Applied logistic regression*. New York: John Wiley.*
- Jessor, R., Donovan, J., & Costa, F. (1991). *Beyond adolescence: Problem behavior and young adult development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.*
- Kaufman, P., Klein, S., & Frase, M. (1999). *Dropout rates in the United States: 1997*. Washington, DC: National Center for Educational Statistics. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 431 051)
- Kohler, P. D. (1993). Best practices in transition: Substantiated or implied? *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 16*, 107-121.
- Kreuger, R.A. (1994). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*. Newbury Park: CA: SAGE.*
- Lange, C. M., & Ysseldyke, J. E. (1998). School choice policies and practices for students with disabilities. *Exceptional Children, 64*, 255-270.
- Lichtenstein, S. (1993). Transition from school to adulthood: Case studies of adults with learning disabilities who dropped out of school. *Exceptional Children, 59*, 336-347.
- McGrew, K. S., Bruininks, R. H., & Thurlow, M. L. (1992). Relationship between measures of adaptive functioning and community adjustment of adults with mental retardation. *Exceptional Children, 58*, 517-529.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*. Newbury Park: CA: SAGE.*
- Morgan, D. L. (1988). *Focus groups as qualitative research*. Newbury Park: CA: SAGE.*
- Nunnally, J. C. (1978). *Psychometric theory*. New York: McGraw-Hill.*
- Oregon Department of Education. (1999). *Special education students in Oregon's public schools*. Salem, OR: Author. *
- Patton, M. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Newbury Park: CA: SAGE.*
- Qualitative Solutions and Research. (1997). *QSR NUD*IST: Software for qualitative data analysis* [Computer Software]. Melbourne, Victoria: Author.*
- Rogers, A., Hubbard, S., Charner, I., Fraser, B. S., & Horne, R. (1995). *Learning from experience: A cross-case comparison of school-to-work transition reform initiatives*. Washington, DC: National Institute for Work and Learning, Academy for Educational Development. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 040 469)
- Sands, D. J., Adams, L., & Stout, D. M. (1995). A statewide exploration of the nature and use of curriculum in special education. *Exceptional Children, 62*, 68-83.

Schumm, J. S., Vaughn, S., Haager, D., McDowell, J., Rothlein, L., & Saumell, L. (1995). General education teacher planning: What can students with learning disabilities expect? *Exceptional Children*, 61, 335-352.

Scruggs, T. E., & Mastropieri, M. A. (1996). Teacher perceptions of mainstreaming/inclusion, 1958-1995: A research synthesis. *Exceptional Children*, 63, 59-74.

Thurlow, M., Shin, H., Guy, B., & Lee, S. (1999). *State graduation requirements for students with and without disabilities: Executive summary*. Minneapolis, MN: National Transition Network. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 431 284)

U.S. Department of Education. (1996). *To assure the free appropriate public education of all children with disabilities: Eighteenth annual report to Congress on the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*. Washington, DC: Author. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 400 673)

U.S. Department of Education. (1998). *To assure the free appropriate public education of all children with disabilities: Twentieth annual report to Congress on the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*. Washington, DC: Author. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 424 722)

Wagner, M., Blackorby, J., Cameto, R., & Newman, L. (1993). *What makes a difference? Influences on postschool outcomes of youth with disabilities. The third comprehensive report from the National Longitudinal Transition Study of Special Education Students*. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.*

Wagner, M., Blackorby, J., & Hebbeler, K. (1993). *Beyond the report card: The multiple dimensions of secondary school performance of students with disabilities*. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.*

Wehmeyer, M., & Schwartz, M. (1997). Self-determination and positive adults outcomes: A follow-up study of youth with mental retardation or learning disabilities. *Exceptional Children*, 63, 245-255.

William T. Grant Foundation. (1988). *The forgotten half: Pathways to success for America's youth and young families* (Final Report). Washington, DC: Author.*

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

MICHAEL R. BENZ (OR Federation), Associate Professor; **LAUREN LINDSTROM** (OR Federation), Senior Research Assistant; and **PAUL YOVANOFF**, Research Associate, University of Oregon, Eugene.

Correspondence concerning this article should be sent to Michael R. Benz, 175 College of Education, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403 (E-mail: mbenz@oregon.uoregon.edu)

BooksNow

* To order books referenced in this journal, please call 24 hrs/365 days: (800) BOOKS-NOW (266-5766); or (732) 728-1040; or visit them on the Web at <http://www.BooksNow.com/Exceptional Children.htm>. Use Visa, M/C, AMEX, Discover, or send check or money order + \$4.95 S&H (\$2.50 each add'l item) to: Clicksmart, 400 Morris Avenue, Long Branch, NJ 07740; (732) 728-1040 or FAX (732) 728-7080.

Early Childhood Special Educators

Employee-owned Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), provides high-technology services and products to government and commercial customers. Currently, we are seeking **Early Childhood Special Educators** to work with American families and their children with developmental delays in Europe, Iceland, Turkey and Korea.

Position requires a Master's degree with 2 years experience, OR a Bachelor's degree and 4 years experience in Early Childhood Special Education, or Early Intervention.

SAIC offers very competitive salaries and a living quarters allowance in addition to an outstanding benefits package, including insurance plans, comprehensive leave and a 401(k) plan. For immediate consideration, qualified candidates should e-mail their resume and a copy of their licenses/certificates, to: SUZANNE.M.KLUGERMAN@saic.com or mail to: SAIC, Attn: SK/ECSE, 1710 SAIC Drive, MS T3-3-2, McLean, VA 22102; EIP Hotline: (703) 676-2550. We are an Affirmative Action Employer who values cultural diversity in the workplace. U.S. citizenship required.

SAIC

Science Applications International Corporation
An Employee-Owned Company

More information about SAIC is available on the Internet at:

www.saic.com