



Collaborative Pre-Employment Transition Services for Students with Autism: Practice & Partnerships

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The Bloom Consulting Pre-ETS Team:



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What makes us the "Experts Where Disability & Employment Meet"?



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This is John Fields, he is 17 years old now, and was diagnosed with high-functioning Autism at age 14. He is very intelligent and takes many advanced classes in Math, Science, and Music Theory. He struggles with social skills and working in team settings, however his schedule is packed with AP courses, how is he going to make time for the soft skills training he needs to successfully get and keep a job?

Answer: Pre-ETS services offered after-school, on weekends, or during the summer!

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Facts about Disability & Employment:

- The Workforce Participation Rate of Adults with Disabilities
 - 21.5% versus 68.4% for Adults without Disabilities (includes those employed and unemployed actively seeking work) [Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy, March 2018]
 - Only 55.1 percent of young adults with Autism held paying jobs during their first six years out of high school, the lowest percentage among the disability categories examined. (Shattuck, 2012)
- Many people with disabilities are in low wage jobs that perpetuate their dependence on the government and their family members. This is particularly devastating for high-functioning individuals with higher earning potential. (Carley, 2016)
- Why?

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What is WIOA & Pre-ETS?

- What is WIOA?
 - The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) amends the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and requires vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies to set aside at least 15% of their federal funds to provide "pre-employment transition services" to "students with Disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible" for VR services.
- What is Pre-ETS?
 - Pre-ETS is the abbreviation for Pre-Employment Transition Services. These services include five required domains designed to prepare students with disabilities, currently in school, for work.
 - Five required domains are:
 - Job Exploration Counseling
 - Work-Based Learning Experiences
 - Counseling on Post-Secondary Opportunities
 - Workplace Readiness Training
 - Self-Advocacy
 - To qualify students must be...
 - Ages 14 to 22
 - Enrolled in secondary or post-secondary education
 - Receiving Special Education or 504 Services due to a diagnosed disability
- Did you know there is an MOU between TEA and TWC-VR to encourage collaboration to provide Pre-ETS services to students?

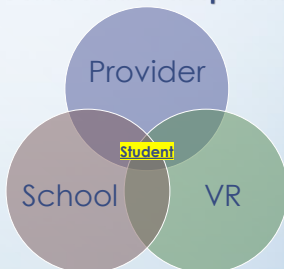
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Challenges to Providing Pre-ETS:

- In a state the size of Texas, one provider, agency, or school simply can't do enough by themselves to reach all of the districts, schools, and students that need to be served.
- Challenges for Schools:
 - Lack of funding, staff capacity, and/or time/bandwidth
 - Lack of access to high-quality curriculum
 - In some cases, a lack of support or understanding from administrators
- Challenges for Providers:
 - Limitations of summer and after school student/staff/space availability
 - Lack of affordable space
 - Reimbursement-based model resulting in delays of up to 90 days for payment
- Challenges for VR:
 - High staff turnover
 - Overwhelmed by large schools and caseloads
 - Lack of time to actually do direct service

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Our Collaboration Responsibilities:



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Examples of Texas Pre-ETS Programs:

- **Bloom Consulting's Pre-ETS Programs**
 - On The Right Track Career/College Exploration Program (OTRT)
 - Career Connections Program (CC)
 - Career Assess & Learn Program (CAL)
- **Texas Tech University's Burkhardt Center for Autism**
 - Summer College Experience Program
- **Texas Workforce Commission's Vocational Rehabilitation Services**
 - Summer Earn and Learn Program (Best When Combined with OTRT and/or VAT)

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What Are The Next Steps For...

- **Schools?**
 - We've worked with over 40 districts, but we would love to collaborate with others to bring high-quality services to other parts of Texas!
- **VR?**
 - If your schools or consumers need more services for their students, but they're not sure how to fund or provide them, consider working with a provider like us to see if we have a Pre-ETS program that can meet their need!
- **Providers?**
 - Connect with schools and learn what their students need are and how your current or future Pre-ETS programming could meet their needs.

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Questions/Contact Information

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