



Opportunity Through Education

DISCOVERY THROUGH TRANSITION

**Using the Discovery Process to Guide Transition for Students
with Significant Complex Needs**

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February 4, 2025

WHAT IS THE DISCOVERY PROCESS & WHY USE IT TO GUIDE TRANSITION

Discovery is...

- A process of getting to know the student and helping them get to know themselves before we help them plan.
- Spending time with students as a means of finding the conditions where they are at their best.
- A practical strategy to determine complexities and preferences.



DISCOVERY IS...

- A way to identify the unique contributions offered by those who might not compete in the standard job market, as well as others.
- Getting to know students in settings where they are most who they are.
- Not a plan, but the foundation of employment planning that seeks to customize outcomes.
- Compatible with self-determination and individual choice.



WHY DO DISCOVERY?

- Can be used to obtain critical student-centered information as an alternate to traditional assessment, which focuses heavily on their deficits, rather than skills, strengths and contributions.
 - Student-driven exploration.
 - Strengths-based assessment.
 - Personalized learning plans.
 - Community engagement.
- To better understand how the student's disability impacts their life.
- Identify what supports are needed in order for the student to be successful.
- Identify the student's interests and contributions.
- Guide curricular content and volunteer/work experiences.



LAWS THAT SHAPE SERVING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Focus on Transition and Employment:

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The purposes of this part are—

300.1(a) To ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living;

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/a/300.1>



34 CFR § 300.43 TRANSITION SERVICES

(a) **Transition services** means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that –

(1) Is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including:

- postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment),
- continuing and adult education, adult services,
- independent living, or community participation;

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/a/300.1>



34 CFR § 300.43 TRANSITION SERVICES (CONT.)

(2) Is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and includes:

- (i) Instruction;
- (ii) Related services;
- (iii) Community experiences;
- (iv) The development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives; and
- (v) If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation.

(b) **Transition services** for children with disabilities may be special education, if provided as specially designed instruction, or a related service, if required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education.

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/regs/b/a/300.1>



WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)

- On July 22, 2014 the President signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, (H.R.803) thus amending the Rehab Act of 1973.
- This new act provides a federal definition of Customized Employment, and it provides a strong focus on employment for all, especially transitioning youth.



TITLE IV - AMENDMENTS TO THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 REHAB ACT (H.R. 803-210 SECTION 7)

Customized Employment means:

- competitive integrated employment, for an individual with a significant disability, that is based on a individualized determination of the strength, needs, and interests of the individual with a significant disability,
- is designed to meet the specific abilities of the individual with a significant disability and the business needs of the employer”.

<https://rsa.ed.gov/sites/default/files/downloads/wioa.pdf>



Relevant State Legislative Initiatives

- Employment 1st Initiative
 - [Employment First](#)

- WDE - Profile of a Graduate
 - includes College and Career Readiness for all students, regardless of whether they are on a diploma or certificate track.
 - <https://edu.wyoming.gov/college-career-ready/>



USING THE DISCOVERY PROCESS:

- Employing a student-centered approach to transition planning.
- Focus is on actively exploring and supporting the students interests, strengths, and needs through:
 - exploration.
 - self-discovery.
 - rather than relying solely on standardized assessments.
 - to better guide post-secondary paths.
- Focuses on getting to know that student better in a broader context - as a whole person
 - family, friends, community, school - the broader picture
 - meaningful information about the whole student, not just what we experience and see initially in the classroom, but the potential they possess and who are outside the classroom and the skills that maybe they haven't yet demonstrated for you
 - <https://transitiontn.org/get-to-know-your-students/>



TRANSITION PHASES OF DISCOVERY

- **Stage I: Career Awareness** - services are provided in the school setting.
- **Stage II: Career Planning** - services are provided in the school setting.
- **Stage III: Career Development** - services are provided in the community through a collaborative effort between school and vocational rehabilitation.



WDE DISCOVERY GUIDES: A DIGITAL TOOL

Stage 1: Career Awareness

- Key component is to begin to identify who this student is, their strengths, interests, and develop work habits now that will set them up to be more successful.
- This is done through a "Life Book."
 - the Life Book becomes a living document that grows with the student.

Stage 2: Career Planning

- The Student Career Portfolio:
 - As the student matures, we will transition from a Life Book to a Student Career Portfolio.
 - This portfolio will become the first impression for a potential employer.

Stage 3: Career Development

- Community based:
 - provided by the school and vocational rehab.
 - hands on employment experiences.
 - continued preparation for post-secondary transition.



STAGE I: CAREER AWARENESS

- Work begins grades at least by grades 5-7, ages 10-12, services provided in school.
 - Discovery.
 - Life Book.*
 - Future Vision.
 - Vocational Plan.
 - Occupational Exposure.
 - Business Tour.
 - Service Learning Volunteering.
 - Intro to Vocational Rehab Services.
 - Intro to SSA Benefits.
 - Visit to Job Center.



THE LIFE BOOK/CAREER PORTFOLIO

- The Life Book shows who the student is through creating a positive picture of who the student is:
 - preferences.
 - goals.
 - skills.
 - supports.
- Captures who the student is to drive career conversations.
- Transitions from a “Life Book” to the “Career Portfolio” during the middle grades (middle/jr. high school).
- Can be done in the format that best suits the needs of the team:
 - narrative format (Google Doc, Word Doc).
 - Slide format.



STAGE II: CAREER PLANNING

Services Provided in School:

- Discovery Vocational Focus.
- Vocational Profile.
- School Work Experience Plan.
- School Work Experience.
- Self-Employment Plan.
- Small Business.
- Mentor.
- Service Learning.
- Visit to Job Center.



STAGE III: CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Work Connections: Grades 10-12, ages 16-18

Services Provided in School with Vocational Rehabilitation Services:

- Update Discovery (Career Portfolio).
- Vocational Profile.
- Customized Employment Plan.
- General/Matched Work Experience.
- Apprenticeships and On the Job Training.
- Job Shadow.
- Customized Job.
- Mentor.
- Service Learning/Volunteering.



WORK EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES

At home

- chores.

At school

- All the roles of different jobs.
- created.

In the community

- Community partners.

Virtual

- [Digital Summer youth Employment Toolkit](#)
- <https://www.theforage.com/>
- <https://pathful.com/explore>
- VR headsets
- OneNet
- [Virtualjobshadow.com](#)
- Career One Stop - endless YouTube career videos

Work-based learning is a continuum of:

- Awareness.
- Exploration.
- Preparation.
- Training Activities.

Importance of establishing necessary Pre-ETS



CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

What is Customized Employment?

- Customized employment is a way of personalizing the employment relationship to meet the needs of both the employer and the employee, or potential employee, in particular, to employees with disabilities.
 - Adjusted schedules.
 - Alternate work location agreements.
 - Supported employment.
 - Self-employment.
 - Disney World deaf clerk example



A woman with blonde hair and glasses, wearing a black cardigan over a patterned dress, stands in the center of an office cubicle. The cubicle has light-colored walls and overhead cabinets. A desk with a computer monitor and keyboard is visible behind her. The floor is dark wood. The lighting is bright, coming from overhead fixtures.

Countney Tallarida

Office Assistant



CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Benefits to the Employer and the Employee

- Customized employment is a way of personalizing the employment relationship to meet the needs of both the employer and the employee, or potential employee:
 - Seeking to fill unmet needs for the employer by creating a job role specifically made to fit an individual's unique skills and strengths while the employer can fill gaps in their workforce in ways that could otherwise be overlooked.
 - This ultimately addresses specific needs within the business that were not being met by existing employees.



OUR TRANSITION DISCOVERY GUIDE ACTIVITIES

- The intent is for the process to begin early and follow the student through their educational journey to make meaningful connections to post-school outcomes.
- Seek to meaningfully connect state performance expanded standards being taught in your classroom to transition-related activities.
- The Guide, once approved through our Communications department, will be a living, digital document with links to activities.

	Stage I: Career Awareness Location of Services: School Focus: Develop knowledge of student interests and strengths. Provide an introduction to careers that align with those interests and strengths.	Stage II: Career Planning Location of Services: School and Community-based Focus: Exploration of career options and skill development for career attainment.	Stage III: Career Development Location of Services: Community Focus: Hands on employment experience and continued preparation for a seamless post-secondary transition, provided through collaboration of the school and vocational rehabilitation.
Discovery Process	Initial determination of strengths, needs and interests.	Align strengths, needs, and interests with potential vocational goals/interests.	On-going updates to student information.
Documentation of Interests and Employment Skills	Ongoing documentation of interests and skills at home and school through the development of a Life Book.	Transition from the Lifebook to a Career Portfolio Ongoing documentation of skills at home and school, as related to preparation for post-secondary success.	Student Career Portfolio Ongoing documentation of skills at home, school and in the community in preparation for post-secondary success.
Implementation Plan	Introduction to career exploration through Discovery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify interests and skills. Identify skill gaps Participate in community exploration. Engage in jobs at home and school. Meaningful person-centered planning focused on employment, giving consideration to predictors of employment success: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion in general education 	School Work Experience Plan Career exploration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual Community Beyond the community 	Community Work Experience Plan Development of a Visual Resume Job site exploration Customized Employment Plan
Instruction and Supports for Vocational Activities	classroom and instruction aligned with standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High expectations at home and school Skills in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self determination Self advocacy Decision making Goal setting 	Develop/learn work specific skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work related social skills Timeliness, following schedules Focus on task completion Self-advocacy in the work environment Identify supports needed	Continue to develop work specific skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine preferences based on work experience Identify skill gaps for ongoing instruction needs Refine customized supports
Real World Application	Based on collected information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide instructional activities to address skill gaps Initiate pre-employment exposure through home and school based chores and visit local businesses. 	Job shadow opportunities based on Career Portfolio	Match work experience to both existing community partners and potential community partners for employment experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customized Job Mentoring Service Learning Volunteering Build systems and structures to facilitate seamless transition into post-secondary work/training
Connection and Collaboration with Outside Agencies	Student and family awareness of related community services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WYABLE Account DVR Social Security Guardianship Supports 	Visit DVR and other community service agencies. Introduction to DVR staff and programs.	Become a client of DVR. Collaborate with DVR for pre-employment services and job placements. Formalize connections to related state and federal programs (social security, independent living programs, etc.)

OUR VISION FOR TRANSITION THROUGH DISCOVERY

- Began with a COP in 22-23.
- Outlined a proposal for a training plan.
- 2024-2025.
 - 8 districts selected from the original training groups to participate in initial training in the Discovery Process. That training will be wrapping up at the end of this school year.
 - Began with one DVR member.
 - DVR members being trained has increased, benefiting the process in districts that they serve.
 - Would love to see Discovery statewide.
 - Training materials and coaching in the process are available through WDE.
 - [wyominginstructionalnetwork/visionoutreach/transition](https://www.wyominginstructionalnetwork.com/visionoutreach/transition)
 - we also plan to have it public facing on the WDE website

★ **Testimonials: Sublette, Natrona**





FOR MORE INFORMATION

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