

SUGGESTIONS AND REACTIONS FROM PROMISE MEETINGS OF EXPERTS

Compiled by the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC)

Meeting held in conjunction with National Transition Conference by OSERS
Washington, DC, May 31, 2012

Participants

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Families and Family Interventions

Barriers

- Families need to be assured of a safety net
- Assurance that transitions in and out of employment are not punitive or disastrous
- Services for families, too

- Benefits planning
- Asset development
- Child care
- Literacy training
- Job skills training for families
- Community services/faith-based services and supports engaged
- Must maintain meaningful health insurance—regardless of employment or income—that is reliable and sustainable
- Benefits counselors—not just SSI, but veterans benefits, workers compensation
- Knowledge of services available, not linked to SSI/SSDI
- Service funding may need to be blended/braided to be flexible and assure that working is more lucrative than not working

Expectations

- Need expectation for work communicated to families the moment children begin receiving SSI
- Families need examples of youth who work
- Need an early family training component

Career Development Aspects of Program

- Must focus on career—not just a job
 - Meaningful career exploration
 - Career planning
 - Meaningful guidance
 - Evaluation, assessment

Coordination of Services

- Look at asset development work of Mike and Abby Cooper out of Washington
- Build on what DOL is funding
- Look at Ready by 21, Credentialed by 26
- Might need requirement to work with Workforce Investment or employers—good information on labor market and job development
- May need input from medical/benefits community in this conversation

What needs to happen for **State and local partners to provide services more seamlessly?**

- Must converse about intended outcomes, so that not another fragmented system
- Include a systems change piece (e.g., real family empowerment component)
- Policy alignment (or forgiveness/waivers) across agencies
- Capacity building at local and state levels
- Require evidence of coordination
- Agencies need to learn about what each other does and identify a mutually beneficial outcome

- Process must be clear for families—single portal, clear process

Intermediate Objectives

- Work experiences—paid/unpaid can also be part—but must include paid
- National service (e.g., Americorps, Vista, postsecondary education) participation might be other objectives
- Stages (lifelong) career development
- Mentors with every student and family is important
- Real family engagement—an opportunity to lift families up
- Measures of effective professional development—projects will implement and measure evidence-based PD practices
- Common intended outcomes across stakeholders

Population

The PROMISE proposal focuses on minors, right now the 14–18 year old age range. Leaving out current recipients who are about to pass age 18 may leave out some important groups of individuals. On the other hand, the intervention time (five years) and funds are limited. One suggestion has been to intervene only with 14–15 year olds and continue that intervention to age 18.

- Fund applications with plan to serve across varying levels of support needs (rather than defining by disability categories)—Example: some individuals with EBD may have intense support needs
- Encourage including “hardest to serve”—youth with EBD, foster care, severe intellectual and complex disabilities
- No rejection policy

Other Logistics

- Key details include:
 - Grants are 5 years, but evaluation will go 7–10 years beyond
 - Population served will go beyond 18, but must begin before age 18
 - Proposed priority should be out for comment late fall/winter and grant competition in spring 2013
 - Will fund 3–5 grants at \$7–10 million annually
- Must identify common outcome(s) for agencies/entities involved—coordinated effort (not just multi-pronged attack)
- Include a systems change piece (e.g., real family empowerment component)
- Policy alignment (or forgiveness/waivers) across agencies
- Focus on capacity building at local and state levels
- Require evidence of coordination
- Will need employment data from a valid source
- Depend on the State to determine who should lead—put out the call and allow flexibility

- Fiscal role
 - Coordinating role
 - Completing the activities roles
- If want large scale implementation or want demonstration of promising practices for later replication—be very clear about that in the RFP—may be one, may be both—but be clear
- Encouraged by research component to grant