

Happy Holidays!

Best wishes for a merry holiday season and a healthy and happy New Year from Project 10!

News from Around the State

Project 10 CONNECT

According to Readyby21.org, only four in ten students are ready for college, work and life—and two in ten are deeply underprepared or off track. The mission of Project 10 CONNECT Interagency Councils is to improve postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities. To strengthen your interagency council:

- Engage in a Resource Mapping Activity to discover gaps and overlaps in services for individuals with disabilities.
- Align your Project 10 CONNECT Interagency Council with other community councils to have a greater voice in legislative changes.
- Invite representatives from Workforce Development, the Chamber of Commerce, Business Leadership Networks, and employers to attend a meeting so that connections can be made and business representatives can learn how youth with disabilities are assets to the work force.
- Invite representatives from higher education and post-secondary institutions to attend a meeting. Ask them to share information on financial aid and other resources available to students who are continuing their education after high school graduation.
- Use technology to share information on services, agencies, and interagency fairs.

Got Data?

Sure—but is it used to create action plans and strategies for student success—or does it sit in a database or folder? Project 10 offers a great training, “Utilizing Data to Diagnose then Treat: Program Evaluation and Improvement,” and provides technical assistance to help improve transition outcomes. For the best results in analyzing data:

- Partner with MIS/IT data personnel and ask for specific reports that address the four transition indicators (youth with IEPs graduating with a regular diploma, youth with IEPs dropping out, youth whose IEPs have measurable postsecondary goals and meet other conditions, and youth with IEPs enrolled in postsecondary education and/or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school)
- Analyze reports by the school level and/or student information level
- Create a data wall—a display of data and information related to a specific question or problem—that can be updated over time and used to guide decisions and strategies
- Gather key players and begin to examine what the challenges are; then build strategies and an action plan to address them.
- Maintain momentum to keep data current for guiding decision-making.
- Contact your Project 10 Regional Transition Representative to schedule training and technical assistance.

Upcoming Conferences

Florida Juvenile Justice Association 18th Annual Adolescent Conference

February 19-20, 2013, at the Florida Hotel & Conference Center, Orlando, FL

The conference theme, “Private Partnerships: The Power to Make a Difference for Youth, Families and Communities,” addresses the ever-increasing value of public private partnerships, which effectively bring together a wide range of collaborators, including state and local agencies, businesses, philanthropies, faith-based institutions, schools and service providers to work together to improve and expand services for children, youth, and families. Conference registration opens in early December. For more information, go to the Florida Juvenile Justice Association website at

<http://www.fja.org>.

Upcoming Conferences—continued

Save the Date for VISIONS XX!

Mark your calendars for May 15, 16, and 17, 2013, for the Florida Division on Career Development and Transition's annual VISIONS Conference! The theme is "Transitioning Students to Life in the 21st Century," and the location is the Renaissance Tampa International Hotel. Don't miss the closing session with Dr. Monica Verra-Tirado, Bureau Chief of the Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services!

Resources

Dropout Prevention Resources

Presentations, handouts, directory of presenters, and other resources from the 24th Annual National Dropout Prevention Network Conference held in Orlando on October 14th – 17th are now available via the Project 10 website at <http://www.project10.info/ConferencePresentations.php>. More than 150 presenters from around the country shared effective programs and evidence-based strategies for promoting school engagement at the conference.

College and Career Readiness and Students with Disabilities

This National High School webinar, cohosted with the American Youth Policy Forum in June 2012, has been archived at <http://www.betterhighschools.org/webinar/default.aspx>. Presenters discussed actualizing college and career readiness for students with disabilities and suggested ways in which states and districts can develop frameworks that address the needs and goals of all students.

Skills to Pay the Bills Adds Videos

The Office of Disability Employment Policy in the U.S. Department of Labor has added seven short (2-3 minute) videos to its *Skills to Pay the Bills* curriculum that helps youth ages 14-21 prepare for the workforce. Modules with hands-on activities are provided in six skill areas including communication, teamwork, problem solving, and professionalism. Users may download the full publication, individual modules, and the videos at <http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/>

Hartwick Symposium Presentations Now Available

Conference proceedings from the Third Annual Hartwick Symposium on Postsecondary Education and Intellectual Disabilities are now available at <http://fltpsid.info/ConferenceProceedings.php>. The conference was held October 31 to November 2, 2012, in Jacksonville and included presentations on AmeriCorps, Project Achieve, Universal Design for Learning, Mentor Scenarios, Comprehensive Transition Programs (CTPs) and Federal Financial Aid, the STAR Person-Centered Planning Model, and more.

Free Resource from CEC

The Council for Exceptional Children's *Tool of the Week* is a free resource designed to support special educators. Many of the topics address specific transition skills such as daily living, occupational, personal/social, and postsecondary education. Go to <http://www.tooloftheweek.org/> to subscribe, and the Tool of the Week will be emailed to you every Monday morning.

Quick Stats Fact Sheets

The National High School Center at the American Institutes of Research publishes a series of fact sheets focused on high school issues. *The First Year of High School* provides statistics on the transition into high school and highlights U.S. high school enrollment rates, predictors of high school dropout, and ninth grade transition strategies at http://www.betterhighschools.org/pubs/documents/NHSC_FirstYearofHighSchool_Oct12.pdf. *College and Career Readiness* provides statistics on high school graduates' readiness for life after high school, highlights challenges and opportunities after graduation, and lists implications for underserved populations at http://www.betterhighschools.org/pubs/documents/NHSC_CollegeCareerReadinessFactSheet_Oct12.pdf

FDOE Guidance

Check out the FDOE TAPs and Memos page on the Project 10 web site (<http://www.project10.info/FloridaGuidance.php>) including the November 14, 2012, Memorandum from Dr. Monica Verra-Tirado on "Clarification of Requirements for Measurable Postsecondary Goals."

News from the Regions

Region 1 - Northwest Florida – Dr. Lori Garcia

- Greetings to our Region 1 ESE Directors, Transition Contacts, and others serving our students in the Panhandle. We hope that you enjoy the upcoming Winter Holidays and look forward to a prosperous New Year.
- Upcoming Project 10 CONNECT Interagency Council Meeting: Big Bend Transition Council (BBTC)
Where: FDLRS/Miccosukee Time: 9 am -11 am EST
Scheduled Meetings: December 20th, January 17th, February 21st, March 28th, April 18th, and May 16th
Contact: Tury Lewis, lewist@leonschools.net
Serving Leon, Gadsden, & Wakulla; other districts welcomed!
- Upcoming Project 10 CONNECT Interagency Council Meeting: Panhandle Area Education Consortium (PAEC)
Where: FDLRS/PAEC Time: 9 am-12 pm CST
Scheduled Meetings: January 17th, March 21st
Contact: Rusty Holmes, holmesr@paec.org
Serving: Washington, Walton, Jackson, Holmes, Calhoun, Liberty, Gulf, Franklin; liaison for Bay; other districts welcomed!
- For more information on Region 1 resources, contact Dr. Lori Garcia at lorigarcia@mail.usf.edu.

Region 2 - Northeast Florida – Patrick Mulvihill

- Kathy Lawrence, Region 4 SEDNET Project Manager, Clay County School District, and Clay Behavioral Health Center created a transition program called *See You at the Top*. Over 15 students who had excessive absences, suspensions, and referrals for misconduct participate in the program, and all have shown remarkable progress since the beginning of this school year. Students meet regularly with a Case Manager from Clay Behavioral Health Center, and Kathy meets regularly with the school-based instructors. The program also has a strong parent component. For more information, contact Kathy Lawrence at (904) 272-8123, klawrence@oneclay.net
- Bradford, Clay, Flagler, and Volusia County's Project 10 CONNECT Interagency Councils sponsored several Transition Fairs in October and November. Cosponsors included Access Flagler, St. John's River State College, and Volusia College Night.
- Duval County's Project 10 CONNECT Interagency Council is working with FDLRS Crown and preparing for their transition fair that is part of the annual TOOLS for SUCCESS Conference scheduled for February 13th.
- Save the Date! Duval County Public Schools and the National Disability Institute will sponsor a one-day train-the-trainer on *Financial Planning for Transition* for transition contacts in the Northeast Region on January 10, 2013, from 8:30 am–3:30 pm at the Schultz Center in Jacksonville. Further information will follow.
- For more information on Region 2 resources, contact Patrick Mulvihill at pmulvihill@mail.usf.edu.

Region 3 – East Central Florida – Heather Mack

- All nine school districts in Region 3 have completed a Priority Activity Plan for the 2012-13 school year. Most districts will have a major focus on Indicator 2, Dropout Prevention. Thank you to all who took time to participate in the important yearly activity.
- All nine school districts in Region 3 also have Interagency Councils starting or underway that help support students as they transition from school to post-school activities. Getting to know community partners is an important step in transition. Thank you to all who have taken the lead in this endeavor.
- The Region 3 Representative attended the *DISCOVERY* training in Mississippi on October and will be sharing this valuable information soon. Please contact Heather Mack if this is a priority for your district.
- For more information on Region 3 resources, contact Heather Mack at hmack1@mail.usf.edu.

Region 4 – West Central Florida – Federico Valadez

Here are some great examples of what Project 10 CONNECT Interagency Councils are doing in the region:

- The Sarasota Developmental Disabilities Council and the Sarasota Community Alliance held a one day legislative summit on October 16 to advocate for future legislative proposals for better services for individuals with disabilities.

Region 4 – West Central Florida – Federico Valadez—continued

- The Hernando County Project 10 CONNECT Interagency Council aligned with the greater Hernando County Community Alliance. In September 2011, the Council obtained additional transportation routes for individuals with disabilities to expand continuing education and employment opportunities for youth.
- On November 1st, Citrus County conducted a “Disability Simulation” exercise in which school personnel, agencies, and providers were given scenarios and attempted to navigate the systems students and families encounter in order to get assistance. The exercise helped participants explore how they would braid their resources to better assist families.
- To facilitate postsecondary outcomes, the Pasco County Project 10 CONNECT Interagency Council meets with Vocational Rehabilitation after each Interagency Council meeting to insure that all students are appropriately referred and that service linkages are in place.
- Lake County Project 10 CONNECT Interagency Council holds two annual Interagency Fairs (North and South County) that accommodate parents’ schedules via weekend and evening events. The fairs are announced at student IEP meetings, and flyers are sent home a few weeks prior to the event as a reminder.
- Hillsborough County Project 10 CONNECT Interagency Council has begun to use technology to get more information to students, families, school district personnel, agencies, and providers. A series of informational DVDs were created to explain the services that the school district and institutions of higher education provide. In addition, the DVDs identify continuing education, employment, discretionary project, and other agency/provider resources. The informational DVDs are now web-based and can be viewed online at anytime.
- For more information on Region 4 resources, contact Federico Valadez at fvaladez@mail.usf.edu.

Region 5 – South Florida – Lisa Friedman-Chavez

- Three of the very large districts in the region have held transition conferences since the start of the school year. Approximately 225 participants attended the Palm Beach S.T.A.R.S. (Start Transition and Realize Success) Conference; nearly 200 individuals participated in the Broward Teen’s Transition to Life Summit, including 69 students; and over 250 students, family members, and transition professionals attended the Miami-Dade Steps for Success SPED Conference, which included a large track dedicated to secondary transition.
- Two Project 10 CONNECT sites collaborated with the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) regional Employment Coordinator to provide training on Social Security Work Incentives. Project Transition of Lee County and the Miami-Dade Transition Task Force have arranged to have a comprehensive two-day training (a requirement to become a Medicaid Waiver Supported Employment provider) and a two-hour training that covers the basics.
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools is working with Florida International University (FIU) and Miami Dade College (MDC) to develop a comprehensive Summary of Performance that will be accepted by both Institutes of Higher Education. A subcommittee from the Miami-Dade Transition Task Force is also involved in the workgroup. The new form should to be finalized this school year.
- For more information on Region 5 resources, contact Lisa Friedman-Chavez at lfchavez@mail.usf.edu.

Department of Juvenile Justice Education Update

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) sponsors the Juvenile Justice Teacher of the Year Program to honor outstanding teachers in Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) education programs. FDOE, DJJ, and school districts representatives as well as community members and other stakeholders evaluate the nominee applications and select regional winners. The three regional winners for the 2011-2012 school year were Svetlana Eleases, Okeechobee Youth Development Center; Cindy McGrath, PACE Broward; and Rocio French, Avon Park Youth Academy. Rocio French was selected as the winner of the Juvenile Justice Teacher of the Year award at the 24th Annual National Dropout Prevention Network Conference in Orlando, October 14th – 17th. Rocio emphasizes real-world relevance in her mathematical problem-solving and mathematic connections courses. She creates lessons that relate to current events of everyday happenings in her student’s lives by first learning about their backgrounds, neighborhoods, and culture. Congratulations, Rocio!
