



# COLLABORATING WITH SCHOOLS what's working

## LLC COLLABORATION WITH SCHOOLS

Collaboration between vocational rehabilitation (VR), schools, and other partners can be an effective strategy to improve career and college readiness outcomes for Vermont high school students with disabilities. Such a collaboration can promote individualized student services, supports, and activities, as well as identify responsibilities of transition professionals in providing the identified needs and supports. For collaboration to gain a foothold, the VR Transition Youth Team and school personnel must first get together, share their desires for students, and realize their similar belief systems. This practice can help improve collaboration.

It is important to identify school personnel who is most familiar with the students on your VR caseload. In some instances, you may be collaborating with more than one person at each school. Potential school partners might include school administrators; special and general education teachers; career and technical teachers and staff; school counselors; and administrative school support staff. However, having a single point of contact can help streamline communication. Once a point of contact is identified, build rapport with this individual by communicating on a regular basis and offering support as relevant.

# VR STRATEGIES TO BUILD COLLABORATION

## DEMONSTRATE HOW YOU BRING VALUE TO EACH SCHOOL

- Determine the school's self-interest rather than what they can do for you. Do not put extra work on the school rather offer your assistance.
- Show schools how the VR Transition Youth Team members can offer value as they prepare transition-age youth for college and careers:
  - Teach employability classes
  - Provide work readiness training
  - Teach self-advocacy skills
  - Connect students with business

## BE CONSISTENT / SET A SCHEDULE

- Find a consistent day to meet with students at each school.
- Once a regular time to visit has been established, maintain the schedule.
- Before your scheduled visit, send an email ahead of time reminding the school you are coming.

## BE TRANSPARENT

- Share students' progress notes with relevant school personnel. This practice not only shows value in what you are doing, but demonstrates how your work with the student is assisting their progress.

## BUILD TRUST

- Follow through with commitments.
- While at schools, strive to work independently.
- Let schools know the focus of each student's meeting so every can be prepared.
- Follow through with action. If there is a change in strategy, then communicate that change to school staff/partners.

## GET ORGANIZED

- The Transition Youth Team meets weekly to coordinate outreach to schools and prioritizes VR activity.

## BE PREPARED

- Take all necessary paperwork and forms to meetings with students and/or school staff (e.g., all VR and LLC forms and materials).

## OFFER SCHOOLS A SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT AT VR

- The VR Transition Counselor is the point of contact for the schools. All communication goes to them first (e.g., IEP meetings, student issues) and they will disseminate the information and pull in other LLC team members as needed.