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Students with Developmental Disabilities Have Limited Postsecondary Options; A New Institution Would Expand Choices but Require Additional State Funding

at a glance

Students with developmental disabilities have limited options for education beyond high school. Most are not eligible to enroll in college credit programs because they do not have a standard high school diploma. The majority of programs for adults with developmental disabilities provide basic transition services that focus on improving employability and skills needed to live independently.

At least 13 Florida school districts offer programs that include aspects of postsecondary education for students with developmental disabilities in Exceptional Student Education (ESE) programs. Three entities (one state university, one state college, and one school district technical center) offer postsecondary education to students who are no longer enrolled in district ESE programs.

Stakeholders have proposed creating a new postsecondary institution for adults with developmental disabilities. While this would give students an additional choice and address some current barriers, establishing a separate program that limits interaction with non-disabled students is inconsistent with emerging national trends. Estimated state costs to create such an institution range from \$1.2 million to \$40 million in recurring operational funds, and up to \$36 million in non-recurring funds.

Scope

As directed by Ch. 2010-155, *Laws of Florida*, this report reviews postsecondary education and transition opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities. The report addresses two questions.

- What postsecondary education options are available to students with developmental disabilities in Florida?
- What is the feasibility of creating a new postsecondary institution for students with developmental disabilities?

Background

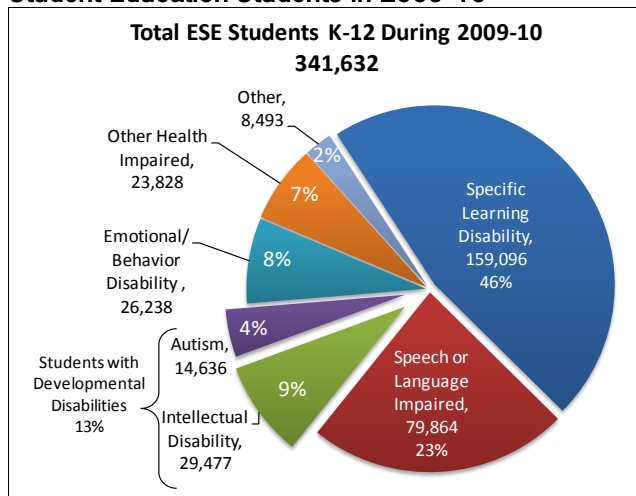
Florida school districts provide K-12 educational services to students with developmental disabilities through Exceptional Student Education (ESE) programs. Students with developmental disabilities have conditions such as mental retardation, autism, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, or Prader-Willi syndrome.^{1,2} As shown in Exhibit 1, an estimated 44,000 students in grades K-12 in 2009-10 had developmental disabilities, representing 13% of all public school students with disabilities.³

¹ Prader-Willi Syndrome is a rare genetic disorder that causes poor muscle tone, short stature, and a constant feeling of hunger that can lead to life threatening obesity in children.

² Section 393.063, *F.S.*

³ Department of Education data records do not contain a specific identifier for students with developmental disabilities. However, department staff stated that using the identifier for students with Intellectual Disabilities and/or Autism provides the best estimate

Exhibit 1 **Students with Developmental Disabilities** **Represented Approximately 13% of All Exceptional** **Student Education Students in 2009-10**



Source: Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services.

Federal and state laws require school districts' ESE programs to provide students with disabilities a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment possible until age 22 or until they receive a standard high school diploma.

Few students with developmental disabilities continue on with postsecondary education. Most of the 7,920 students with developmental disabilities who exited Florida high schools in 2007-08 received a special diploma (6,068, or 77%) rather than a standard high school diploma (187, or 2%).⁴ Without the standard high school diploma, few of these students are eligible for enrollment in college credit degree programs at state universities and colleges.⁵ They may be exempted from certain basic skills requirements to work toward a vocational certificate at a district technical center or Florida college.^{6, 7}

of the number of students with developmental disabilities.

⁴ In addition to many standard diploma options, Florida has two high school special diploma options available to students with disabilities. Other students who exited Florida high schools may have received certificates of completion, reached their 22nd birthday without completing school, or dropped out.

⁵ All state universities, Florida colleges, and district technical centers provide a range of accommodations and services to students with developmental disabilities such as mentors, interpreter services, test accommodations, and transportation on campus.

⁶ Although students who do not have a standard high school diploma must typically meet the state's "basic skills" requirement

Of the 7,920 students who exited school districts in 2007-08, 734 enrolled in postsecondary college, university, or vocational programs and 905 enrolled in adult education programs. The remaining 6,281 students with developmental disabilities did not continue on to postsecondary or adult education during the following school year.

Because so few developmentally disabled youth go on to college or university, this review explored what other postsecondary opportunities are available.

What postsecondary education options are available to students with developmental disabilities in Florida?

School districts' ESE programs provide basic transition services to students with developmental disabilities up to age 22, and a few have added programs with a postsecondary component. However, these individuals have limited opportunities for postsecondary education and vocational training beyond high school. Although they may be able to attend basic transition programs through colleges, district technical centers, or adult training centers, only three entities (the University of North Florida, Indian River State College, and Brewster Technical Center) provide postsecondary education to students no longer enrolled in ESE programs.

While all school district ESE programs provide basic transition services, some offer postsecondary education activities

School districts routinely provide basic transition services to help ESE students with developmental disabilities move into the workforce and live independently once they leave high school. At least 13 school districts have developed programs for these students that include elements of postsecondary education.

for postsecondary career certification education programs before receiving a vocational credential, students with a special diploma may be exempted from this requirement.

⁷ Rule 6A-10.040, F.A.C.

School district ESE programs provide basic transition services to students with disabilities. All 67 school districts provide basic transition services to students with developmental disabilities up to age 22 as part of their federally-funded ESE programs. As required by federal law, a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) must include appropriate post-school goals related to education, employment, and independent living, and the transition services necessary to attain this outcome.⁸

Basic transition services may include academic, career, or community-based instruction, support services, community activities, employment training, and independent living activities. Appendix A provides some examples of school district programs that provide basic transition services for ESE students.

As part of the IEP process, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is available to help students age 16 and older find and maintain competitive employment once they leave high school. Students or school officials can initiate a request for a conference with a vocational rehabilitation counselor to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment. This plan must lead to competitive employment and may include postsecondary education if needed to pursue a specific job. The division reviews these plans and determines whether the student meets criteria for immediate services or is to be placed on a waiting list.^{9, 10}

Ten districts have enhanced their basic transition programs by adding more intensive employment-related training through Project SEARCH. Project SEARCH is a national transition initiative for students with developmental disabilities in their last year of high school who are seeking competitive employment. The program provides

training in independent living, employability skills, and other job-related skills and support. The program is funded by school districts, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, and the Agency for Persons with Disabilities. Currently, 10 school districts operate 18 Project SEARCH sites and serve more than 200 participants. Appendix B provides a list of Florida's Project SEARCH sites.

At least 13 school districts have added programs that include aspects of postsecondary education for students with developmental disabilities who are still enrolled in ESE programs. In response to our survey of the 67 Florida school districts, these 13 school districts identified programs with elements of postsecondary education, such as vocational certificates and opportunities to audit classes and participate in campus activities with non-disabled postsecondary students. The districts have partnered with other entities, such as state universities, private universities, and district technical centers, to provide these programs. The programs are supported by school district ESE funds, and students can participate until they reach age 22 or receive a standard high school diploma. The districts and programs use a variety of criteria to select students for participation, including the type of high school credential earned by the student, students' specific disabilities, and/or student interviews.

In addition to focusing on independent living skills, these programs include varying levels of postsecondary campus, classroom, and vocational training activities, as shown in Exhibit 2. For example, the Bradford Transition Academy at Bradford-Union Technical Center provides training for specific jobs. The program awards each student a modified certificate of industry certification that lists competencies and skills the student has acquired in a career area the student has chosen, such as food handling. In Polk County, the district partners with three universities and two technical centers to provide students a variety of postsecondary opportunities, such as auditing classes, participating in activities on campus with non-disabled students, and receiving vocational training in Brick and Block Masonry or Environmental Sciences.

⁸ Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Public Law 108-446; Section 504 Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

⁹ The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation assigns applicants one of three levels of needs: priority 1, 2, or 3. The division approves services for all individuals meeting the criteria for priority 1 or 2, but keeps a waiting list of more than 2,000 individuals deemed priority 3. These individuals typically have short-term injuries.

¹⁰ If the plan includes a postsecondary component, the institution must be a sub-grant vendor for the division and be accredited by an agency approved by the U.S. Department of Education to receive any vocational rehabilitation funding for the student.

Exhibit 2**At Least 13 School Districts Offer Programs with Aspects of Postsecondary Education to a Limited Number of Students with Developmental Disabilities Who Are Still Enrolled in ESE Programs**

Name of Program	School District	Postsecondary Activities	Annual Enrollment
ACCESS Program at Atlantic Technical Center and Sheridan Technical Center	Broward County	Audit classes, participate in job-sampling and employment internships, and receive assistance with job placement	32
Access to College and Community Environments in Preparation for Transition (Project ACCEPT) at Miami-Dade College	Miami-Dade School District	Audit classes, participate in social integration and work experience activities	Not available
Bradford Transition Academy at Bradford Union Technical Center	Bradford Union School District	Audit classes, receive modified certifications in selected areas from vocational programs, gain work experience on campus	16
College Transition Program at the University of Central Florida	Seminole County School District ¹	Audit classes, participate in internships, and gain work experience in paid positions	10
Lively Transition Program at Lively Technical Center	Leon County School District	Attend vocational classes, receive job experience in both paid and unpaid employment	23
Lynn University Transition Program	Palm Beach School District	Audit classes, receive training from job coaches, participate in non-paid job rotation and activities with non-disabled students; three-year curriculum	12
Real World Employability Skills at Charlotte Technical Center	Charlotte County	Participate in activities that teach social and work skills for employment through construction, gardening, food services, woodworking, auto detailing, office and retail work; receive training from job coaches	12
Transition Program ²	Polk County School District	Audit classes, work on campus, vocational training in Brick and Block Masonry and Environmental Sciences, participate in student activities	Approximately 13
Successful Transition After Graduation for Exceptional Students (STAGES) at the University of South Florida	Hillsborough County School District	Work in paid and unpaid positions on campus and participate in class activities in the special education college, computer labs, and the Best Buddies program	16
STEPS at St. Leo University (district also offers additional programs at Marchman Technical Center)	Pasco County School District	Audit classes and perform selected jobs on campus	10
STING RAY at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg	Pinellas County School District	Audit classes and participate in campus life	6
Transition Academy at Withlacoochee Technical Institute	Citrus County School District	Receive vocational training in Culinary Arts, Auto Maintenance, Carpentry, and Computers; participate in unpaid employment	30 to 35
Transitions School to Work at Partnership Flagler Technical Institute	Flagler County School District	Audit classes, earn occupational completion points through a modified curriculum, participate in internships and jobs at local businesses and on campus	10

¹ Services for students from the Seminole County School District are supported by ESE funding. Although some students from the Orange County School District attend, services for these students are funded by McKay Scholarships rather than ESE funding.

² The program operates at five sites: Southeastern University, Warner University, Ridge Technical Center, Travis Technical Center, and the University of South Florida. Each site offers different opportunities, including some specialized vocational programs for students with developmental disabilities. In addition, Southeastern University has been working with the Polk School District in recent months to create a post-secondary program for students who age out of the public schools.

Source: OPPAGA survey of school districts.

Individuals with developmental disabilities have limited options for postsecondary education after leaving ESE programs

Three entities (one state university, one state college, and one school district technical center) offer postsecondary education programs to students with developmental disabilities who are no longer enrolled in district ESE programs. In addition, nine colleges and five technical centers offer basic transition programs on postsecondary campuses.

The University of North Florida offers postsecondary education that gives students with developmental disabilities a traditional college experience. The University of North Florida's On-Campus Transition Program provides eligible students with developmental disabilities the opportunity to live on campus and experience college while receiving individualized education services. Students audit classes with non-disabled students, participate in student activities, work on or off campus, learn independent living skills, and live in student housing.

The program is small and only a few students have enrolled and completed the program. During the five years the program has operated, 42 students have enrolled and 12 students have graduated with a certificate of completion.

The program is funded by the university, the Jacksonville Association of Retarded Citizens, and private donations and grants. Although students can use McKay Scholarship funds for tuition, they must privately pay for housing and living expenses. The program is open to students who have completed high school and not received a standard diploma. Participants must meet other admissions criteria.¹¹

A state college and a technical center provide postsecondary education that awards workforce certificates to students with developmental disabilities. Indian River State College in Vero Beach and Brewster Technical

Center in Tampa offer Postsecondary Adult Vocational certificates of completion in specific workforce areas for students with developmental disabilities ages 18 and over.¹² Both programs focus on workforce training and securing competitive employment. For example, students at Brewster Technical Center can elect to learn merchandising skills needed to work at a department store through on-site job training, such as stocking shelves and pricing merchandise. Students at Indian River State College receive career preparatory instruction geared for students with disabilities and may pursue occupational training and/or industry certifications depending on their skill levels. The two programs also aim to enhance employability and life skills and provide students workforce training opportunities.

Indian River State College offers its program at three locations and receives support from several community partners and the college's adults with disabilities grant. Brewster Technical Center's program is supported by local business partnerships and workforce education funding. In 2010-11, Indian River State College's program enrolled 92 students, while Brewster Technical Center's program enrolled 75 students.

Nine state colleges and five district technical centers offer basic transition services on postsecondary campuses for adults with developmental disabilities. Although the programs do not provide vocational certification, students receive the experience of attending transition programs on a postsecondary campus.

As with the transition services provided to ESE students, the programs teach employability skills such as how to complete a job application, and offer computer instruction and other courses to maintain basic math and reading skills, as well as independent living and communication skills. Programs may also provide a job coach to assist students in selecting a career path and gaining employment in that field.

¹¹ Students must be eligible for receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), be able to travel independently while on the college campus, and have had two paid or unpaid community work experiences.

¹² These programs use the Florida Department of Education's Curriculum Framework for Vocational Education for Students with Disabilities, which includes on-site job training.

These college and district programs are funded through the state's Adults with Disabilities grant and work with community partners such as local Associations of Retarded Citizens and United Cerebral Palsy. The district technical centers may also receive state workforce funding. Appendix C lists these programs.

What is the feasibility of creating a new postsecondary institution for students with developmental disabilities?

There are advantages and disadvantages to a recent stakeholder proposal to create a postsecondary institution for students with developmental disabilities. Depending on how the proposal was implemented, the state would need to provide recurring operational funds ranging from an estimated \$1.2 million to \$40 million, plus an initial investment of \$36 million if the state pays the full cost of construction.

Creating a new public postsecondary or vocational institution for students with developmental disabilities has several advantages and disadvantages

During the 2010 Legislative Session, stakeholders proposed creating a new residential vocational institution dedicated to providing postsecondary education and vocational training to students with developmental disabilities. Under this proposal, the Legislature would authorize and provide funding to construct and support the new institution, and have the discretion to establish the institution's mission and admission criteria and the type of credentials it will award to students. The institution would operate on an independent campus.

Although a postsecondary institution specifically for students with developmental disabilities would give students who are no longer enrolled in ESE programs an additional option for postsecondary education and address some current barriers to expanding access to these programs, it would limit students' interaction

with non-disabled students and could jeopardize their eligibility for federal student assistance.

Establishing a separate postsecondary institution for students with developmental disabilities has some potential benefits. As proposed, the new institution would give students who have left district ESE programs an additional opportunity to attend postsecondary education. Students of all ages could attend because the institution would not be restricted by the current age limit of 22 for programs dependent on federal ESE funds. In addition, students could attend if they do not have standard diplomas and were thus not eligible for admission to a state university or college. The proposed institution could be designed to accommodate a larger number of students than the existing postsecondary education programs. Stakeholders' initial proposal was for the state to construct an institution to accommodate 500 to 1,000 students and include residential facilities so that students could attend regardless of whether they lived in the area, although later proposals did not include state funding for residential facilities.

Some stakeholders believe that certain students would be best served in a separate community with their disabled peers. Some parents feel more comfortable with having their adult children in this type of setting rather than on a larger, traditional college campus. In addition, the mission and resources of postsecondary institutions that serve non-disabled students may not be consistent with providing education services to students with cognitive disabilities.

If established, the institution could help address some barriers to expanding the state's existing postsecondary programs for students with developmental disabilities. Staff of these programs reported that limited availability of transportation, lack of funding for residential facilities, and small teacher-to-student ratios restrict their current programs from expanding. For example, the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind is the only education institution in Florida that provides instruction, room, board, and transportation to a special needs population, and has teacher-to-student ratios of 1:10 for high school students in

the classroom.¹³ Postsecondary programs for students with developmental disabilities in other states we contacted reported teacher-to-student ratios ranging from 1:2 to 1:8.

Creating a separate postsecondary institution devoted to students with developmental disabilities has some potential drawbacks. A separate institution for students with developmental disabilities would provide limited opportunities for the students to participate in academic and social activities with non-disabled students. This type of institution would be inconsistent with emerging national trends to incorporate programs for these students into existing postsecondary institutions. Most postsecondary programs in other states provide opportunities for students with developmental disabilities to participate in classes and activities with non-disabled students. While these programs vary considerably in curriculum and services, students spend at least 50% of their time on campus with non-disabled students.¹⁴ Students may interact with non-disabled students in various settings such as classrooms, other campus activities, and living facilities. Appendix D provides more information about postsecondary programs in other states.

In addition, students with developmental disabilities who enroll in an institution solely devoted to this population may not have access to federal student assistance. To receive federal financial aid, students must attend a comprehensive transition program that requires students with intellectual disabilities to participate in courses and activities on at least a half-time basis with individuals without disabilities.^{15, 16} Institutions that offer residential

facilities must also provide integrated housing opportunities where developmentally disabled students live in the same dorms with non-disabled peers. Moreover, to be eligible for federal vocational rehabilitation funding, students must enroll in an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.¹⁷ Only one separate postsecondary institution in another state we contacted, the Riverview School in Massachusetts, was accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

State costs for a new public postsecondary institution would vary considerably depending on how it was implemented

State costs to create a new postsecondary institution for students with developmental disabilities would vary depending on how the proposal was implemented. Cost estimates range from a high of \$36 million for construction plus \$40 million or more in recurring operational funds, down to \$1.2 million in recurring funds for a much smaller institution that uses leased space.

Stakeholders' initial proposal required state funding to construct a new postsecondary institution for students with developmental disabilities. Stakeholders proposed that the state fund construction and the recurring costs of a new postsecondary institution for 500 to 1,000 students, but the proposal did not include funding estimates. We estimated that the cost of construction would be approximately \$36 million for a new facility that would accommodate 600 students in classrooms and include 400 student beds. These estimated costs include classrooms (\$17.5 million) and a

¹³ The school serves students from ages 5 to 22 regardless of whether they live near the campus or in other areas around the state. The campus serves approximately 600 students, with more than 400 living on campus.

¹⁴ The time students spend with non-disabled students may include internships or other activities outside of the classroom.

¹⁵ The newly reauthorized Higher Education Act gives students with intellectual disabilities eligibility for Pell Grants, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, and the Federal Work-Study Program if they attend a comprehensive transition program where students with intellectual disabilities participate on at least a half-time basis with individuals without disabilities.

¹⁶ To be eligible for students to receive federal student aid, an institution must already participate in federal student aid programs and offer an approved comprehensive transition and

postsecondary program. Approved programs must provide academic, career and technical, and independent living instruction to prepare students with intellectual disabilities for gainful employment, and require students with intellectual disabilities to participate at least half-time in academic components with non-disabled students. Other requirements include partnering with one or more local educational agencies to support students who are still eligible for special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and offering students a meaningful credential.

¹⁷ Students may use vocational rehabilitation funding for postsecondary education if the education will assist them in securing competitive employment.

residence hall (\$18.5 million).¹⁸ The Legislature could choose to reduce the state's upfront costs to \$17.5 million for the classrooms by authorizing the institution to use bonds to finance construction costs for the residence hall. The institution could make bond payments by charging students fees for room and board. This is similar to how most state universities fund residence construction projects.

Recurring costs when the institution became operational would vary widely depending on the number of students enrolled, the number of staff, the amount of tuition and fees charged to students, and the extent to which the institution receives funding from other sources such as private donations. Because the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind serves a similar number (600) of students with disabilities, its recurring costs can serve as a baseline estimate of the potential recurring costs of a school for students with developmental disabilities. The state provided the school almost \$40 million in Fiscal Year 2010-11 for general operations.¹⁹ Because the School for the Deaf and Blind's teacher-to-student ratio is higher than the ratios of the schools for the developmentally disabled in other states, actual recurring costs are likely to be higher.

¹⁸ We estimated the cost to construct classrooms using a 2008 high school construction project designed to serve 600 students. We estimated construction costs for a residence hall using a 2010 approved construction project at a state university for a residence hall with 400 student beds. We used these sources because they provided the most recent projections available for constructing educational facilities that would accommodate student enrollment close to the amount proposed by stakeholders.

¹⁹ State funding includes tuition, room and board, transportation, and medical care.

However, students do not pay tuition or fees to attend the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind. State costs for the new postsecondary institution for developmental disabilities could be reduced if the institution charged tuition and fees. These costs could also be reduced by seeking funding from grants or private sources.

Stakeholders later proposed a lower cost alternative based on leasing classroom space for a smaller institution. The institution would lease space from an existing facility and accommodate up to 50 students. Stakeholders estimated that they would need \$1.2 million in recurring funding from the state to cover instruction and administrative costs under this proposal. The proposal includes having students pay \$5,000 or more in tuition and fees each year, although the Legislature would have the authority to determine this amount if this were a state-funded public institution. This proposal does not include student housing and living expenses.

While this proposal would accommodate fewer students than stakeholders initially proposed, it would greatly reduce the initial state costs and expedite the program's start date. However, without a residential component, students would be less able to attend if they reside in other areas of the state.

OPPAGA supports the Florida Legislature by providing data, evaluative research, and objective analyses that assist legislative budget and policy deliberations. This project was conducted in accordance with applicable evaluation standards. Copies of this report in print or alternate accessible format may be obtained by telephone (850/488-0021 or 800/531-2477), by FAX (850/487-3804), in person, or by mail (OPPAGA Report Production, Claude Pepper Building, Room 312, 111 W. Madison St., Tallahassee, FL 32399-1475). Cover photo by Mark Foley.

OPPAGA Website: www.oppaga.state.fl.us

Project conducted by Byron Brown, Michelle Harrison, Amelia Parnell, Glenda Rabby, Emily Sikes, and Brian Underhill
Tim Elwell (850/487-9228), Staff Director, Education Policy Area
Kathy McGuire, OPPAGA Interim Director

Appendix A

Examples of School Districts' Basic Transition Programs for Students in Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Programs

All Florida school districts provide basic transition programs for students enrolled in ESE programs. These programs may include academic, career, or community-based instruction, support services, community activities, employment training, and independent living activities. Table A-1 provides some examples of these programs.

Table A-1
School Districts' Basic Transition Programs Help ESE Students with Developmental Disabilities Develop Independent Living and Employment-Related Skills

School District	Program Name	Description
Brevard	Learner Empowerment through Agency Partnerships (LEAP)	Provides 10 community training sites where mentors strive to improve individuals' self determination and life skills needed to obtain self-sufficiency and enhance their potential, especially for employment and independent living
Broward	Post-graduate Alternatives for Secondary Students (PASS)	Places students in a variety of workplace internship experiences on a rotating basis during the first two years of the program; assesses students in the various work experiences in an effort to identify the type of work where the student will experience the most success as an adult
Duval	Supported Competitive Employment Program	Focuses on employment placement and training; uses a district job coach to provide one-on-one training on positive attendance, job skills, and appropriate work behaviors; provides follow-up support to ensure employer satisfaction
Orange	Post High School Classes	Offers an intensive job-skills program that provides school-to-work transition classes at four sites at which a teacher and at least one job coach provide training; operates as a collaborative effort between the School District and the business
Palm Beach	Therapeutic Recreation Transition Program (TRIP)	Helps students continue to develop social and independent living skills while in a community business environment; provides job training in culinary operations, grounds-keeping, custodial work, and housekeeping; offers students who successfully complete training the opportunity to participate in non-paid apprenticeships while they rotate through various jobs at local hotel or resort settings

Source: Responses to OPPAGA survey and telephone interviews with program administrators.

Appendix B

Project SEARCH High School Transition Programs

Project SEARCH is a national school-to-work transition program available to students with developmental disabilities in their last year of high school whose main career objective is competitive employment. Table B-1 provides a list of Florida's 18 Project SEARCH sites, businesses and other entities that partner with the school districts, and the number of students enrolled during the 2010-11 school year.

Table B-1
Florida has 18 Project SEARCH High School Transition Programs

Host Business or Other Entity	School District	Number of Students Enrolled During the 2010-11 School Year
Baptist Hospital	Escambia County School District	12
Bethesda Hospital	Palm Beach County School District	14
Bethesda Hospital Service Center	Palm Beach County School District	12
Cape Canaveral Hospital	Brevard County School District	12
City of Hialeah	Miami-Dade County School District	11
City of Miami	Miami-Dade County School District	12
Florida Hospital East	Orange County School District	10
Florida Hospital Winter Park	Orange County School District	10
Gulf Breeze Hospital	Santa Rosa County School District	10
Holmes Regional Medical Center	Brevard County School District	12
Leon County Commissioner's Office	Leon County School District	11
Martin Memorial Hospital	Martin County School District	12
Miami Dade County Zoo	Miami-Dade County School District	12
Miramar Hospital	Broward County School District	11
Rosen Shingle Creek	Orange County School District	12
Santa Rosa Hospital	Santa Rosa County School District	12
Shands Hospital/University of Florida	Duval County School District	12
University of West Florida	Escambia County School District	11
Total Students Enrolled		208

Source: Florida Project Search.

Appendix C

Basic Transition Programs for Adults at Colleges and School District Technical Centers

Five school district technical centers and nine state colleges reported that they offer transition programs on postsecondary campuses for adult students who have moved beyond high school ESE programs. These programs teach employability skills, computer instruction, and other courses to maintain basic math and reading skills, as well as independent living and communication skills. Table C-1 shows the programs offered by school district technical centers and Table C-2 shows the programs offered by state colleges. The tables include a description of the program and the number of students enrolled during 2010-11 school year. Table C-2 also includes grant amounts the colleges used to fund these programs.

Table C-1
Five School District Technical Centers Provide Basic Transition Programs for Adults with Developmental Disabilities

District Technical Center	Program Name	Program Description	Number of Students Enrolled During the 2010-11 School Year
Brewster Technical Center, Hillsborough County	Programs for Adults with Disabilities	Offers a job club, sewing initiative training, and computer training	215
Lorenzo Walker Institute of Technology, Collier County	Project Explore-Moorings-Park	Provides job coaches and training opportunities at a retirement/nursing care facility	23
Sarasota County Technical Institute	Adults with Disabilities	Offers a variety of activities for students to learn food service, retail, customer service and other kinds of work habits and situations	59
Taylor Technical Institute, Taylor County	Special Needs Adult Program (SNAP)	Offers training in a classroom that is set up in home-like environment and students can attend vocational classes	19
Technical Educational Center, Osceola County	Career and Skills Enrichment (C.A.S.E.) Program	Provides hands-on training in classrooms and labs in jobs that include culinary stewards, culinary preparations, auto maintenance, auto detailing, and commercial sewing; offers job developers and job coaches	48

Source: Responses to OPPAGA survey of school districts.

Table C-2
Nine State Colleges Provide Basic Transition Programs for Adults with Developmental Disabilities

State College	Program Description	Number of Students Enrolled During the 2009-10 School Year	Adults with Disabilities Grant Funding for the 2010-11 School Year
College of Central Florida	Offers class that meets twice weekly to cover both life skills and special topics	19	30,756
Daytona State College	Provides employment preparation	520	262,120
Florida State College at Jacksonville	Provides referral services	270	226,644
Pensacola State College	Focuses on involvement in campus activities and job development in cooperation with community partners	93	33,218
Santa Fe College	Holds classes on campus; offers students the opportunity to use campus resources such as the library	65	\$65,330
Seminole State College	Introduces students to education and vocational training opportunities and assists with job searches and work assessments	130	57,580
South Florida Community College	Focuses on environmental services, nursery operations, and skill development	94	217,394
St. Johns River Community College	Reinforces skills needed for job placement	63	39,861
Tallahassee Community College	Provides recreation and active leisure learning activities and information on vocational training opportunities	35	35,281
Total		2,141	\$968,184

Source: Responses to OPPAGA survey of state colleges and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Appendix D

Examples of Postsecondary Transition Programs in Other States

Postsecondary institutions in several states offer postsecondary education programs to students with developmental disabilities that go beyond basic employability and life skills training.¹ Although these programs emphasize skills for independent living, they also offer a formal curriculum that typically leads to a certificate of completion or other credential.

There are two primary types of postsecondary education programs.

- **Separate schools** where all of the students are developmentally disabled, although there may be opportunity for the students to audit college or vocational classes with non-disabled students.
- **Programs incorporated into existing post-secondary institutions that serve all students**, with a curriculum especially designed for the developmentally disabled. These students can participate in campus life with non-disabled students, and may audit general education classes with other students or work toward vocational certification. However, there is typically a core of courses that are designed for the students with developmental disabilities.

All of these programs provide academic, vocational, and life skills training, but the programs' focus and settings differ.

Substantially separate programs provide services to students in isolated settings at postsecondary institutions. A few organizations offer programs that are solely focused on educating students with development disabilities.² These programs are on separate, independent campuses, and students participate in classes, social activities, and on-campus employment with other students with developmental disabilities. The programs use defined selection criteria that include IQ thresholds and rely on personal interviews with students and parents to determine which prospective students should be admitted. Programs using this approach include life skills, vocational training, and work experience in their curriculum and award students a completion certificate when they finish. The programs are typically supported by student tuition and fees and some private donations. Cost per student at the institutions we contacted ranged from \$31,000 to \$68,000 per year. Interactions with non-disabled students primarily occur through internships, jobs, and social activities. In some cases, community partnerships may allow selected students to audit college classes or participate in vocational training at a technical center.

Programs incorporated into existing post-secondary institutions allow students with developmental disabilities to participate in and the campus environment and activities with non-disabled students. Think College lists approximately 140 programs nationwide that provide postsecondary education services to students.³ While these programs vary considerably in curriculum and services, students spend at least 50% of their time on

¹ To gather information about the different types of programs available in other states, we interviewed program directors and national stakeholders and reviewed literature about programs in other states.

² We identified four programs that are exclusively for students with developmental/intellectual disabilities, conduct classes on their campus, and include a residential component.

³ Think College is a project of the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts and focuses on postsecondary education for individuals with developmental disabilities. The project is funded by three federal grants.

campus with non-disabled students.⁴ Students may interact with non-disabled students in various settings such as classrooms, other campus activities, and living facilities. Students are encouraged to follow their own academic and vocational interests rather than a predetermined track or curriculum. While there are currently no established standards, curricula, or outcomes for these programs, federal agencies and other stakeholders are in the process of developing standards for this model.⁵ Cost per student at the programs we contacted ranged from \$8,000 to \$30,000.

Table D provides eight examples of public and private postsecondary programs available for students with developmental disabilities in other states. Four programs operate as separate or independent programs and serve only students with developmental disabilities. The other four programs are provided by institutions that primarily serve non-disabled students, and provide postsecondary academic, vocational, and life skills training for students with developmental disabilities within an existing college or university setting.

⁴ The time students spend with non-disabled students may include internships or other activities outside of the classroom.

⁵ Other stakeholders include the U.S. Department of Education and Think College.

Table D
Some Other States Have Postsecondary Transition Programs for Students with Developmental Disabilities

Name of Institution	Type of Program and Postsecondary Institution	Length of Program	Residential Component	Curriculum	Type of Certificate Awarded	Enrollment and Age of Students	Cost
Horizons School, Birmingham, AL Horizonsschool.org	Separate postsecondary institution, Private	Three years, during the 3 rd year, students focus on community transition	Students pay \$10,000 per year to live in apartments	Applied communication, shopping and nutrition, cooking, mobility, health management, working skills and supervision needs	Certificate of completion	38 students, ages 18 to 25	Tuition is \$21,000 a year, room and board is separate.
Minnesota Life College, Richfield, MN Minnesotalifecollege.org	Separate postsecondary institution, Private	Three years, during the 3 rd year, students work to obtain a permanent job	Students required to live on campus	Life skills, social and physical wellness, self-understanding; vocational skills curriculum and volunteer work opportunities; also provides a graduate living community for graduates who want to continue career development services	Certificate of completion; also partners with a community technical college for those inclined to pursue vocational certificates	29 students, ages 18 to 26, in undergraduate program	Tuition is \$42,000 a year, which includes all expenses. Foundation and private financial support from founders supplements tuition.
Riverview School, Cape Cod, MA Riverviewschool.org	Separate postsecondary institution, Private ¹	Three years, the 3 rd year is a work internship	Housing is included in tuition	Both academic and vocational skill development, as well as independent living skills training	Certificate of completion; possible to take college credit or vocational classes	90 students, ages 18 to 22	Tuition is \$60,000 a year, which includes housing.
Shepherds College, Union Grove, WI Shepherdscollege.org	Separate postsecondary institution, Private faith-based	Three years, the 3 rd year is a work internship	Most Students live on campus ²	Life skills including functional academics, mobility, spiritual life, daily living, and social/emotional skills; vocational classes in culinary arts and horticulture	Certificate of completion	26 students, ages 18 to 34	Tuition is \$30,125 a year. Good Shepherd Ministries provides supplemental support.
15 Cutting Edge Program Edgewood College, Madison, WI Edgewood.edu	Incorporated into existing postsecondary institution, Private faith-based.	Four years, but students are not limited as to how long they stay	Varies; some live on campus, but no special housing	Individually designed, but 5 core Cutting Edge credits per semester; students audit general education courses	Each student has a 'portfolio' at the end of each semester that can be shown to prospective employers	13 students, ages unknown	Tuition is \$692 per course credit; does not include any living expenses.
Threshold Program, Lesley University, Cambridge, MA Lesley.edu	Incorporated into existing postsecondary institution, Private	Two years, with an optional 3 rd transition year	Residence houses	Life Skills and vocational skills, with vocational training in Business and Support Services and Early Childhood Studies	Certificate of completion and six college credits	50 students	Varies by year, but first year tuition is \$35,150. Room, board, and health insurance are additional, as well as some fees.
Academy for Inclusive Adult Education, Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw, Georgia Kennesaw.edu	Incorporated into existing postsecondary institution, Public	Two-year program	Beginning in Fall of 2011, students will be able to live on campus	Life skills, fitness, job shadowing, independent study, and work study working with peer mentors	Certificate of Social Growth and Development	9 students, ages 18 to 25	Tuition and fees are \$2,853 per semester; does not include living expenses.
Transition to Independent Living, Taft Community College, Taft, California Taftcollege.edu	Incorporated into existing postsecondary institution, Public	Two-year program	Freshmen live in campus dorm; then mixture of college operated and off-campus housing	Life skills instruction, training, and experience in social and leisure, functional daily activities, career, and transition to independent living	Certificate of completion	51 students, ages 18 to 32	\$30,000 tuition is paid by the California Department of Developmental Services and a Medicaid waiver. Students pay room and board.

¹ Riverview School also has a secondary school on the same campus.

² One student at Shepherds College lives off campus.

Source: OPPAGA interviews with program administrators in other states.

The Florida Legislature

Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability



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Project conducted by Byron Brown, Michelle Harrison, Amelia Parnell, Glenda Rabby, Emily Sikes, and Brian Underhill
Tim Elwell, Education Policy Area Staff Director (850/487-9228)
Kathy McGuire, Interim Director