

Carol A. Beatty, Secretary
Christian J. Miele, Deputy Secretary

Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor



September 30, 2021

The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan
State House 100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson
President
Senate of Maryland
State House, H-107
Annapolis MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker
Maryland House of Delegates
State House, H-101
Annapolis MD 21401

Re: Report required by Executive Order 01.01.2007.13 Governor's Interagency Transition Council for Youth with Disabilities

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Pursuant to Executive Order 01.01.2007.13 Governor's Interagency Transition Council for Youth with Disabilities, the Maryland Department of Disabilities and the Maryland Department of Education-Division of Rehabilitation Services submit the Governor's Interagency Transition Council for Youth with Disabilities: 2021 Report.

If further information is required, please do not hesitate to contact Elizabeth Hall, Director of Interagency Affairs, Maryland Department of Disabilities. She may be reached at (410) 767-3652.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carol A. Beatty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carol A. Beatty

cc: Sarah Albert, Department of Legislative Services (5 copies)

GOVERNOR'S INTERAGENCY TRANSITION COUNCIL FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

2021 REPORT

Co-chair, Carol A. Beatty, Secretary, Maryland Department of Disabilities

Co-chair, Scott A. Dennis, Assistant State Superintendent, Maryland State Department of
Education Division of Rehabilitation Services

Submitted September 30, 2021

I. BACKGROUND

The Interagency Transition Council for Youth with Disabilities (IATC) was first created on December 7, 2000 to improve the postsecondary outcomes of youths with disabilities in Maryland. It was reconstituted on August 7, 2007 by Executive Order 01.01.2007.13.

The primary responsibility of the IATC is to review, revise and update annually the Interagency State Plan for Transitioning Youth with Disabilities to ensure effective interagency planning and delivery of services for secondary students with disabilities. Additionally, the IATC is tasked with identifying and reporting activities of each partner which impact the delivery, quality and availability of transition services. The IATC also serves in an advisory capacity to all transition-related federal grants.

The IATC met two times during the reporting period: October 20, 2020 and March 23, 2021.

State Agency Acronyms Used in this Report

- BHA – Behavioral Health Administration, Maryland Department of Health
- DBM – Department of Budget and Management
- DDA – Developmental Disabilities Administration, Maryland Department of Health
- DHS – Department of Human Services
- MDH – Maryland Department of Health
- Maryland Labor – Maryland Department of Labor
- DORS – Division of Rehabilitation Services, Maryland State Department of Education
- GOCPYVS - Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, & Victim Services
- GWDB – Governor’s Workforce Development Board
- MDOD – Maryland Department of Disabilities
- MHEC – Maryland Higher Education Commission
- MSDE – Maryland State Department of Education

II. SIGNIFICANT POLICY CHANGES

Workforce Investment Opportunities Act

The work of IATC partner agencies, particularly MSDE, Maryland Labor, DHS, MDH/DDA, MDH/BHA, and GWDB, continues to be significantly impacted by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which went into effect July 1, 2015. The intention of this federal law was to improve employment outcomes for youth, particularly out-of-school youth (those who had left high school) and included a new emphasis on serving youth with disabilities.¹

WIOA places a priority on providing services to youth with disabilities. Youth with disabilities ages 16 -24 who are not attending school are eligible for out-of-school services. Youth with disabilities up to age of 21 are eligible for in-school services if they are low-income or meet other eligibility criteria. WIOA also represents new opportunities for support for young job seekers with disabilities by increasing the responsibility of Workforce Investment Boards and American Job Centers to be fully accessible and offer necessary accommodations to provide job seekers with disabilities effective and meaningful participation in the use of skills training and career development. WIOA also requires vocational rehabilitation agencies to set aside 15% of their federal funds to provide pre-employment transition services specifically to “Students with Disabilities.” Maryland state agencies continue to implement the new WIOA requirements.

Maryland ABLE Program

¹ WIOA’s Title I Youth Program funds, which are targeted at young adults classified as either “in-school” or “out-of-school,” are intended to assist in career and educational development. These funds are allocated to states by the U.S. Department of Labor according to a formula. WIOA preserved many aspects of youth services previously provided under the Workforce Investment Act, but made key changes, including: increasing the amount of youth services funds that must be spent on out-of-school youth; expanding the age of eligibility for out-of-school services; making disability a core category for eligibility for all youth services; and expanding the required youth services program elements. Under WIOA, at least 75% of federally allocated Title I Youth Program funds now must be used for out-of-school youth, an increase from the 30% required under WIA. The types of services funded include training and youth development programs for young people who have left school, as well as after-school services and employment supports for young people still in school. Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) now must spend at least 20% of WIOA Title I Youth Program funds on work experiences that incorporate academic and occupational education.

Governor Hogan signed the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act ([HB431](#)) on April 12, 2016 enabling Maryland to begin building an ABLE program. The Maryland ABLE program is implemented by Maryland 529 and officially launched in November 2017. Maryland ABLE is pursuing a state-partnership to make available tax-advantaged savings accounts for Marylanders with disabilities, allowing individuals to save money for qualified disability expenses without jeopardizing state and federal means-tested benefits.

Maryland ABLE account features include:

- Saving up to \$100,000 in your ABLE account before impacting SSI limits for cash benefits
- Saving money in your ABLE account without jeopardizing state and federal means-tested benefits such as Medicaid, food, or housing assistance
- \$2,500 state income tax deduction per filer and up to \$5,000 for joint filers
- \$14,000 annual contribution limit
- \$350,000 lifetime contribution limit

Since the beginning of 2017, Maryland ABLE has expanded outreach to Marylanders with disabilities, family members, and agencies and organizations. Through presentations and expos, the program has connected with 36,940 Marylanders. In addition, Maryland ABLE established an active social media presence on Facebook & Twitter, expanded their email marketing list to a total of 28,237 contacts. At the end of FY21 Maryland ABLE had 3,490 beneficiaries, thirty-five million dollars in total assets and 97% of account holders were Marylanders.

Learn more at <https://www.marylandable.org/>

III. GRANT AWARDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Evidence-Based Behavioral Health Programs

BHA oversaw the 2014 Healthy Transitions which ended in Sept 2019 and ended up serving 276 out of 380 Transition-Age Youth in Howard and Southern MD Tri-Region area, so we met 76.7% of our goal. BHA applied for the 2019 Healthy Transitions (HT) and was awarded the grant in March 2019, to end in March 2024. HT continues as a program for youth ages 16-25 with serious mental health conditions. [1] The goal of the initiative is to create a seamless transition for participants moving from youth to adult services. Services include intensive treatment, community interventions, and family supports. Qualitative and quantitative data will be collected. The grant covers Anne Arundel County and MidShore Region (Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot counties). MD-HT service providers are Arundel Lodge and Crossroads Community. As of June 30, 2020, MD HT served 52 unduplicated individuals to date, reaching 14% of their goal to serve 380 unduplicated individuals. MD-HT has provided Outreach and Education to 9,215 individuals through at least 130 events. Due to the COVID pandemic resulting in increased virtual and remote service delivery, the number of social media contacts has greatly expanded compared to the previous two iterations of the HT-MD grant.

BHA continues to participate in studies related to research around disability, independent living, and rehabilitation. BHA worked with researchers on adaptations to the model and fidelity tool for Supported Employment in Maryland for use with Transition-Age Youth which was published in 2020.

The Maryland Work-Based Learning Collaborative

The Maryland Work-Based Learning Collaborative, coined Way2Work Maryland, was a five year project funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Education and awarded to the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) in October 2016. DORS partnered with the Local Education Agencies, Community Rehabilitation Partners, American Job Centers, the Maryland Department of Labor, the University of Maryland, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., and employers to implement a comprehensive project featuring work-based learning components to improve career outcomes for youth with disabilities. 401 students were recruited; 200 students randomized to the model intervention, and 201 students to the control group. The Way2Work work-based learning experiences (WBLES) for the 200 randomized students were required to be completed in community-integrated settings, for a minimum of 4 weeks duration, and authorized by DORS. WBLES were customized for the individual student and aligned with career-related interests and skills. In all, 87% of students had at least one WBLE, and 74% had at least two, with an average of 2.5

WBLEs per enrolled student. Of note, is that during their enrollment in Way2Work, 44% of the students secured a paid job, frequently as a result of the WBLE converting into a job. The majority of the WBLEs were funded by a stipend from DORS (54%), with 24% of WBLEs being paid by the employer or business.

The conclusion of the project noted no significant difference between treatment and comparison conditions on post-secondary enrollment and competitive employment at high school graduation which could be attributed to several factors. However, students enrolled in the treatment condition were 8 percentage points more likely to successfully graduate from high school (either diploma or Certificate of completion) compared to students in the comparison or control condition.

IV. INTERAGENCY STATE PLAN FOR YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES: GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Interagency State Plan underwent annual review at the June 11, 2019 meeting. The three major goals comprising the strategic plan are:

1. Students will have the access, opportunity, and support needed to explore employment before leaving high school
2. Students with disabilities have access, opportunity and support to attend postsecondary education and/or training programs after-school
3. Students with disabilities, their families, and other stakeholders have the information, resources, and support needed to successfully transition from school to work, post-secondary education or training programs, and/or the community

The following pages contain descriptions of the strategies that were implemented to support these goals, and the progress IATC partner agencies have made in reaching these goals.

EMPLOYMENT

GOAL

- Students will have the access, opportunity, and support needed to explore employment before leaving high school

OUTCOME

- Every student with a disability will exit school prepared for competitive, integrated employment.

STRATEGIES

- **Support opportunities for students to have paid jobs in their communities while still in school.**
- **Increase the knowledge and understanding of students, families, professionals, and school personnel about competitive, integrated employment.**
- **Increase access to information, resources, and tools about competitive, integrated employment.**
- **Increase the positive employment outcomes for youth with disabilities after school exit.**

PROGRESS

Supported Employment and Competitive Employment.

- During the report period, 12,786 consumers ages 14-22 received services through DORS, of whom 4,922 were potentially eligible students receiving pre-employment transition services prior to applying for pre-employment transition services. 141 consumers attained competitive integrated employment. (Age 14-22 at time of Exit)
- In FY21, BHA provided 518 transition-aged youth with Supported Employment services. In FY21 The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) identified and served 594 transitioning students.
- Youth were authorized to enter adult services, thanks to the long standing Governor's Transitioning Youth Initiative (GTYI). This initiative has allowed DDA eligible youth an access point into appropriate Meaningful Day services rather than being placed on a waiting list. The DDA administered the funds to provider agencies to support these transitioning youth in Supported Employment, Community Development Services, Day Habilitation, and Discovery and Customization services.
- **The QUEST Internship Program** The QUEST Internship Program, a partnership of DORS, DBM and participating State agencies, affords State agencies the opportunity to provide mentoring services for persons with disabilities through unpaid part-time or full-time internships. In the past year, no individuals participated in the QUEST Internship Program due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency.
- **Summer Employment.** Due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency, students did not participate in the traditional DORS supported employer-based summer employment opportunities. Students were, however, offered virtual services through DORS to prepare them for employment. Additionally, in the summer of 2021, the Local Workforce Development Boards utilized the Summer Youth Connection and Youthworks grants to provide summer employment to 103 youth with disabilities. Local areas

employed in-person and virtual employment opportunities to engage youth participants. These were paid work experiences in competitive integrated, virtual, or hybrid settings and were provided to youth between the ages of 14-24. These opportunities also provided job readiness training and employment for 20-30 hours per week over a 5 to 6 week time period

- **Project Search Expansion.** Project Search, a business-led school-to-work program for students with significant disabilities takes place entirely at the workplace. The Division of Rehabilitation Services in FY20 funded 11 Project Search sites. Eight of those sites are strictly for students with disabilities and three of those sites are for youth/adults with disabilities. In some instances the program was modified for virtual delivery due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency.
- **State Agency Transition Collaborative of Maryland (SATC-MD)**
 - SATC-MD's purpose is to assist Maryland's State Education Agency, Local Education Agencies, State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), and VR service providers to implement evidence-based and promising practices ensuring Maryland students with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, graduate prepared for success in postsecondary education and employment.
 - SATC-MD focuses on the values and systems alignment needed to support all youth with disabilities and their families to successfully transition from school to community, career and/or college.
 - Vision: All students will exit school informed and connected to community, career and/or college
 - Coordinated messaging with a focus on youth and family
 - Deeper understanding of agency roles/responsibilities/challenges/barriers
 - Mapping/development of current/aspirational flow of services
 - System alignment
 - Cross agency coordination and trainings
 - Development of tools and templates for local school systems and partners

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

GOAL

- Students with disabilities have access, opportunity and support to attend postsecondary education and/or training programs after-school

OUTCOME

- Students with disabilities are prepared for postsecondary education and/or training programs

STRATEGIES

- **Support and expand opportunities and access to activities that help students pursue postsecondary education and/or training programs.**
- **Increase the knowledge and understanding of students, their families, professionals, and school personnel about postsecondary education and training program opportunities and requirements.**

PROGRESS

- **Graduation Rates.** According to MD Special Education/Early Intervention Services Census Data & Related Tables, on October 1, 2020, of the total number of students ages 14-21 with disabilities, there were 4,954 (47.8%) students ages 14-21 with disabilities exiting with a diploma and 745 (7.2%) students ages 14-21 with disabilities exiting school with a certificate of program completion.
- **Postsecondary Supports.** DORS supported 518 students ages 14-22 in post-secondary education: 235 in College/University, 264 in Vocational and Occupational Skills Training; and 19 in Workforce Technology Center training programs.
- **DORS Pathways Program Expansion.** The DORS Pathways Program, an educational support program for students in post-secondary education with an Autism Spectrum Disorder diagnosis, is available at all three Community College of Baltimore County sites, Howard Community College, Anne Arundel Community College and Montgomery College. 20 individuals ages 14-22 participated from 7/1/20 to 6/30/21.

Grants to Expand Inclusive Higher Education Options in Maryland

Since May of 2018, \$500,000 has been allocated to the Maryland Department of Health’s Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) for grants designed to create an inclusive higher education program for students with developmental disabilities. Two institutions of higher education have been awarded grants to develop and implement inclusive higher education opportunities.

“This grant further helps us meet our goal to enhance the lives of people with developmental disabilities—starting at a younger age—to provide much needed tools and knowledge so they can live active, full lives and to ultimately become working and living members in the

communities of their choice,” said Bernard Simons, Deputy Secretary for the Developmental Disabilities Administration.

In 2021, The Developmental Disabilities Administration continued to explore and expand partnerships with three higher education institutions, two of which are summarized below. The DDA will be releasing information on the third partnership later this year.

Coppin State University

The first round of grant funding was awarded to Coppin State University (CSU), who has worked to develop and expand upon inclusive higher education options available for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities on their campus. Through Coppin’s Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP), students are able to increase independence, improve social and communication skills, explore career interests, participate in college classes and develop relationships with peers.

Coppin’s first cohort of 9 students started in the fall of 2018 by attending orientation and getting acclimated to campus life. In the spring 2019 semester, the students began their academic classes as well as individualized exploration and taking part in campus life. Two of the students are living on campus.

Students that are part of this initial cohort include students from Baltimore City, Howard County, Baltimore County and one student from New Jersey. Students have expressed interest in Art, Math, Technology, Child Care Services, Music, Theater and Fitness Training.

Each student is paired up with a graduate intern who serves as a mentor to students with disabilities. The mentors assist their fellow students to navigate campus life both academically and socially. Students are supported to identify their own academic and career path, including earning a degree and support with job placement.

Harford Community College

In July 2019, Harford Community College (HCC) was awarded the second round of grant funding from DDA. HCC will be developing a College & Career Experience for Self Sufficiency (ACCESS) Program to provide inclusive higher education opportunities for adults with intellectual disabilities. The ACCESS Program will provide person-centered planning, individualized supports, and services for the academic and social inclusion of students in the program leading to certificates and employment in: customer service, applied culinary arts, hospitality, and building maintenance as well as opportunities to earn additional stackable credentials through credit and noncredit programs.

HCC's ACCESS Program will offer inclusive experiences focusing on academic enrichment and extracurricular activities, socialization, independent living skills, self-advocacy skills as well as integrated work experience and career development services. Students will have access to all College facilities and support services.

University of Maryland - Maryland Hub for Inclusive Higher Education

Terps EXCEED - Experiencing College for Education & Employment Discovery (TerpsEXCEED) is a new two-year pilot certificate program at the University of Maryland College Park for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities who would not be able to apply and attend University of Maryland - College Park through a traditional pathway.

- This is a non-degree program that culminates in a University of Maryland (UMD) certificate which includes a transcript of all students' academic coursework that is aligned with students' career interests.
- Students will participate in career development activities, work experiences, internships and paid jobs.
- TerpsEXCEED students will be UMD students, like typical incoming freshman – with student IDs and email accounts, access to UMD facilities, activities, and student organizations, and the choice to live on campus in dorms.
- Extra supports will be provided by TerpsEXCEED staff and a network of trained student Peer Mentors

TRANSITION PROCESS

GOAL

- Students with disabilities, their families, and other stakeholders have the information, resources, and support needed to successfully transition from school to work, post-secondary education or training programs, and/or the community

OUTCOME

- Students with disabilities exit school prepared to be fully included in their communities alongside their peers without disabilities.

STRATEGIES

- **Students with disabilities and their families have information and knowledge about agencies who support adults with disabilities.**
- **Students with disabilities and their families have information and knowledge about adult health care services.**
- **Increase knowledge and skill of school personnel who are directly involved in the transition process about the transition process and available options for people with disabilities after school.**

PROGRESS

- **Addressing Service Gaps.** Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, & Victim Services (GOCPYVS) is taking the lead in working with IATC partner agencies to support Governor Hogan's goal of an economically secure Maryland by improving outcomes among disconnected youth ages 16-24 who are not working and not enrolled in school. Youth with disabilities are often disconnected and struggle to enter the adult workforce due to multiple systemic and individual barriers. As a member, GOCPYVS informs and supports the work of the IATC by providing analysis of State policies that impact youth disconnection, identifying gaps in services, and providing information on promising strategies for re-connection.
- **TAY Behavioral Health Care.** Core Service Agency (local mental health authority) representatives from 12 local jurisdictions with state grant-funded Transition Age Youth (TAY)-specific programs meet on a quarterly basis, started May 9, 2018, to align local implementation with state-level model and policy development in order to address broader systemic and financing issues necessary for sustainability and expansion of the TAY initiative statewide. Funding of the TAY initiative continues into FY 2021.

- **Early Intervention Program.** The Maryland Early Intervention Program (EIP) is a specialized program with expertise in the early identification, evaluation, and comprehensive psychiatric treatment of adolescents and young adults with psychotic disorders. The EIP is comprised of three components: (1) Outreach and Education Services; (2) Clinical Services; and (3) Training and Implementation Support. Research is integrated into each of these components and focuses on the development of objective methods for early detection and prediction of disease emergence, progress or recovery; and intervention development to enhance efficacy and effectiveness. All EIP activities are guided by a multi-disciplinary Advisory Council, including youth, family and consumer advocacy
 - FY21, Outreach and education activities were conducted at 39 events reaching 907 attendees. Services were provided to approximately 493 individuals (duplicated) and 227 consultations (211 via centralized phone line & 16 face-to-face at MPRC) were provided.

V. LIST OF IATC MEMBERS

The membership of the IATC is provided for in Executive Order 01.01.2007.13. As of September 30th, 2021, the membership of the IATC was:

Co-Chair: Carol A. Beatty, Secretary of Disabilities

Co-Chair: Scott A. Dennis, Assistant State Superintendent Rehabilitation Services

Appointed by Governor to 3-year terms

- Rachel London
- Shannon Minnick
- Jennifer Moberly
- Jackie Gast

Student representative appointed by Governor

- one vacancy

Representing State Dept. of Education

- Scott A. Dennis, Assistant State Superintendent for Rehabilitation Services
- Christy Stuart, designee of Assistant State Superintendent for Special Education & Early Intervention Services
- Tiara Booker-Dwyer, designee of Assistant State Superintendent for Career & College Readiness
- Walter Sallee, designee of Assistant State Superintendent for Student & School Services
- Michelle Stewart
- Joyce Serio

Representing Maryland Department of Health

- Kathleen Walker, Developmental Disabilities Administration
- Natalee Solomon, Behavioral Health Administration

Representing Dept. of Human Services

- Cassandra Key

Representing Dept. of Juvenile Services

- Stephen Mwangi

Representing Maryland Department of Labor

- Michael R. DiGiacomo
- Kristen Patterson

Representing Maryland Commission on Disabilities

- one vacancy

Representing Maryland Higher Education Commission

- Glennis Daniels-Bacchus
- Emily Dow

Representing Maryland Technology Assistance Program

- Lori Markland

Ex officio

- Carol A. Beatty, Secretary of Disabilities
- Mohammed Choudhury, State Superintendent of Schools
- Christina E. Drushel, Governor's Office Of Crime Prevention, Youth, & Victim Services designee of Deputy Director

Staff:

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