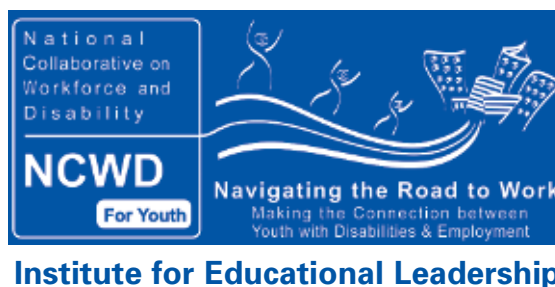


HIGH SCHOOL/HIGH TECH PROGRAM GUIDE

A Comprehensive Transition Program
Promoting Careers in Science,
Technology, Engineering
and Math for
Youth with Disabilities





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Appendix A: HS/HT Program Guide References.....A-1



Acknowledgements

The original High School/High Tech (HS/HT) Program Manual was produced in 1994 under the leadership of the President’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (PCEPD) and included information, processes and forms provided by people such as Dr. Charles McNelly of United Cerebral Palsy in Prince Georges County, Maryland. The second version of the Manual was also produced by PCEPD. The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth), under a grant from the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) within the U.S. Department of Labor, wrote the third edition in an effort to expand and improve upon existing HS/HT programs and facilitate the creation of new HS/HT programs. We would like to acknowledge the contributions of Lee Miller, President and CEO of the Georgia Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, Donna Mundy, State Coordinator for HS/HT in Florida, and Lisa Cuzzo and George Tilson of TransCen, Inc. in Maryland for their assistance in creating the earlier editions of the HS/HT Program Manual. The fourth edition of the manual, now referred to as the “HS/HT Program Guide,” still contains much of their work.

HS/HT is recognized as one of the most successful strategies for assisting youth with disabilities as they transition from school to post-school activities, including entry into postsecondary education and engaging in the workforce. With significant support from ODEP, HS/HT has spread to numerous states, and interest in the program has increased significantly. The extensive experiences of the ODEP-funded grantees and resultant evolution of the HS/HT program from a locally administered and implemented program to a state administered and locally implemented program have provided a wide array of administrative models,

service strategies, and individual success stories, as well as numerous examples of positive systemic changes. Capturing this wealth of information necessitated a significant expansion of the HS/HT Program Guide. In addition, continued refinement of ODEP’s and NCWD/Youth’s *Guideposts for Success*, which comprise the key design features for today’s HS/HT programs, necessitated an extensive rewrite of the chapters on School-Based Preparatory Experiences and Career Preparation and Work-Based Learning Experiences. The resultant HS/HT Program Guide is greater in depth and breadth, providing extensive information that existing programs can use for program improvement and that new and developing programs can use to guide their implementation efforts.

This Guide is full of information and materials used nationwide by HS/HT programs. We would like to thank the HS/HT representatives from around the country for providing detailed information on their programs and examples of partnerships, service strategies and success stories, as well as examples of systemic change facilitated by HS/HT programs. And, a special thanks goes to Joan Wills, Director of Center for Workforce Development at the Institute for Educational Leadership, who provided oversight for the project and direction on compiling all of this information so that it was both logical and comprehensive.

The dedication and commitment of HS/HT representatives have made the lives of thousands of youth with disabilities better, helping them to successfully transition into post-school activities such as postsecondary education and employment – in many cases employment in emerging technology-based industries. To all – keep up the good work!!!

Preface

The diverse and complex needs of today's youth cannot be met by any one family, school district, government program, or private organization acting alone. The successful transition of all youth to adulthood and a productive, independent, self-sufficient life demands coordination and collaboration across programs, agencies, and systems, along with an integrated approach to service delivery. For youth with disabilities it has long been recognized that integration in mainstream programs is the most desirable and effective educational strategy. However, there is also recognition that at certain times youth with disabilities may also benefit from targeted support services. High School/High Tech (HS/HT) is a targeted program for youth with disabilities.

Why This Guide Was Developed

This is the fourth edition of a national Guide to support HS/HT. This edition contains updated evidence-based research and lessons learned from experience in multiple states and localities. The primary objectives of this Guide are to promote program improvement and expansion for existing HS/HT programs; to help programs establish the state infrastructure to support HS/HT; and to both encourage and assist in the creation of new HS/HT programs. To that end, this Guide

- provides the basic information needed to create and support a HS/HT program;
- introduces strategies for creating a state infrastructure to support the expansion of HS/HT throughout the country;
- provides information on existing HS/HT programs;

- introduces new resources, practices, and related activities to assist both existing and developing programs as they strive to improve and expand;
- explores ways to fund and sustain HS/HT programs;
- suggests ways to promote and market HS/HT programs; and
- provides insight into the ways practice, research, and policy can work together to promote stronger, more successful HS/HT programs.

This Guide is NOT intended as a stand-alone cookbook for program success. Rather, it simply provides a programmatic shell and suggestions regarding implementation strategies and program activities for HS/HT. One key ingredient in all HS/HT programs is creativity. Another is partnerships, and a third is resourcefulness. Each HS/HT site is similar in terms of its overall goals, objectives, and program design. However, programs may vary significantly, depending upon these key ingredients and the availability of technology and resources in a given community.

How to Use This Guide

This Guide should serve as a primary resource for state coordinators for HS/HT and site operators. It is organized so that all sites, no matter what their stage of development, will be able to find the information and resources they need to implement an effective HS/HT program.

New sites can use this Guide as a roadmap for developing a locally-based HS/HT program. This Guide will also assist states in establishing the

infrastructure for a statewide HS/HT program. Additionally, existing sites can use the information to create a state infrastructure and to strengthen their existing local sites.

The Guide also provides useful statistical information on the need for intervention when youth begin transitioning to adulthood. The Guide includes research findings, facts, and statistics that can be used in the development of grants to support HS/HT.

Finally, the Guide includes a variety of information that state and local HS/HT staff can use as they work directly with youth, such as how to construct an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and an Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) that are in keeping with the student's skills, abilities, capabilities and interests.

This Guide is divided into two parts that contain a total of eleven chapters. Part I is High School/High Tech—The Basics. Part II is High School/High Tech—Putting It All Together.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the history and evolution of HS/HT, highlights reasons for focusing on youth with disabilities and on careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (referred to as the STEM careers), and introduces the *Guideposts for Success*.

Chapter 2 provides detailed information on the first *Guidepost—School-Based Preparatory Experiences*.

Chapter 3 provides detailed information on the second *Guidepost—Career Preparation and Work-Based Learning Experiences*.

Chapter 4 provides detailed information on the third *Guidepost—Youth Development and Leadership*.

Chapter 5 provides detailed information on the fourth *Guidepost—Connecting Activities*.

Chapter 6 provides detailed information on the fifth *Guidepost—Family Involvement and Supports*.

Chapter 7 addresses the steps necessary to launch a HS/HT program, highlighting issues that need to be addressed at both the state and local levels.

Chapter 8 provides tips on finding the fiscal and human resources necessary to implement a HS/HT program.

Chapter 9 outlines the importance of evaluating a HS/HT program and using that information to manage the program for performance excellence.

Chapter 10 addresses things to consider in marketing a HS/HT program.

Chapter 11 provides definitions of key terms applicable to HS/HT and transition services for youth with disabilities.

Stories about successful HS/HT students, examples of systemic changes facilitated by various HS/HT programs, and tips from lessons learned are sprinkled throughout the Guide. These vignettes represent only a small sampling of the successes experienced and lessons learned by HS/HT programs throughout the country.

Also included throughout the chapters are online resources related to specific elements of the *Guideposts for Success* (described in detail in Chapter 1). Recognizing that websites change frequently, every possible effort has been made to compile accurate and current information at the time of printing. These links are provided only as examples of the many useful resources available on the Internet.

Individual chapters are followed by

- exhibits containing supporting research;
- information on related topics;
- tips for implementation;
- sample tools, forms, written communications and agreements; and
- other information and items that should be helpful, particularly for developing HS/HT programs.

The Supporting Research Exhibits reflect a synthesis of over 30 years of research on promising and effective practices to improve transition services for youth with disabilities. The synthesis was conducted by two national technical assistance centers: The National

Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET), funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), and the National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth), funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP). The five components for transition success that emerged from the research, many of which were derived from early implementation of HS/HT, formed the foundation for both the National Alliance on Secondary Education and Transition's (NASET)

Standards and NCWD/Youth's and ODEP's *Guideposts for Success*. The NASET Standards established a common and shared framework to help school systems and communities identify what youth need in order to achieve successful participation in postsecondary education and training, civic engagement, meaningful employment, and adult life. Building on this work, the synthesis in the Supporting Research Exhibits in this Guide summarizes findings from research, demonstrations and promising and effective practices related to each of the five components of the *Guideposts for Success*.

