

Linking Learning to Careers

Linking Learning to Careers (LLC) is an exciting new opportunity to improve career and college readiness outcomes for Vermont high school students with disabilities. This 5-year statewide initiative will build on effective career exploration and employment services already provided to students and engage them in additional experiences that will help them to successfully transition from high school into adulthood. LLC creates a powerful partnership involving Community College of VT, VABIR, the Agency of Education, and high schools and career and technical educational centers throughout the state, along with VocRehab Vermont.

Who Benefits:

Students with Disabilities – Students already benefit from access to nationally recognized, innovative transition and employment services through VocRehab Vermont. The enhanced services through LLC add to that solid foundation and may include:

- In-school career development work, resulting in a career pathways plan;
- Work-based learning opportunities, such as job shadows and internships;
- Paid employment experiences;
- Additional dual enrollment opportunities for postsecondary education;
- Access to assistive technology, including consultation, assessment, on-the-job evaluation, delivery of equipment, and follow-up;
- Mentoring with college students to model the potential to pursue postsecondary education;
- Targeted funding for transportation for work-based learning and employment experiences;
- Focused employer outreach directed by students' individual goals and personal learning plans.

High Schools – Vermont high schools are striving to build flexible pathways for students to better prepare for life after graduation. LLC services assist them by:

- Making education more relevant and valuable to students;
- Meeting the needs of diverse student populations;
- Individualizing and expanding learning opportunities for students;
- Exposing students to state-of-the-art equipment, technology, and applications in the workplace;
- Promoting and fostering connections with the local business community;
- Increasing student retention rates by connecting learning to real world application.

Employers and Community Partners – Employers want to secure high quality, well prepared local employees to meet their needs and to diversify their workforce. LLC supports collaboration and cooperation among schools, employers, and the community, and it contributes to building a more productive local economy.

Expected Outcomes:

LLC will also operate as part of a 5-year rigorous evaluation study supported by Mathematica Policy Research. The results of the evaluation will provide qualitative and quantitative evidence of the impacts of LLC services on students' early career outcomes, including paid competitive employment, postsecondary school enrollment, and improved confidence to achieve career goals. This information will assist the transition field by providing clear evidence of LLC's effectiveness along with its potential replicability in other states.

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