



Career Technical Education for Students with Disabilities: Guidance for West Virginia Schools and Districts

Office of Special Programs
Office of Career and Technical Instruction
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Introduction

Career technical education (CTE) programs in West Virginia are designed for all students and prepare them for entering post-secondary education, training or the workforce. CTE Content Skill Sets (CSSs) are based on national industry recognized accreditation and credentialing standards. Many students with disabilities achieve great success in career and technical education programs with minimal accommodations. It is essential that CTE instructors and special education (SE) case managers collaborate to develop coordinated plans to meet the needs of individual students as indicated in the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Part I: Standard Procedures for Coordinating Services

It is essential that both the CTE instructor and special education (SE) case manager for the student collaborate and develop a coordinated plan for providing services noted on the IEP.

Special Education and the IEP Process for Transition

It is essential that both the CTE instructor and special education (SE) case manager for the student collaborate and develop a coordinated plan for providing services noted on the IEP.

All students begin development of the Individualized Student Transition Plan (ISTP) as part of WVDE Policy 2510 requirements at grade eight. Transition planning is a requirement of WVDE Policy 2419 for special education services for all students age 16 and above as they prepare for post-school settings. Since the IEP process requires transition instruction and support services to be documented in the IEP and IEP Team membership includes both general and special educators, it is vital that a CTE staff member be a part of that process when the student is a prospective CTE participant. Students considering a CTE concentration need background knowledge about programs of interest and options that might support their instructional needs. Transition assessment data can help guide the process and identify vocational needs, interests and aptitudes of the student.

The IEP identifies the specially designed instruction and supports necessary for students to access and progress in the general curriculum. Clear designation for coordination and collaboration between special education (SE) and CTE staff for meeting student needs in CTE courses should be clearly noted in the IEP document. All students enrolled in CTE programs are expected to receive instruction using the same CSSs for the course in which they are enrolled, unless the student is participating in the Individual Work Readiness Certificate (IWRC) CTE concentration program (See Part 2). Administrators for CTE and SE must collaborate when anticipated supports for CTE may require increased staff.

Development of self-determination skills for students with disabilities is vital to post-school success and a part of the transition process. Student involvement in the IEP process provides an excellent opportunity for development of those self-determination skills and contributes to maximizing success in CTE. When a student is a part of conferencing and discussions, many issues can be resolved with minimal intervention before problems arise. As students prepare to move to the adult setting and consider pursuing eligibility for disability services under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), IEP participation assists the student in developing vital skills and assists in identification of essential supports for the adult settings of work, training and education.

Student Participation in CTE

Special educators must develop background knowledge of CTE programming and understand that CTE concentration certificates prepare students for occupations that require extended training rather than short-term on-the-job training or entry level work. Students with disabilities should explore the range of occupations and training options through a variety of activities such as occupational evaluation, CTE program visits, interviews and team planning sessions. The U.S. Department of Labor classifies occupations by the level of training required to perform the job duties in the occupation. IEP Team members can support student exploration using the Bureau of Labor Statistics website <http://www.bls.gov/> or access O*Net, <http://www.onetonline.org/>. More links are available at the WVDE OSP Web Resources page for secondary transition, <http://wvde.state.wv.us/osp/Transition/webresources.html>.

Students with disabilities should be represented in any CTE program in similar proportion to the total school population of the LEA. For example, if students with disabilities comprise 17% of the total student population in a high school, then students with disabilities should comprise approximately 17% of the students enrolled in any district CTE program. Since students with IEPs have such a wide range of needs, each class or program should be evaluated individually regarding appropriate percentages. U.S. Department of Education standards for compliance with the Office for Civil Rights Guidelines, including Title VI, Title IX and Section 504, require LEAs to take steps to ensure that any disproportion does not result from unlawful discrimination. If CTE monitoring indicates LEA difficulty with maintaining this ratio, technical assistance from the WVDE may be requested. The LEA must exercise caution in strict adherence to this area of guidance, but should use it as a baseline measure for identification of disproportionality. Collaboration among CTE and SE administrators and staff is crucial to determine staffing needs and methods for support for students in CTE programs, particularly at CTE centers where no special educator is located in the building.

Two primary options for completing a CTE concentration exist for students with IEPs. The first option is typical completion of a CTE concentration with or without accommodations and supports. The second option, **IWRC**, provides students with mild learning deficits the opportunity to gain valuable work readiness and occupation specific skills through a CTE career concentration cluster. This option is discussed in Flexible Options for Students with Disabilities – IWRC in Part 2 of this guide.

Other occupational preparation options exist for students with disabilities. Some students elect to pursue an academically oriented program to develop skills needed for the post-school settings of education, work or training, other students may not be academically able to earn a standard diploma and need work experiences while in school which occur in the community to develop general work related skills (soft skills) to assist in identifying occupations of interest. A program for this purpose is often identified as work experience. Supervised work opportunities for students with moderate disabilities can lead to post-secondary employment opportunities. Instruction occurs with the special educator or special education job coach providing supervision on the work site. Other students may only be able to perform real or simulated work in the school or class setting with a high level of supervision. This group may not be ready for a community work experience program until after leaving public school.

Staff Roles

Since CTE instructors are important IEP Team members, provision must be made for the CTE instructor to participate in the IEP Team meeting. A planning meeting or activities prior to developing the IEP may resolve concerns, questions and other issues related to student placement in a CTE program. The team approach is vital to student success. Once a determination is made regarding participation in a specific CTE program, the IEP is developed to identify support services, aids and accommodations that will be provided to enable the student to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum. Additional planning meetings may be needed to make periodic minor adjustments for success. Providing accommodations, not reducing requirements allows for equity and access.

Special education case managers and CTE instructors must coordinate the use of instructional strategies, such as differentiation or co-teaching, to maximize access to the curriculum for student success. Universal design for learning (UDL) practices can alleviate issues before they arise if considered during the design phase of instruction. Preliminary planning between CTE and SE staff can alleviate concerns and issues prior to the IEP Team meeting. Program supports for student success vary and are dependent on identified areas of need determined by formal and informal assessment measures. All students with IEPs are assigned an IEP case manager. The IEP case manager has the primary responsibility to facilitate supports necessary for the student during the school day. An array of services may be discussed prior to final determination of needed supports in the students' IEP.

Assessment

CTE concentration completers take the ACT WorkKeys when they complete requirements for a concentration. Accommodations may be requested; however, consulting the administration manual will assist the student, family and educational staff in determining the potential need for any assessment accommodations permitted. Careful consideration is required because these decisions impact awarding of a National Work Readiness Credential. Additionally, all CTE completers are administered the WV CTE Educate WV Performance Assessment that is closely aligned with industry standards. Instructors must educate themselves regarding requirements for assessment and become familiar with the WV Measures of Academic Progress (MAPS) guidelines for decisions about assessment accommodations. Some sections of the assessments can be read aloud if identified as an area of need as specified in the specific assessment manual.

Preparation programs, such as WIN or KeyTrain, prepare students for the WorkKeys Assessment areas of Reading for Information, Math Application and Locating Information. It is strongly recommended that coordination between the CTE center, home high school and CTE and SE staff occurs to maximize student progress to provide opportunity for WorkKeys success. Staff should work together to develop a plan that incorporates online student access and practice with direct instruction for identified areas of need in various settings. The results for the student with an IEP can be substantial when implemented consistently as demonstrated in past data from some districts.

WorkKeys Resources, including accommodations options for test administration, are available at <http://careertech.k12.wv.us/workkeys-performance-assessments.html> on the WVDE website.

Safety

Safety is a number one priority for CTE, and safety procedures are crucial to the success of all CTE programs. General safety guidelines are provided in Section D of the WV Career and Technical Education Handbook located at <http://careertech.k12.wv.us/ctemanual/>, for CTE instructors and administrators. Safety procedures are specific to program areas and must be followed diligently. Discussion of safety concerns should be an integral part of determining placement of students with disabilities in any CTE program. All CTE students are required to meet safety standards at all times. Open honest discussion and special consideration should be given to assessing safety for students with disabilities who are placed in CTE programs when behavior might constitute a considerable safety risk. Consideration for periodic review of program specific safety procedures may be a part of the accommodations on the IEP. Students with disabilities are required to pass all safety examinations with necessary accommodations. Special educators may assist with safety instruction for CTE students with disabilities. ToolingU and other programs, provided to districts by the WVDE, provide valuable electronic instructional supports for students to learn safety procedures.

Problem Solving

Collaborative planning and frequent communication between CTE instructors and special educators alleviate issues before they arise; however, some issues cannot be anticipated. Professional conferencing among staff or with the student is the best step for a successful CTE experience. Unresolved issues must be addressed as part of the IEP process or through administrative intervention.

Part 2: Flexible Options for Students with Disabilities

Individual Work Readiness Certificate (IWRC): A Tailored CTE Work Preparation Program for Students with Disabilities

Overview

The West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) Office of Career and Technical Instruction and the Office of Special Programs (OSP) has designed a career technical education (CTE) certificate program, Individual Work Readiness Certificate (**IWRC**). The IWRC is designed for students with disabilities with academic deficits who are enrolled in a CTE concentration. After High School these students are specifically interested in pursuing entry level support jobs related to occupations in CTE concentration career clusters.

This program assists students to proceed from the school setting to post-secondary training; learning and work in the preferred occupational field with certification that relevant skill sets have been acquired. It requires intensive collaboration between career technical and special educators for each student to acquire the necessary occupational skill sets. Additionally, the certificate program provides CTE with the flexibility to provide valuable services for a student with a disability who selects a CTE concentration area for the skilled pathway but who lacks the academic skills to successfully earn the standard CTE concentration completer certificate. Administrators provide leadership and guide the implementation of this specialized program to maintain class size and program integrity.

During the 2010-2011 school year, five districts participated in a pilot through selecting a small group of students who met the criteria determined for potential candidates. Each district was required to obtain signed permission for participation, including the district superintendent, CTE administrator and special education director. The districts agreed to assist in identification and development of a guidance document for future implementation statewide. Students and staff responded favorably to the program and helped guide development of the process for components of this program.

Program Goals and Components

The **IWRC** is designed to provide some students with IEPs the opportunity to gain work readiness and occupation specific skills related to CTE career concentrations during high school. Students who earn the **IWRC** demonstrate the necessary skill sets for entry level and support jobs in a specific occupational area. The same individuals may even choose to pursue the CTE concentration certificate program in an adult post-secondary education/training program after gaining real world work experiences in order to earn the industry credential when available.

District participation in the **IWRC** option requires approval by the district CTE administrator and submission to WVDE Office of Career and Technical Accountability and Support on LEA form 5. It is recommended that in the initial stages of development, LEAs begin with one or two **IWRC** cluster area concentrations.

All students working toward the **IWRC** enroll for the four required CTE concentration courses. Once a student is selected for the **IWRC**, the CTE and special educators will review the **IWRC** skill sets established by the WVDE for student attainment of the certificate. A copy of the approved WVDE skill sets must be provided by CTE staff, special educators and student and family of **IWRC** candidates to assure they understand the program. Exposure to all skill sets in each course will assist students to develop a broad knowledge of the concentration and an opportunity to develop additional skill sets or to be a typical completer at a later time.

The CTE and SE staff will collaborate for individual assignment requirements during the course. The IEP for the student describes any specially designed instruction, supports or accommodations necessary for student success. The district may consider offering a prerequisite elective course where students may gain skills for work readiness, career awareness and exploration, basic academics, understanding transition, assessments and self-determination. The CSSs for 2013-2014 are available on the CTE web pages, clusters tab: <http://careertech.k12.wv.us/>, in addition to other links.

Flexibility into and out of the program allows the student enrolled in **IWRC** to move into a regular CTE concentration program when he or she demonstrates aptitude and ability. It also allows the student enrolled in a typical CTE concentration program to move to the **IWRC** when he or she is unable to master all required skills for the concentration. Any change requires an IEP Team meeting to assure understanding by all team members.

Participating students who earn the **IWRC** must complete the four core courses and score a Level 3 on the ACT WorkKeys Assessment. The WVDE Office of Career and Technical Instruction will guide the assessment process for **IWRC**. The Educate WV Performance Assessment will be individualized as described in the subsequent Program Evaluation and Assessment section of this document, specifically adjusted to skill sets as determined by WVDE Office of Career and Technical Instruction.

Participant Recruitment

The potential student:

- Has an IEP
- Is pursuing a standard high school diploma
- Is in the skilled pathway
- Has selected an occupation that aligns with a CTE career concentration area that is available at the local CTE center, comprehensive high school or high school
- Demonstrates learning challenges and documented academic deficits in the core areas of reading, math and written expression that are significantly (more than three years) below the current grade level
- Plans to enter the workforce directly after high school with on-the-job-training, apprenticeship or continued technical training as an adult
- Has excellent attendance
- Demonstrates poor performance or is failing despite individual or small group tutoring for success in a regular CTE career concentration
- Is highly motivated, demonstrates a strong work ethic and positive work habits
- Can successfully pass the required safety examination with accommodations or supports as indicated in the IEP
- Demonstrates the ability to acquire basic/core CTE skills to become employed in a support position for a CTE career concentration
- Has family support and approval for participation

Timelines and Roles

Suggested Timeline	Student	Staff (SE and CTE) Note: Staff member listed first serves as lead.
Grades 9-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Visits one or more CTE programs to assess interest and aptitude in selected CTE career concentration(s) » Begins development of e-portfolio » Maintains grades in all courses » Continues to develop basic core academic skills in reading, math and written expression » Participates in all IEP Team meetings <p>Note: Concentration course participation may begin in grades 9-10, depending on course configuration at the LEA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Meets with the student and school counselor to determine if student goals fit a specific CTE career concentration area and verify program availability at the local CTE center (SE, CTE) » Conferences with the student, family and other school staff to determine CTE options for participation, followed by a formal IEP Team meeting that includes CTE participation (SE, CTE) » Reviews skill sets for the CTE career concentration program of study for the student (CTE, SE) » Submits a report at the end of every year regarding participation and assessment results (SE, CTE) » Uses LINKS components in conjunction with the school counselor for career development (SE)
Grades 11-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Completes the specified skill sets for the selected program of study with curricular adjustments as specified by the IWRC » Successfully completes Educate WV Performance Assessment for the IWRC program » Completes ACT WorkKeys Assessment at Level 3 to earn IWRC » Completes and presents e-portfolio » Completes Senior Exit Survey » Participates in all IEP Team meetings <p>Note: Concentration course participation may begin before grade 11, depending on course configuration at the LEA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Monitors and document student progress regarding acquisition of skill sets for the CTE career concentration (CTE, SE) » Facilitates participation for development of core academic skills using WIN or KeyTrain with final ACT WorkKeys Assessment (SE and CTE) » Administers the Educate WV Performance Assessment for the IWRC through coordination with the WVDE (CTE, SE) » Issues IWR Certificate through coordination with the WVDE (CTE, SE) » Facilitates production of student e-portfolio (SE, CTE) » Collaborates every two weeks or more frequently with the CTE program instructor while student is in community work setting (SE) » Guides and documents post-school placement opportunities (CTE, SE) » Facilitates completion of Senior Exit Survey (SE) » Submits a report at the end of every year regarding participation and assessment results (SE, CTE) » Uses LINKS components in conjunction with the school counselor for career development (SE)
1 Year Post High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Completes One Year Follow-up Survey regarding work and education or training progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Contacts former student to obtain One Year Follow-up post-secondary outcomes results and gathers information needed for Perkins documentation (SE and CTE)

Individual Work Readiness Concentration

- Required Courses: Students schedule for the required concentration courses. Mastery of predetermined critical CSSs identified for the concentration verifying the student has developed entry level skills.
- Multiple options exist for facilitating communication and collaboration among CTE and special educators to meet student needs for **IWRC**. Each LEA must individually determine how to provide the supports for all students with IEPs based on location and assignments of special educators in the home high school, comprehensive high school, CTE center or multi-county center. Administrators for special education and CTE should guide the problem solving process.

Examples of CTE supports by special education	
Special educator assigned and located within CTE center	Frequent collaboration between the CTE and special educators; Opportunity for daily contact; Opportunity for frequent intervention and problem solving
Special educator assigned and located at home school part time and CTE center part time (daily or less frequently)	Frequent collaboration between the CTE and special educators; Opportunity for daily contact; Opportunity for frequent intervention and problem solving
Special educator assigned and located at home school	Communication and collaboration occurs by phone or electronic method; include face-to-face minimum one time per month

Program Evaluation and Assessment

Academic Skills: Use of a basic academic skill building program, such as WIN or KeyTrain, with subsequent ACT WorkKeys Assessment at the completion of the concentration is required by **CTE instructor or special education teacher**. Students in the **IWRC** program must attain Level 3 or higher score on the ACT WorkKeys scores on the same subtests: Reading for Information, Applied Math and Locating Information. Students who make progress but who do not attain Level 3 or better on the WorkKeys in each area may still earn a CTE attendance certificate. All students will complete the adjusted Educate WV Performance Assessment for the **IWRC**, which will consist of a portfolio, a résumé, an exit interview and a student presentation to highlight skill sets and experiences in preparation for work. The **IWR** Certificate will list the specific skill sets the student has mastered during the program.

e-Portfolio/Resume: Student develops and presents an electronic portfolio as part of the Educate WV Performance Assessment with the support of **CTE instructor**. Portfolio requirements include a resume, highlights of skills and achievements, examples of work, evaluation reports of cooperative training experiences and on the job training documentation or letters from employers. (Example: PowerPoint or files on an electronic storage device for potential employers)

Interview/Presentation: Educate WV performance assessment will consist of a presentation and discussion to an interview panel to highlight the specific skill sets attained by the student as prepared by **CTE instructor and special education teacher**. This is an accommodation for this group of students.

Positive Occupational Placement: Documentation of follow-up for placement in the field of study, military or continuing education after high school from the **LEA Career and Technical Education Director or designee**.





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