

Document of Support for Universal Design in Career Connect Washington

An extensive body of research has demonstrated that meaningful and effective transition services promote long-term post-school employment outcomes. Universal Design for Learning¹ (UDL) is a concept for designing and delivering instruction and services that are usable by people with the widest possible range of functional capabilities.

Governor Inslee’s Career-Connected Learning (CCL) initiative offers Washington State the historic opportunity to be a national leader in incorporating universal design concepts to support improved employment outcomes for historically-underserved populations, including students with disabilities.

CCW Task Force Recommendations	Research-based best practices for supporting post-school outcomes for students with disabilities ²	Recommended implementation strategies for overcoming barriers to employment training and access	Benefits to stakeholders (i.e., students, families, educators, employers, support providers)
1. Ensure education puts students on a pathway to careers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify individual supports to address specific barriers experienced by students of color, rural youth, low-income, multilingual students, and students with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of meaningful, student-centered transition and high-school and beyond plans. • Early access to career exploration activities that align with student strengths, interests, and needs. • Wraparound supports to address individual barriers to employment services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse career exploration & pathways for students. • Greater diversity in workforce pool for employers. • Long-term benefits of lower unemployment for individuals with disabilities. • Better post-school preparation.
2. Ensure Professional Development for CCL partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal and informal linkages among schools, agencies, and employers. • Data-based resources and training. • Blended funding opportunities and guidance. • Interagency agreements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and specific roles and responsibilities for CCW employment partners, educators, and service providers. • Joint training and workshop opportunities on accessing appropriate services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency, family and individual coordination; expanded networking options for educators, employers, and support providers. • Increased civic expectations for inclusion and acceptance of individuals of all abilities. • Measurable milestones and outcomes aligned to post-secondary goals.

¹ <http://www.cast.org/our-work/about-udl.html>

² Doren, B., Yan, M.-C., & Tu, W.-M. (2013). Key Program Features to Enhance the School-to-Career Transition for Youth with Disabilities. *Prevention Researcher*, 20(2), 11-13.

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3. Expand apprenticeship options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal design in apprenticeship development, implementation, and supports. • Connecting people through experiential learning opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentional development of apprenticeship options that match with skills of individuals with disabilities. • Match students with professionals and peer mentors to provide one-on-one supports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded workforce in disability-friendly occupations: healthcare providers (Certified Nurse’s Assistance, Radiology), information technology (IT), construction. • Opportunities for braided and blended funding to expand access to professional development and resources.
4. Career Connect WA Systems Planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify system-wide supports to address specific barriers experienced by students of color, rural youth, low-income, multilingual students, and students with disabilities. • Universal Design for Learning in developing accessible lessons and programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key contacts within CCW partner agencies knowledgeable about transition issues facing students with disabilities. • Representative for interests of underserved populations (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Focus 14 "Populations with Barriers"). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional directories of local support options and peer mentors. • Increased program referrals across partner agencies and organizations.