Work Based Learning Experiences in a Virtual World

2020

Vermont Interagency Collaboration Virtual Event

October 27 , 2020

Brenda Simmons and Christine Johnson

The George Washington University
WINTAC

1

What TA Centers Have Learned From States

1. Work based learning experiences are most effective when **developed in coordination** with one or more of the other four required pre-employment transition services.

2. Meaningful work experiences are typically developed around a career pathway continuum and provide **opportunities for students to stack or layer skills**.

3. Successful collaboration promotes business partnership when employers understand how providing a work opportunity for students with disabilities can help **meet current workforce needs**, a better prepared future workforce, and improved community engagement.

4. Cross-agency collaboration is most effective when it is **out-come driven**.

5. States are still young in evaluating and determining what the data is telling us – much of our **data is anecdotal**

What is Work-based Learning?

- The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth defines <u>work-based learning</u> as:

  – a "supervised program sponsored by an education or training organization that links knowledge gained at the work site with a planned program of study.

- Work-based learning is an educational approach or instructional methodology that uses the workplace or real work to provide students with the knowledge and skills that will help them connect school experiences to real-life work activities and future career opportunities.

- Work-based learning experiences (WBLE) are **one of the strongest predictors of adult employment success for students with disabilities**, especially when they are provided early and often, and include opportunities for paid work in competitive, integrated settings.

Student and Family Engagement

None of this works if the student/family is not engaged, and/or it is too confusing/time intensive

– If student is not a minor remember to get their permission to talk with parent/family.

– Make it fun and simplify the process as much as possible

– Listen to what parent/family feels is important to share, their goals for their child, and then frame virtual WBLE opportunities around those thoughts/concerns.

– Respect where they are, some have unrealistic expectations for their child, and some have low expectations and/or no interest in their child working at all, so gain an understanding of their values as a starting point when sharing ideas for virtual work experiences.

– Over communicate using email or phone – at a time when everyone is working and delivering services remotely it is easy for messages and things to get lost – send out reminders, etc., ask for parent's email to cc them on communication with the student.

– Maintain a consistent schedule. Do what you say you are going to do. Be professional.

– Have virtual meetings with parents - Start meetings on a positive note.

– Be mindful not to post recordings and/or videos and pictures of students/families on the internet

Virtual Work-Based Learning Experiences

WINTAC
Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center

- **Career Mentorship:** An opportunity for a student to engage with a mentor who teaches or provides career-related guidance and advice.

- **Informational Interviews:** An informal conversation for a student with someone working in a career area/job that interests the student, who will give them information and advice. It is not a job interview and the objective is not to find job openings.

- **Job Shadowing:** An opportunity for a student to observe different jobs and ask businesses questions about the skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to perform the tasks involved in the job.

- **Workplace Tours/Field Trips:** An excursion for students to gain first-hand observation of specific work sites. Students learn about the business, meet employees, ask questions and observe work in progress. Often conducted in a group.

Adapted From: Minnesota's Pre-ETS Toolkit with Resources

On-Line Career Tours

Online Career Tours

Below are suggested activities and questions to accompany the virtual industry tour. Each component may be used individually or modified to fit the needs of your classroom. For more information on this career cluster, visit these websites:
- www.education.ne.gov/nce/documents/ataglance/InfoTech.pdf
- www.glencoe.com/sec/careers/cclusters/student/clusters/information.shtml
- www.iseek.org/careers/it.html
- www.onetonline.org/find/career?c=16

ANTICIPATORY SET:

Guide the students to think about the importance of the information technology career cluster.

"Take a few moments to think about your day thus far including everything from the time you woke up to right now while you are sitting in this classroom."

"You have 2 minutes to list everything on a sheet of paper. Questions? Get started!"

After time is called, ask students to share their lists with a partner or small group.

"Let's take another look at your lists individually. You have 45 seconds to read your list silently and circle any steps that would not have been possible without technology. Questions?"

After time is called, ask students to share a couple of circled steps/ tasks aloud with the class.

"Raise your hand if you have sent an email today? Raise your hand if you watched TV today? Raise your hand if you sent a text message today before coming to class? As you can see, our lives are filled with technology. Today we are going to explore the Information Technology career cluster."

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS:

Ask these questions to students; can be given as journal questions or asked aloud. If asking aloud, consider having the students share with a partner first, then calling on students to share aloud. Responses will vary. Remember that these responses are based on the students' knowledge prior to watching the virtual tour.

When you think of information technology, what types of jobs come to mind?

Are these jobs that YOU might be interested in?

Virtual Industry Tours

[Virtual Industry Tours](#)

HEAR + LEARN FROM PROFESSIONALS

Experience virtual industry tours that provide a unique opportunity to get a glimpse inside Nebraska-based industries without leaving your home or classroom.

These virtual industry tours provide a unique opportunity for students, parents and job-seekers to experience Nebraska-based industries without leaving the home or classroom.

The videos showcase different business and industries in each of the sixteen Career Clusters in the Nebraska Model. In addition to the tour of the business/industry, the videos also contain interviews with employees and managers discussing work requirements, education levels, salary and job prospects.

The videos will provide an accurate picture of today's workplace, breaking down stereotypes and assumptions while emphasizing the knowledge and skills required to be successful.

7

Virtual Work-Site Tours

- **Tour Jobs that People Do in One Workplace**
  - Virtual tours and visits are also a great way to show students a range of occupations and career options that may exist within one business or workplace.
  - For example, an airport, zoo, manufacturing plant

- **Tour "Essential" Jobs (Today's World)**
  - Grocery stores, hospitals, garage door repair, Heating and Air, Plumbing companies

- **Tour businesses that expose students with disabilities to employment opportunities that lead to industry-recognized credentials, and/or opportunities for internships or apprenticeships.**

- **Workplace tours and visits are most engaging when the employer is willing to provide hands-on opportunities for students to experience some aspects of one or more jobs.**
  - Tough to do virtually, but get creative. What might the student have available at home they could touch and work with that was talked about in the workplace video?
  - If student is really interest in a workplace, document and follow up with an on-site visit in the fall if possible.

8

Organize Career Cluster Employer Demonstrations

- Use Interactive Activities and Choices to Engage Students

- Organize an event with employers from all 16 career clusters. One activity as an example, could be modeled after the TV game show, "What's My Line?"

- Professionals in nontraditional careers describe what they do at work and students guess what their occupation is.

- Ideas for professionals include a skydiver, a female firefighter, a chef, a falconer, etc.

- The professionals each talk about how they got to where they are professionally.

adapted from www.ncwd-youth.info/innovative-strategies

Make Informational Interviews Interactive

- To keep students engaged, provide guidance to employers on how to make it interactive.

- When employers talk about their jobs on-line, they can bring tools of their trade to show what they do. For example:
  - a veterinarian can bring x-rays of animals to demonstrate parts of that job.
  - when inviting employees from a video game design company to speak, ask them to share some video games they are currently developing, and show how they test the games for bugs fix any errors they found.

adapted from www.ncwd-youth.info/innovative-strategies

Mentoring Activities

- Career-focused mentoring involves matching students with vetted adult mentors who assist them with career exploration in various ways.

- One advantage of career-focused mentoring is its capacity to provide students with more individualized support for exploring careers specific to his or her interests.

- The mentoring relationship can consist of telephone or online communication.

- What distinguishes career-focused mentoring from general mentoring is that the mentoring interactions are intentionally focused on helping students identify and explore their career interests rather than just providing general support and encouragement.

adapted from www.ncwd-youth.info/innovative-strategies
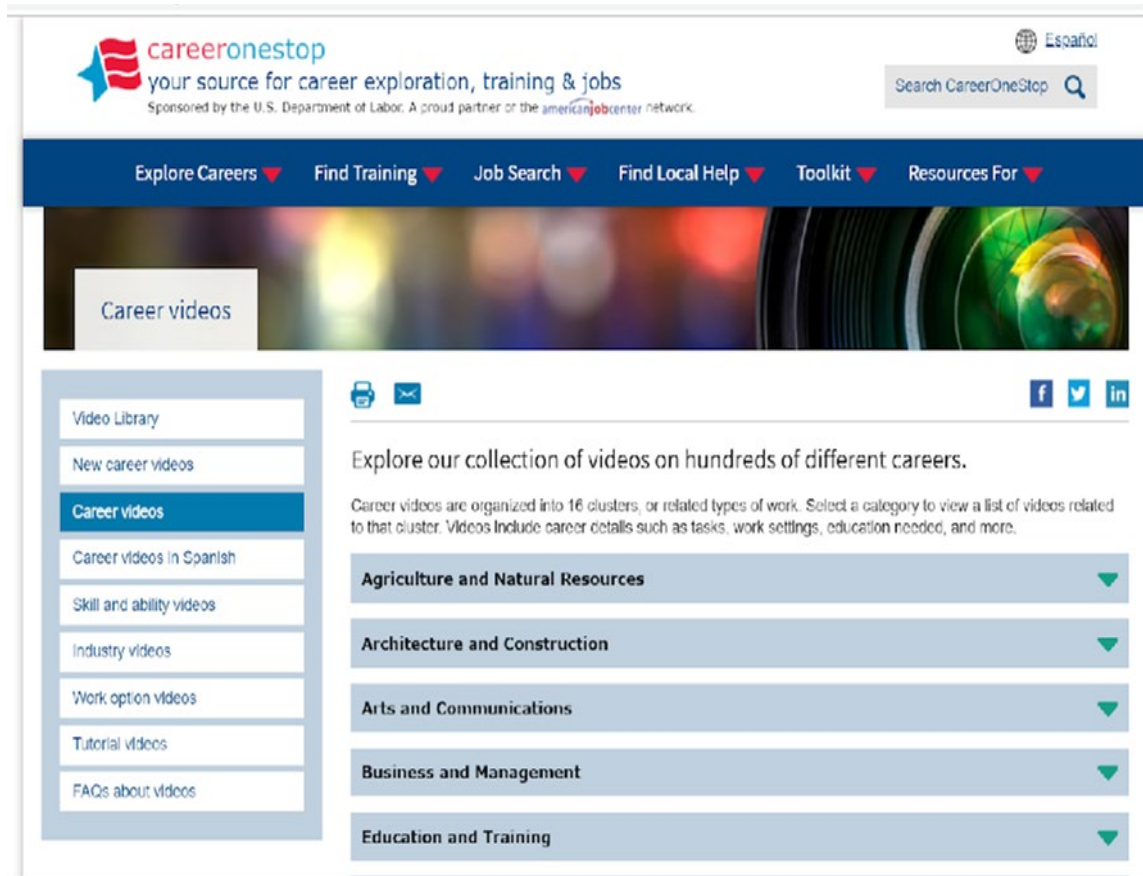
Explore-Work (WINTAC)

- Explore-work.com

- Series of web-based modules that align with the five required Pre-Employment Transition Services activities that will help students:

  - Discover talents and jobs that may be a good fit for you!

  - Get experience and try out jobs right now!

  - Uncover education and training options to help you meet your job goals.

  - Learn about self-advocacy or how to ask for and get things you need.

  - Get skills to help you succeed at work and school.

- Available in Spanish

- Using Explore-Work.com Webinar
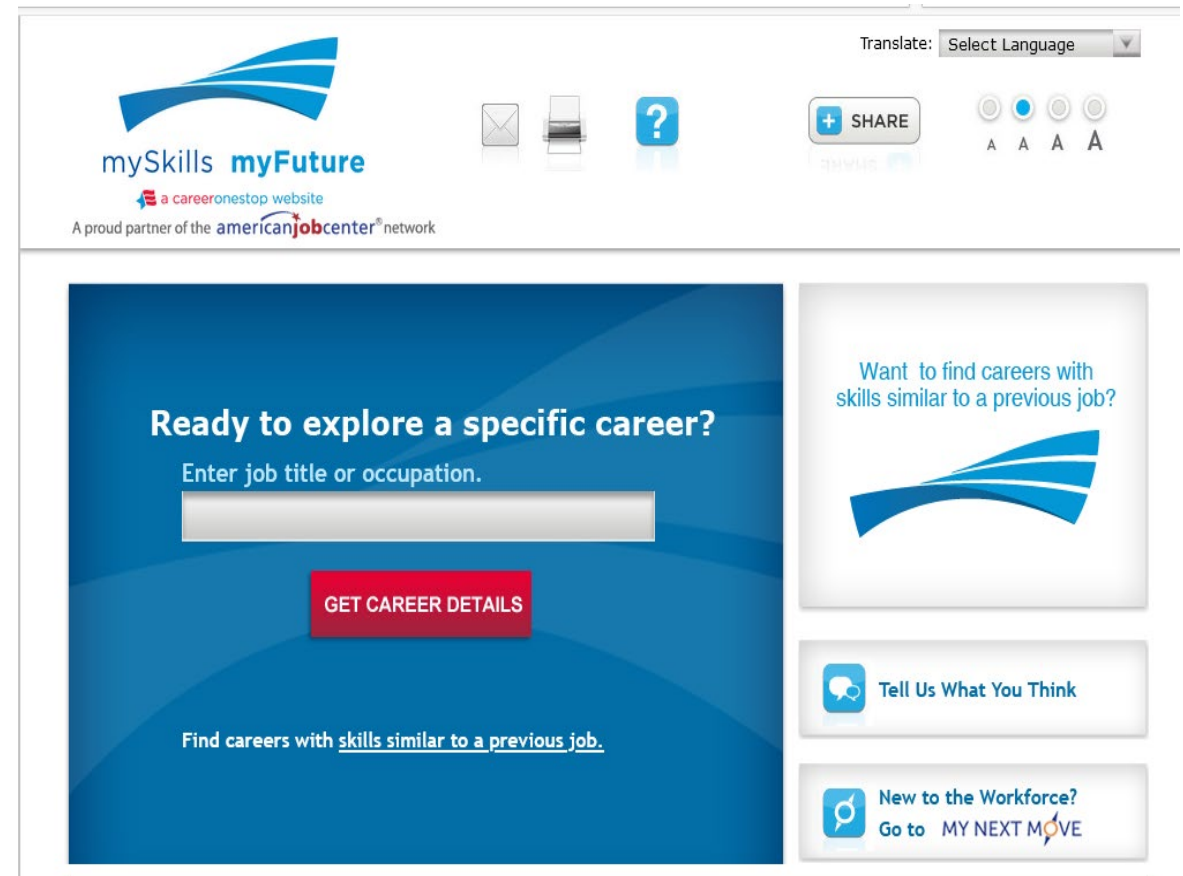
Assess Interests and Explore Careers

CareerOneStop Videos

mySkills - myFuture - Website

Assess Interests and Explore Careers (continued)

- My Next Move

- O*Net Career Exploration Tools
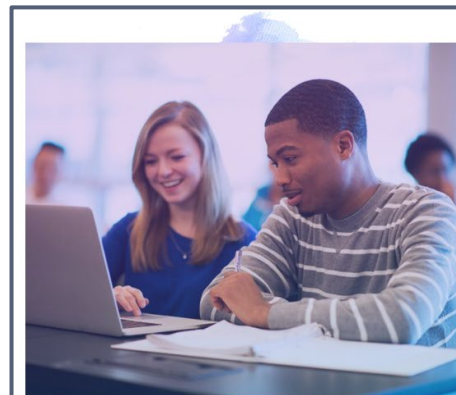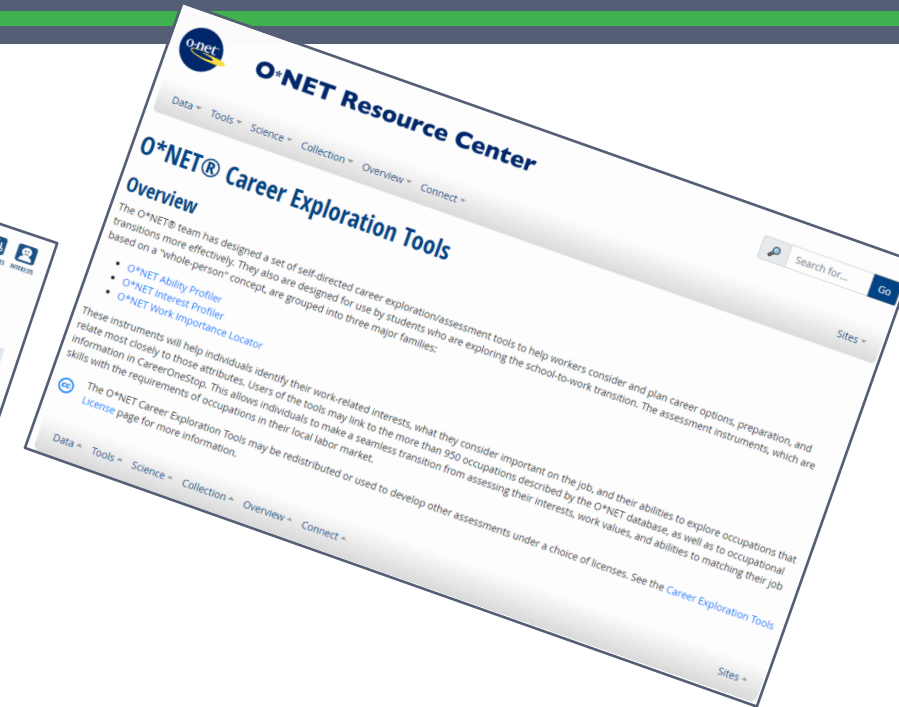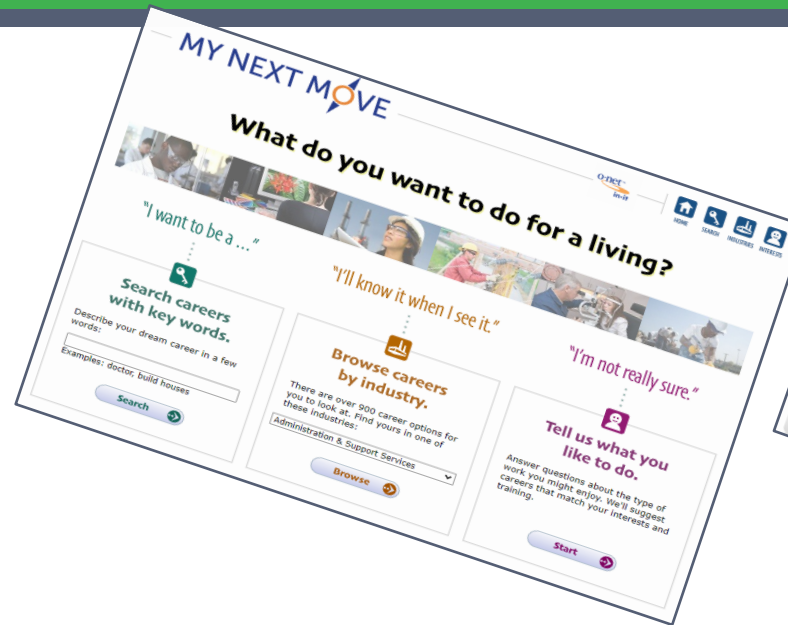
- https://virtualjobshadow.com/

COVID-19 Resources

OSERS
- Questions and Answers on Providing Services to Children with Disabilities During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Outbreak (March 2020)
- Supplemental Fact Sheet Addressing the Risk of COVID-19 in Preschool, Elementary and Secondary Schools While Serving Children with Disabilities
- OSERS 2020 Transition Guidance Letter

- NTACT: https://www.transitionta.org/covid19
- WINTAC: http://www.wintac.org/content/covid-19-resources
- WINTAC: http://www.wintac.org/content/resources-distance-service-delivery
- Transition Coalition blog: https://transitioncoalition.org/blog/webinar/transition-activities-online-athome/
- NCSI COVID-19 Resource Hub: https://ncsi.wested.org/
- CASE Novel Coronavirus Resources: https://www.casecec.org/
- VR Innovative Training Center COVID-19 Resources - https://gwcrcre.org/cit-vr

US Dept. of Education
- COVID-19 ("Coronavirus") Information and Resources for Schools and School Personnel https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus

RSA
- COVID-19 Frequently-Asked Questions: WIOA Performance Accountability Provisions https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/rsa/supporting/rsa-faq-wioa-vr-covid-19-03-26-2020.pdf

Thank You

WINTAC Pre-Employment Transition Services Team

WINTAC Pre-Employment Transition Services
The George Washington University
Center for Rehabilitation Counseling Research and Education (CRCRE)

http://www.wintac.org/topic-areas/pre-employment-transition-services

Follow us on