

Memorandum of Understanding
Among
The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation,
The New Mexico Department of Labor,
Developmental Disabilities Support Division,
Dona Ana Community College (Las Cruces Branch),
Public Health Division's Children's Medical Services, and
The Gadsden Independent School District

1. Purpose

The purpose of this agreement is to facilitate the integration and coordination of services to eligible secondary students. The intent is to integrate the activities of education and rehabilitation services to provide a continuum of services that will meet the needs of all students with disabilities. The integrated continuum of services will:

- A. Assure that all students with disabilities as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA) receive appropriate and necessary services;
- B. Coordinate services to students with disabilities so as to maximize learner outcomes and provide for a successful transition to appropriate employment and independent living;
- C. Formalize referral procedures to an appropriate agency(ies) to ensure that students with disabilities are provided opportunities with services;
- D. Ensure joint planning of Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Individual Transitional Plans (ITPs), Individual Service Plans (ISPs), and Individual Plans for Employment (IPEs) for each student with disabilities eligible for Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and/or Developmental Disabilities Support Division within the Gadsden Independent School District;
- E. Ensure coordination of services delivery and follow-up along with education/social/rehabilitation services continuum as identified in an IEP which includes an ITP, ISP, and IPE if needed as in D (above); and
- F. Ensure joint training between cooperating agencies for staff development and other activities.

11. Goal

This Agreement will provide for the unified delivery of integrated transition planning services to Gadsden Independent School District Special Education students, ages 14-21. The intent is to create an integrated service system flexible enough to meet the needs of special education students within the available resources. The focus is on maximizing opportunities for students while eliminating limitations and obstacles.

111. Eligibility

Students with disabilities 14-21 years old may be eligible for services from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) or from the Developmental

Disabilities Support Division (DDSD) or from New Mexico Department of Labor (DOL) or from Public Health Division's Children's Medical Services (PHD/CMS) under this memorandum of understanding if they meet the following requirements:

- A. The student has a currently approved IEP that includes an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) in place and/or
- B. The student has a disabling condition that constitutes a substantial impediment to employment.

IV. Functions and Responsibilities

The State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) (Las Cruces Office), The Developmental Disabilities Support Division (DDSD), the Department of Labor (DOL), Dona Ana Branch Community College (DABCC), Public Health Division's Children's Medical Services (PHD/CMS) and the Gadsden Independent School District (GISD) agree to cooperate in providing appropriate transition services to students with physical, mental, and/or learning disabilities in order to assure the student's entry into suitable employment and independent living. It is mutually agreed that the following steps and procedures will be utilized to accomplish this goal and that each agency or program will maintain a documentation of its actions for historic and/or other purposes. Each agency will provide a copy of this Memorandum of Understanding to each employee who is assigned tasks directly or indirectly related to this Memorandum of Understanding. Documentation of this action will be maintained by each agency or program.

- A. At the beginning of each school year the Gadsden Independent School District Transition Team will meet with the appropriate school personnel, i.e., counselors, diagnosticians, department heads, and principals to provide an overview of the comprehensive transition services available, including eligibility and services offered.
- B. No later than the student's eighth grade year, the Gadsden Independent School District Team will refer students with mental disabilities and/or physical disabilities to the Developmental Disabilities Support Division (DDSD) assisting families with filling out forms such as the Development Disabilities Waiver and The Match for Services Form. The Gadsden Independent School District Release of Records Form will also be presented to the student/parent for signature so that once processed by DDSD, eligibility/allocation results may be reported to the school district.
- C. During the senior year, students with learning disabilities and milder mental or physical conditions will meet with a GISD Transition Team member to fill out intake information for the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Then a meeting will be scheduled with the appropriate representative of DVR. A DVR Release of Records Form will be secured by the school prior to the first meeting so that Diagnostic data may be released to DVR. The student and or the parent and the appropriate Transition Specialist will be notified of the eligibility decision. The DVR counselor will develop an IPE or make a vocational recommendation for each eligible student. DVR will provide eligible students, as

resources allow, vocational rehabilitation services directly related to achieving the planned employment outcome. These services must be specified in the IPE.

- D. The DVR Counselor, the DOL Counselor, and Dona Ana Branch Community College representative will provide informal consultative service in the area of career planning to students and appropriate school personnel when requested.
- E. Interagency meetings will take place regularly between DVR, DDS, DOL, Dona Ana Branch Community College, and the Gadsden Independent School District.

The Gadsden Independent School District will:

1. Provide transition services for students with disabilities receiving special education classes and student receiving 504 services;
2. Identify those students with disabilities in their school district for whom support is necessary as soon as possible, but not later than age 14;
3. Maintain active membership on the Gadsden Independent School District Transition Team (Organizations signing this MOU);
4. Coordinate and participate in joint in-service training with DVR, DDS, DOL, DABCC, PHD/CMS and the Gadsden Independent School District personnel;
5. Identify the transition service needs of each student through a Transition Rating Scale and document such on the IEP no later than the eighth grade,
6. In cooperation with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Developmental Disabilities Support Division identify appropriate adult service agency (ies) to provide ongoing support to the eligible students before/after exiting the school system as appropriate;
7. Develop an Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) as a component of each student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) beginning at age 14; (The purpose of this plan is to determine the activities and support services necessary for the student to successfully participate in work, home, and community settings.)
8. Identify and implement appropriate linkages with Gadsden Independent School District students in need of transition services. This must occur no later than the year the student becomes age 14 and be documented using the Gadsden Independent School District IEP form;
9. Develop and implement a school-based case management system. The system will identify a case manager for every special education student;
10. Refer students for vocational rehabilitation in a timely manner with appropriate supporting documentation;
11. Plan for post-secondary services for students beginning no later than age 14;
12. Coordinate with Social Security Administration concerning those students who are participating in work-study work experiences programs and who are also receiving SSI/SSDI.

Community College, as appropriate, a minimum of four weeks prior to an IEP being conducted for seniors/exiting students so above mentioned agencies can schedule to attend the IEP; (Gadsden Transition Coordinator/Counselor assigned to that campus will be in attendance.)

14. Maintain an IEP for each high school student ages 14-21 with a disability;
15. Share student data, to the extent allowed by law, to evaluate the effectiveness of special education and rehabilitation services; and
16. Collaborate to create and maintain a region-wide referral system to participating agencies.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will:

1. Provide transition services to eligible students with disabilities who are receiving special education services and 504 services;
2. In cooperation with the Developmental Disabilities Support Division, the Gadsden Independent School District, and the Dona Ana Branch Community College identify the appropriate adult service agency(ies) to provide ongoing support to the students after exiting the school system as appropriate;
3. Maintain active membership on the Gadsden Independent School District Community Transition Team, i.e. parties to this Memorandum of Understanding; and
4. Provide agency service information to the schools for their students/parents.

The New Mexico Department of Labor Will:

1. Acknowledge its responsibility to provide transition services to eligible students with disabilities who are receiving special education services;
2. In cooperation with DDSD, DVR, Dona Ana Community College, and the Gadsden Independent School District, identify the appropriate adult service agency(ies) to provide ongoing support to the student after exiting the school system;
3. Make presentations to parents, student and school officials to explain post- secondary labor employment options;
4. Assist parents/students with filling out applications for labor programs
5. Serve as a regional resource for inquiries to the New Mexico Department of Labor and its services as necessary;
6. Provide training to other parties of this MOU as needed; and
7. Attend IEP meetings with seniors/exiting students who qualify for Department of Labor services as staffing allows.

The Developmental Disabilities Support Division (Southwest Office) will:

1. Provide transition services to eligible students with disabilities who are receiving special education services;

2. In cooperation with the Gadsden Independent School District, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Dona Ana Branch Community College, identify the appropriate adult service agency(ies) who will provide ongoing support to the eligible student before/after exiting the school system as appropriate;
3. Maintain active membership on the Gadsden Independent School District Community Transition Team;
4. Make presentations to parents and school officials to explain the application process, eligibility determination, and person-centered planning;
5. Assist parents/consumers with the eligibility and services application process as needed;
6. Serve as a regional resource for inquiries for long term services as needed and
7. Provide training to the other parties of this Memorandum on an as needed basis;
8. Case managers contracted through the Developmental Disabilities Support Division will be invited to attend all IEP meetings of eligible developmentally disabled students according to the priorities as determined by staffing; and
9. Collaborate to create and maintain a region-wide referral system to participating agencies for as long as the Division maintains a data system;
10. Notify Public Health Division's Children's Medical Services (PHD/CMS) to assure that medical/transition services are in place.

Dona Ana Branch Community College will:

1. Provide transition services to eligible students with disabilities who are receiving special education services;
2. Maintain active membership on the Gadsden Independent School District Transition Team;
3. In cooperation with the Developmental Disabilities Support Division and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation identify the appropriate adult service agency(ies) to provide ongoing support to the eligible students from the Gadsden Independent School District who will attend Dona Ana Branch Community College.
4. With parent/student permission, provide information regarding student performance to participating agency(ies) as soon as possible;
5. Agree to assign a community college representative to serve as the school contact with Department of Vocational Rehabilitation , the Developmental Disabilities Support Division and the Gadsden Independent School District;
6. Include DVR area counselors, DDSD personnel/case workers, and the Gadsden Independent School District in transition planning efforts for students with disabilities so that vocational services meet students needs;
7. Share student data, to the extent allowed by law, to evaluate the effectiveness of special education and rehabilitation services;
8. Create and maintain a region wide referral system to participating agencies; and
9. Provide vocational testing/assessments when practical.

PV. Referral Procedures

The Gadsden Independent School District will be the lead agency in the referral process. Listed below are the steps to be taken by the Gadsden Independent School District to refer students to agencies providing support and/or funding for students with disabilities. It is the intent of all of the organizations to share information/records to the greatest extent allowed by law. No information will be shared without a signed release by the student/parent. An original of each signed release by the student/parent shall be retained by the agency that information is released to.

Referrals to: The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

No later than the end of the Fall Semester, the Gadsden Independent School District Transition Coordinator/Rehabilitation Counselor assigned to each high school will meet with the seniors/exiting students in consideration for DVR services. A DVR intake packet will be filled out with the student to include a signed GISD Release of Records Form. Before the initial DVR interview, the Transition Coordinator/Counselor will secure the Diagnostic Report/s and then schedule a subsequent meeting for the student and the appropriate DVR counselor assigned to that school. The parent(s) will also be invited.

Referrals to New Mexico Department of Labor

Upon request the Gadsden Independent School District Transition Coordinators will provide the New Mexico Department of Labor a list of graduating/exiting seniors with disabilities.

Referrals to: Developmental Disabilities Support Division

It is the responsibility of the GISD Transition Coordinator/Counselor to obtain a roster and check the status of each student with a disability more severe than Specific Learning Disability for the High School that they are assigned to, no later than September 30 of each school year. The Coordinator/Counselor must maintain in his or her records eligibility letters procured from DDS regarding status for at least five years past the student's graduation date, so much of the status checking can be done in-house. A copy of the letter must be also placed in the state eligibility folder. If by checking the rosters/records it is found that a case has never been opened or for some reason has been closed, it is the responsibility of the appropriate Transition Coordinator/Counselor to obtain a completed Developmental Disabilities Application and a Match for Services Form. In addition, if the applications for the Developmental Disabilities Waiver and the Match for Services form have been procured by a GISD employee, it will not require a Release of Records Form to obtain the status information. DDS case managers will have the responsibility of sending a copy of the eligibility letter to the appropriate GISD Transition Coordinator/Counselor or will release the status of a student upon request. (Basic qualifications for long-term services through DDS are that the child have an IQ below 70, or have a severe medical condition. In addition, an adaptive behavior scale indicating the functional ability of the student must be provided.) It is the responsibility of DDS to notify PHD/CMS of a student with medical needs so that the medical/transition services will be in place.

Referrals to: Dona Ana Branch Community College

The Gadsden Independent School District will refer students to the Dona Ana Branch Community College on an individual basis. Students will be advised of their responsibility to declare their disability status in order to receive services do to the regulations under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and under the federal mandates of Section 504.

Referrals to: Public Health Division/Children's Medical Services

Children's Medical Services will receive referrals of youth identified by Individual Educational Plans that are affected by chronic illness and/or developmental disabilities and are in need of medical case management in order to enhance support of transition planning. Children's Medical Services will coordinate other learning opportunities for CMS eligible clients who may not be eligible for mainstream services.

VI. Effective Date and Termination

This Memorandum of Understanding shall take when signed by all parties, and shall remain in effect until terminated. Any party may terminate its participation in this MOU by providing ninety days advance notice to the other party(ies).

In witness thereof, the following signatures are affixed:

Ronald Haugen, Superintendent of Gadsden Independent School District

Ginny Johnson, Bureau Chief, Long Term Services Division Intake and Eligibility Unit

Gary Beene, Director, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation

Richard Wagner, Director New Mexico Department of Labor

Dr. Margie Huerta, Campus Executive Officer, Dona Ana Branch Community College

Lynn Christenson, Children's Medical Services