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Governor's Council on Disability: Education Position Paper

It is the position of the Governor's Council on Disability to promote equity and inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of the education process

Guiding principles for individuals with disabilities:

- Inclusiveness in all aspects of school, college, university, and community
- Inter-agency collaboration to advance the rights of individuals
- Full access to all curriculum and career readiness programs
- Actively promote principles of self-determination, which is critical to educational success and attainment
- Student-led Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan meetings
- Promote self-awareness of strengths, preferences, interests, and needs for individuals with disabilities and their parents/guardians
- Promote an accessible career readiness pathway
- Promote community-based instruction
- Place an emphasis on the individuals with disabilities' success, integrity, and continuous improvement
- Promote safe and bully-free learning environments and transportation environments
- An understanding of the principles of equity that promotes opportunity for all
- Prepare individuals with disabilities for the future by providing information on strategies of independent living
- Transition planning is a shared inter-agency responsibility among the Missouri Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and other state agencies, county-funded organizations and a network of community organizations
- Engage in effective individualized transition planning in the IEP or 504, by addressing gaps in skills needed to access and attain post-secondary goals, to facilitate successful transition from school to adult life and increase workforce participation
 - The workforce participation rate of individuals with disabilities (ages 16-64) is 37.8%, compared to 77.1% for individuals without a disability.
For youth between the ages of 16 to 19, the workforce participation rate is 28.9% for those with a disability in comparison to 37.2% for those without a disability. (Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, US Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy, 2022
<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/research-evaluation/statistics>)
- Promote inter-agency collaboration among all private and public post-secondary educational institutions

Recommendations:

- Review and adopt best practices from other states and organizations
- Improve educational achievement and goal attainments of learners with disabilities while in the Pre-K-12 process
- Schools, institutions, and individuals shall show accountability for graduation with at least the minimum core competencies and grade-level expectations
- Promote funding and resources at the post-secondary level for individuals with disabilities for access to higher education:
 1. For support and accommodations to achieve parity with learners without disabilities
 2. To reduce structural barriers on campus, be they physical or policy-related
 3. To promote affinity groups to increase the sense of belonging for learners with disabilities
 4. To promote diversity training for faculty with respect to individuals with disabilities
 5. To promote a culture of inclusion in higher education that goes beyond ADA requirements

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