

## Georgia (GA) WIOA Matrix

### Employment First State Leadership Mentor Program (EFSLMP)

No specific disability related information found.

### Customized Employment

- Development of comprehensive array of service for the over 3,000 project participants in either a school or community, integrated setting: Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) (including assessments for determining level of understanding career pathways selection for the participants); CAPI; and. customized employment to address the complexities of individualization. (Page 247)

**DBHDD:** GVRA has a formal MOU with DBHDD that utilizes the SE IPS model. This MOU covers both the behavioral health and developmental disabilities divisions of DBHDD to serve those individuals using Supported and Customized Employment.

This agreement allows VR services to collaborate statewide with a network of providers including CSBs for the provision of SES. These agencies prepare VR clients for permanent jobs through supported employment and complementary services. The CSBs provide a wide scope of outpatient, day, residential housing, and community-based services that include SE. The Memorandum of Understanding with DBHDD allows for improved coordination of efforts to serve those with the most significant disabilities. (Page 253)

1. Disability-Specific Topics (including Positive Behavioral Supports training for counselors who have clients with Most Significant Disabilities, Deaf Culture Literacy, and Individualized Placement and Support Training for Counselors Handling Clients with Severe & Persistent Mental Illness.
2. Customized Employment Training.
3. Case Management.
4. Eligibility for Services.
5. IPE Development.
6. Varying Types of Caseloads (including Supported Employment and Transition).
7. Values-based Training for Persons Working with Individuals with Disabilities.

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8. Collaborative Training with School Personnel on Creative Individual Assessments.
9. Transition Resource Planning.
10. Road Map for Services Available to Georgians.
11. Job Development.
12. Employment Engagement Training (developing a work plan and work goal).
13. Compliance Training (including Sexual Harassment and Anti-Discrimination).

VR continues to identify current information from research, rehabilitation trends and professional resources. This information is provided to agency staff through a variety of methods, including training at the State, quadrant and local level. Most recently this training has been focused on Customized Employment. (Page 269)

Access to Supported Employment: There are concerns that there is both a paucity of Supported Employment Providers, and that from the supported employment providers' perspective, SES are cost-prohibitive. Concerns regarding access to Supported Employment have highlighted the following needs for services expansion:

1. Increase in SES, especially for those individuals with significant disabilities. Many of these individuals have limited or no access to SES.
2. Increase in both services and actual Customized Employment opportunities.
3. Increase in the availability in specific skills training that is actually aligned with real jobs within the state and less on generic training. (Page 271)

## Braiding/Blending Resources

Describe how the designated State unit will collaborate with the State agency responsible for administering each of the following programs to develop opportunities for competitive integrated employment, to the greatest extent practicable:

### **1. THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT;**

GVRA has established collaborative relationships with multiple State agencies in order to more efficiently and effectively assist individuals with disabilities in achieving employment in an integrated setting. In some cases, these collaborative relationships have been developed to enhance the working relationship between the VR program and other State agencies. Several of these relationships have been formalized through Interagency Cooperative Agreements that were described earlier in Sections (e) Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations and (f) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of SES. GVRA has identified other State agencies in which formal agreements need to be developed to support collaboration and seamless service delivery statewide. (Page 258)

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### Section 188/Section 188 Guide

Describe how the one-stop delivery system (including one-stop center operators and the one-stop delivery system partners), will comply with section 188 of WIOA (if applicable) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) with regard to the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This also must include a description of compliance through providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Describe the State's one-stop center certification policy, particularly the accessibility criteria.

Georgia's One-Stop delivery system is focused on ensuring universal access across its workforce system. The State and its local partners, maintain compliance with the provisions of WIOA Section 188 which require programmatic and physical accessibility. Through monitoring performed at both the state and local level, Georgia ensures that all One-Stops are in compliance with Section 188 of WIOA, the ADA, and other applicable regulations. Individuals who seek to utilize Georgia's workforce system can expect facilities, whether physical or virtual, to meet federally-mandated accessibility standards. In addition, the State maintains a Methods of Administration which details how compliance with WIOA Section 188 will be maintained. The Methods of Administration is a "living" document which ensures current federal regulations and directives are implemented at the state and local level as quickly as possible.

Separately, as a component of one-stop certification, the State collects a business plan from each LWDA which details how a new one-stop will satisfy accessibility requirements and the provisions of WIOA Section 188. In order to be certified, each comprehensive one-stop must satisfy the requisite federal criteria. This process ensures universal access to programmatic services and facilities are maintained across the state.

Moreover, the One-Stop Integration Working Group is identifying additional criteria which will be assessed during the one-stop certification process. This may lead to additional accessibility requirements being incorporated into the one-stop certification process. Through the One-Stop Integration Working Group, the State continues to prioritize programmatic and physical accessibility in the one-stop certification process. The One-Stop Integration Working Group will provide guidance and technical assistance to LWDBs prior to the completion of LWDB certification, prior to July 1, 2017. (Page 144-145)

### DEI/Disability Resource Coordinators

No specific disability related information found.

### Other State Programs/Pilots that Support Competitive Integrated Employment

A key component of achieving the goal of increased participation in the workforce system is ensuring that the one-stop system provides services to individuals with barriers to employment. Each of Georgia's core partners are working to reduce barriers to employment among the workforce population in support of this goal. Through their involvement in the WIOA implementation working

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groups, each partner has contributed to the conversation to ensure that the workforce system provides easy access for these targeted populations, and ensures that all services are available to help remove barriers to employment. Additionally, these partners have been integral in the development of sector partnerships in each of the twelve planning regions, contributing to the discussions as they develop pathways into high demand careers. One of the key issues that the sector partnerships will address is ensuring that the career pathways are accessible to individuals with barriers. In order to receive grant funding, regions will have to specifically address this issue. The Disability Employment Initiative is currently being piloted in two LWDA's to customize employment offerings to individuals with disabilities. The state has already begun to collect and distributed best practices from this initiative to other LWDA's. In addition to efforts such as Operation: Workforce; the State has also made available strategic grants to serve transitioning services members and their families, ex-offenders, and at-risk youth. These grants enable LWDA's to implement unique programming that will serve as models throughout the rest of the state. (Page 65)

The state has determined that one of the most effective strategies for serving Georgia's special populations is through the provision of targeted grants using Governor's reserve funding. The grants enable LWDA's to conduct pilot programs without using local formula funds. If service strategies for special populations are found to be successful, LWDA's are then able to integrate those strategies into their formula funded services. This alleviates much of the risk of building new programs while still promoting innovation. An example of this strategy was the state's Ex-Offenders Pilot Program. Through this pilot, the State made a grant opportunity available to every LWDA that had a transition center within its geographic boundaries. To be awarded the grant, the LWDA's had to propose effective strategies that would be utilized to training individuals that resided within transition centers. The LWDA's had to choose training programs for occupations that were in-demand, paid a livable wage in the region, and were appropriate for an individual who did not have a clean background. The state assessed the proposal and awarded funds to the LWDA's with the most innovative plans. The pilots were highly successful and enabled LWDA's to enhance relationships with community partners and better serve ex-offenders. Beginning in calendar year 2016, the state plans to expand upon the successes of this grant, by awarding at least five special populations grants. The subject of the grants will coincide with the specified populations in the Governor's vision. The state will work with the LWDA's to ensure consistent and innovative services are delivered through grants. (Page 77)

Georgia VR does not currently have any cooperative agreements with State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. However, VR does work closely with the Georgia Assistive Technology Act Program. Currently, Tools for Life loans equipment for clients to try prior to purchasing the equipment. Additionally, GVRA is one of the pilot sites for Tools for Life and the State ADA office to test equipment that is under consideration for purchase by the State. Tools for Life provides training to VR's Assistive Work Technology team. (Page 245)

VR does not have cooperative agreements with non-educational agencies serving out-of-school youth. GVRA has partnered with DJJ to pilot a program with the YDC in Augusta. Through this pilot, GVRA worked with the mental health unit to develop an effective and efficient process for transitioning youth out of the facility and into employment or training opportunities upon their release. Additionally, the agency is finalizing a referral process by which the YDC will refer all youth whom they believe has a disability and may be appropriate for VR services.

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GVRA has an established referral process with contracted service providers and strongly encourages them to refer out-of-school youth. The agency partners with Parent to Parent of Georgia, a non-profit organization that provides advocacy and training for families of children and youth with disabilities. Lastly, the agency is a participant in GaDOE-Coordinated Career Academic Education/Project Success and Career Technical Instruction grant which provides intervention support services to students from special populations enrolled in career, technical and agricultural education courses. (Page 246)

Developing and implementing a model transition demonstration project, and GVRA plans to use the current federal Georgia Career Pathways grant as an instrumental pilot to test and measure and duplicate those practices in collaboration with the local school districts that tend to be most effective in producing desired transition outcomes;

- Continuing to expand and establish multistate, regional and/or statewide partnership involving key stakeholders, agencies, organizations and businesses to improve the overall success of the PETS services; and
- Disseminating information and successful strategies that improve the overall success of the PETS services, especially as it relates to individuals of the traditionally underserved or unserved populations within Georgia. (Page 258)

As described in Section (c2) State Programs Carried Out under Section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, GVRA works closely with the Georgia Assistive Technology Act Program. Currently, Tools for Life loans equipment for clients to try prior to purchasing the equipment. Additionally, GVRA is one of the pilot sites for Tools for Life and the State ADA office to test equipment that is under consideration for purchase by the State. Tools for Life provides training to Georgia VR's Assistive Work Technology team.

Internally, GVRA employs occupational therapists and rehabilitation engineers who provide assistive technology consultation and assist in equipment acquisition for those individuals with disabilities who are served by the agency. The idea of having a VR Counselor who works closely with the IPS SE program ensures these individuals are afforded proper access to Assistive Work Technology and sensory services. GVRA has plans to continue expanding sensory and AWT access through VR involvement with clients with sensory disabilities. (Page 287)

- Develop new and innovative services for both in-school and out-of-school career pathways. As a part of this, GVRA will utilize its current Georgia Career Pathways federal demonstration grant as the method to pilot new services that can be added to the array of PETS services. This will be done in collaboration with GaDOE, the individual local school district, and the local employers and businesses. For example, based on local employer involvement and feedback, GVRA may ask the local school district to tailor its current career pathway curriculum to fit the specific needs of the local employers, or may ask the school to include more opportunities for work-based learning, pre-apprenticeships, etc., especially for the PETS students. As new services are piloted, they will be evaluated and improved as needed, with a long range to roll out successful new services statewide. (Page 288)

GVRA and VR implemented a plan to increase the salaries of CRCs.

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- VR collaborated with Kennesaw State University's Inclusion Program to develop a cooperative agreement for a VR Counselor to be onsite to serve students with developmental disabilities.
- GVRA and VR collaborated with DBHDD to increase and enhance services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness, and for those with developmental disabilities.
- VR collaborated with Bobby Dodd Industries, a CRP in Atlanta, to develop a pilot program targeting transition students with significant disabilities who typically drop out of the program after graduating from high school. This pilot will keep them involved through social media and online technology for job clubs and other activities leading to employment. (Page 292)

The primary strategy used by GVRA was the development of the formal MOU with DBHDD that has increased and enhanced services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness and for those with developmental disabilities. In coordination with the Georgia DBHDD, GVRA also implemented an IPS pilot, which included cross-training among the staff of both agencies.

The Individual Placement and Supports-pilot model is a very specific type of Supported Employment with Behavioral Health at this time. The IPS approach assumes everyone can work with the right supports. The person decides when and how they want to go to work. There are no prerequisites (work adjustment, pre-vocational, sheltered, enclave, work evaluations, or otherwise) to go to work. Unlike other approaches, IPS-SE has been researched and proven to achieve higher rates of employment for people with severe and persistent mental illness. (Page 293)

## Financial Literacy/Economic Advancement

Through the workforce system, the State will provide youth participants the opportunity to become involved in 14 required youth elements which are listed in the Youth program elements section:

1. Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction and Evidence Based Dropout Prevention and Recovery Strategies can allow a participant to attain their secondary school diploma or a recognized equivalent.
2. Alternative Secondary School Services or Dropout Recovery Services show students alternative learning environments that focus on their skills, abilities, and learning style to prevent them from dropping out of school.
3. Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences are structured learning programs that take place for a specific period.
4. Occupational Skills Training allows participants to become proficient in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at all different levels.
5. Education Offered Concurrently with and in the same context as Workforce Preparation integrates training and education.
6. Leadership Development includes the development of positive social and civic behaviors.
7. Supportive Services are in place to allow youth participants to partake in WIOA activities.

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8. Adult Mentoring is a 12-month program that matches a youth participant with an adult that will guide the mentee.
9. Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling gives youth participants the opportunity to meet with counselors for career and academic counseling.
10. Financial Literacy Education informs participants of smart financial decisions and habits.
11. Entrepreneurial Skills Training educates youth participants on the skills needed to start and maintain a small business.
12. Labor Market and Employment Information Services provide information about in-demand industry sectors.
13. Activities that Prepare for Transition to Postsecondary Education and Training allows for career exploration and research.
14. Follow-up Services are available to youth participants once they have exited the program. (Page 184)

Services are provided to eligible youth participants through a network of youth service providers, which are competitively procured by Georgia's 19 LWDA's. Georgia is committed to providing, through LWDA's, the following required youth elements:

1. Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction and Evidence based Drop-out Prevention and Recovery Strategies;
2. Alternative Secondary School Services or Drop-out Recovery Services;
3. Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences;
4. Occupational Skills Training;
5. Education Offered Concurrently with and in the same context as Workforce Preparation;
6. Leadership Development;
7. Supportive Services;
8. Adult Mentoring;
9. Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling;
10. Financial Literacy Education;
11. Entrepreneurial Skills Training;
12. Labor Market and Employment Information Services;
13. Activities that Prepare for Transition to Post-secondary Education and Training; and
14. Follow-up Services. (Page 195)

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### Benefits

TAA coordinates and facilitates worker orientations to inform the workers about the benefits and services they may receive as well as the eligibility requirements associated with each benefit. The worker orientations often include LWDA representatives to provide guidance on demand occupations and available training in the LWDA. DOL staff assist workers with TAA registration and filing UI claims. (Page 162)

x. The Georgia SRC strongly supports amending current 361.45(c)(2) by adding a new paragraph (v) that would require a DSU to provide eligible individuals who are entitled to Social Security benefits under titles II or XVI of the Social Security Act, information on available assistance and supports available to them when entering the workforce (i.e., benefits planning and financial supports). (Page 239)

**Non-Disability Specific Barriers:** There is on-going feedback for assistance to address some of the non-disability specific barriers to employment such as transportation, disincentives through entitlement benefits, and lack of family support for employment. (Page 271)

### School to Work Transition

Project SEARCH is only offered in a subset of communities across Georgia. The Project SEARCH High School Transition Program is a unique, one-year, school-to-work program for young people with intellectual and developmental disabilities that takes place entirely at the workplace. This innovative, business-led model of school-to-work transition features total workplace immersion, which facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction; career exploration; and hands-on, worksite-based training and support. The goal for each student is competitive employment. Project SEARCH was developed at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, and has been implemented at several sites in Georgia through a statewide initiative involving the collaborative effort of DoDD, a division of GVRA, area school systems, and several of Georgia's leading employers. GVRA is working to add Project Search partners across the state to create more opportunities for youth with significant disabilities in obtaining real-life work experience that improves successful transitions from school to adult life. (Page 242)

ii. Goal II - Expand transition services to assist more students with disabilities to go from high school to work or post-secondary education/training. (Page 291)

### Data Collection

The primary data collection and reporting system used by GVRA through the VR program is the Libera System 7 electronic case management system, and the data collected is specific to individuals served through the VR program. At the current time, neither the Libera System 7 case management system, nor its data, is integrated with all the programs and activities present in the one-stop centers. (Page 117)

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### Small Business/Entrepreneurship

Through the workforce system, the State will provide youth participants the opportunity to become involved in 14 required youth elements which are listed in the Youth program elements section:

1. Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction and Evidence Based Dropout Prevention and Recovery Strategies can allow a participant to attain their secondary school diploma or a recognized equivalent.
2. Alternative Secondary School Services or Dropout Recovery Services show students alternative learning environments that focus on their skills, abilities, and learning style to prevent them from dropping out of school.
3. Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences are structured learning programs that take place for a specific period.
4. Occupational Skills Training allows participants to become proficient in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at all different levels. (5) Education Offered Concurrently with and in the same context as Workforce Preparation integrates training and education.
5. Leadership Development includes the development of positive social and civic behaviors.
6. Supportive Services are in place to allow youth participants to partake in WIOA activities.
7. Adult Mentoring is a 12-month program that matches a youth participant with an adult that will guide the mentee.
8. Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling gives youth participants the opportunity to meet with counselors for career and academic counseling.
9. Financial Literacy Education informs participants of smart financial decisions and habits.
10. Entrepreneurial Skills Training educates youth participants on the skills needed to start and maintain a small business.
11. Labor Market and Employment Information Services provide information about in-demand industry sectors.
12. Activities that Prepare for Transition to Postsecondary Education and Training allows for career exploration and research.
13. Follow-up Services are available to youth participants once they have exited the program. (Page 184)

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### Career Pathways

GVRA has a strong statewide presence with offices located in urban and rural areas to provide vocational rehabilitation services to assist in the workforce development of individuals with disabilities. GVRA intends to focus on both youth with disabilities and students with disabilities to better prepare them to become an integral part of Georgia's workforce. GVRA plans to offer an array of transition services to every public school district in the state with these services focused on assisting students with disabilities to either continue on to a post-secondary education or into a career pathway that is based on the specific skill requirements of Georgia's employers. GVRA plans to conduct outreach activities to identify and attract those youth with disabilities who are not in school to participate in community-based alternative career pathways that are also based on the specific skill requirements of Georgia's employers; or if appropriate, assist these youth in returning to school, either secondary or post-secondary. (Page 61)

Finally, GVRA has partnered with the Department of Education (DOE) in the current federal career pathways demonstration grant to expand transition services to students with disabilities and out-of-school youth that lead to real jobs in their communities. As a part of this partnership, GVRA intends to offer an array of transition services to the 50 intensive school districts identified by DOE as part of DOE's state systemic improvement plan (SSIP).(Page 78)

#### Youth with Disabilities

Georgia's one-stop system engages youth in customized career pathways and SES through collaborative partnerships between VR and other core partner programs in the one-stop system. Georgia recently developed a strategic initiative to expand and improve VR services for youth with disabilities who are either in-school or out-of-school. The purpose of this initiative is to braid existing and new resources to offer a robust, comprehensive array of VR services to all schools. Current VR program policies and procedures are being reviewed and amended to reflect this new way of doing business. The plan includes the provision of pre-employment transition services and timely development and approval of an individualized plan for employment for each youth served. One subset of the proposed plan to expand and improve VR services is a newly awarded, five-year demonstration project entitled "Georgia Pathways to Work" funded through the US Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration.

The proposed Georgia Pathways to Work program aims to significantly change the way GVRA does business statewide in transitioning students and youth with disabilities in partnership with the core program partners, GaDOE, as well as local employers. This will be accomplished by working with statewide initiatives such as HDCI to ensure responsiveness to the known workforce demands in Georgia, as well as supporting their efforts to better engage those with disabilities. The overall goal of the Georgia Pathways to Work program is to increase the number of youth who achieve competitive integrated employment through improving the 18 existing career pathways for students with disabilities, and creating community-based alternative career pathways for out-of-school youth. (Page 104)

1. Provide the vision and mission of the program or organization. Please include a description of the population that the program will serve, including how the program will meet the needs of persons with barriers to employment (e.g. Displaced Homemaker, Low-income

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Individual, Individuals with Disabilities, Single Parents, and other individuals as described in the law).

2. Provide a description (and supporting documents, when available) of the program's implementation of career pathways system as well as any cooperative agreements/contracts that the program has with other agencies and service providers for the delivery of adult education and literacy activities. Also, describe ways in which the program coordinates with other service providers to provide wrap-around services to participants (e.g. child care, transportation). (Page 221)
  - The depth, intensity, and rigor of the programs and activities offered by the eligible provider. The proposed program must incorporate the basic tenets of reading instruction. Attention will be given to the extent to which the eligible provider incorporates stringent research in the grant proposal submission and the development of the literacy program itself;
  - The extent to which the eligible provider's program is based on intense research and best practices;
  - The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates the effective use of technology for instruction, to include distance education, toward students' improved performance;
  - The eligible provider's demonstrated integration of contextualized instruction, to blend literacy skills, and preparation for transition to post-secondary education or entry into the workplace. Particular attention will be given to implementation of a career pathways system, activities that promote and lead to economic self-sufficiency, and the ability to exercise the full rights of citizenship; (Page 222)

The GVRA Executive Director provided an update to SRC members for their meeting in October on actions the agency has taken to implement WIOA recommendations for expanding and enhancing services for youth with disabilities. This work includes the receipt of two new federal grant awards:

1. U.S. Department of Labor, ETA's Disability Employment Initiative Cooperative Agreements: awarded directly to WFD in partnership with GVRA that focuses on the Georgia Disability Employment Initiative, Customized Career Pathways.
2. U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration's Demonstration and Training: Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities, Georgia Pathways to Work: awarded directly to GVRA that focuses on career pathways for youth with disabilities who are in school or out-of-school. In addition, GVRA has appointed a Director of Transition Services. This new position emphasizes the importance and significance of services to youth with disabilities before they leave high school. All of these activities are very innovative in preparing high school students with disabilities for competitive employment. The Council would like to see these programs expanded throughout the state as part of VR transition services. (Page 240)

Georgia Pathways to Work will change how organizations support the independence, employment, and career advancement of Georgians with disabilities. This will be accomplished by

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working with statewide initiatives such as Go Build Georgia and HDCI to be responsive to the known market demands for careers in Georgia, as well as supporting employer efforts to more effectively engage Georgians with disabilities. Furthermore, the overall goal of the Georgia Pathways to Work program is to increase the number of youth who achieve competitive, integrated employment through existing and customized pathways. Additionally, this demonstration project will be implemented to increase the average weekly wage and employer benefits of participants in each occupational cluster through successful completion of career pathways.

GVRA will develop policies that address the WIOA requirements, ensure coordination of services with GaDOE, and meet the needs of youth with disabilities in and out-of-school. VR program's current transition policies are as follows: (Page 248)

In collaboration with GaDOE, Burton Blatt Institute, and Poses Family Foundation, GVRA is customizing the landscape of career pathways for young Georgians with disabilities. The Georgia Pathways to Work program- E3: Explore, Engage, Employ- connects real people to real jobs that fill a real need for employers in their individual communities. The purpose of the Georgia Pathways to Work program is to improve the 18 existing career pathways by tailoring them to a variety of work opportunities available in the communities. The program will engage employers in the model design and employ social media strategies to connect youth across the nation. The project impact is to change how organizations support the independence, employment, and career advancement of Georgians with disabilities. (Page 247)

- Development of comprehensive array of service for the over 3,000 project participants in either a school or community, integrated setting: Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) (including assessments for determining level of understanding career pathways selection for the participants); CAPI; and. customized employment to address the complexities of individualization. (Page 247)

Georgia Pathways to Work will change how organizations support the independence, employment, and career advancement of Georgians with disabilities. This will be accomplished by working with statewide initiatives such as Go Build Georgia and HDCI to be responsive to the known market demands for careers in Georgia, as well as supporting employer efforts to more effectively engage Georgians with disabilities. Furthermore, the overall goal of the Georgia Pathways to Work program is to increase the number of youth who achieve competitive, integrated employment through existing and customized pathways. Additionally, this demonstration project will be implemented to increase the average weekly wage and employer benefits of participants in each occupational cluster through successful completion of career pathways.

GVRA will develop policies that address the WIOA requirements, ensure coordination of services with GaDOE, and meet the needs of youth with disabilities in and out-of-school. VR program's current transition policies are as follows:

- I. THE VR CSPM STATES THAT TRANSITION SERVICES ARE TO BE PROVIDED TO ELIGIBLE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES THAT FACILITATE THE TRANSITION FROM THE RECEIPT OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES IN SECONDARY SCHOOL TO THE RECEIPT OF VR SERVICES ORIENTED TOWARD AN EMPLOYMENT OUTCOME (CSPM 450.1.02). (Page 248)

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**WFD:** GVRA has partnered with WFD to engage youth in customized career pathways and supported employment. This work is funded through the USDOL ETA Disability Employment Initiative Cooperative Agreements. (Page 253)

- i. Implementing the Georgia Pathways to Work grant. As described in Section (d) Coordination with Education Officials, GVRA was awarded a grant through the Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration. The Georgia Pathways to Work will significantly change the way GVRA does business statewide in transitioning students and youth with disabilities in partnership with GaDOE, WFD, and local businesses and employers. The focus of this proposed model will be to increase access for students with disabilities to the existing high school career pathways, as well as customizing those existing career pathways for students with disabilities, and creating community-based alternative career pathways for those youth who are not in school. (Page 258)

Based on the feedback that GVRA has received, there were some common statewide needs identified for youth and students with disabilities. These include:

1. Increase and enhance transition services overall, especially to younger students, ages 14-16.
  2. Improve the quality of GVRA's transitional staff who are provided to the local school districts to ensure greater consistency of services.
  3. Expand the array of transition services made available to schools.
  4. Develop outreach efforts that engage youth with disabilities who have dropped out of school.
  5. Improve alignment of GVRA's transition services with the needs of the local school districts.
  6. Improve alignment of the VR program's training programs with the GaDOE's occupational clusters and career pathways. (Page 273)
- iii. Develop and implement a career pathway model of services for both in-school students and out-of-school youth that will include Vocational Rehabilitation services that are aligned with the current GaDOE's Occupational Clusters and curriculum-based career pathways; as well as alternative integrated community-based career pathways for those youth who are not in school.
  - iv. Partner with GaDOE, TCSG and USG to develop collaborative arrangements that improve the transition from high school to post-secondary education for students with disabilities. (Page 278)
    - Transform how GVRA and the VR services focus on youth and students with disabilities by integrating services agency-wide to make this population the highest focus.
    - Partner with GaDOE to increase and deliver a comprehensive array of transitional services to every school district within the state, including a special focus on career pathways and customized career pathways.
    - Develop a concentrated outreach effort to identify youth with disabilities that are not enrolled in school, and make the same robust services available to them.
    - Partner with the existing VR provider network to create community-based career pathways for youth not enrolled in school.

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- Partner with both TCSG and USG to improve post-secondary transition.

### Strategies:

- Develop formal third-party agreements with local employers to contribute to all career pathways available to youth with disabilities, both in school and out of school. (Page 286)

GVRA's goal to improve and expand VR services for students with disabilities by the following:

- Develop and offer a comprehensive array of services to all school districts statewide. Specifically, GVRA will develop all 5 required PETS activities, as well as the 9 authorized activities as may be needed, and offer those to every school district in the state of Georgia. These will include services that are VR Program-provided, as well as services provided through the VR provider network. GVRA's goal is to establish a minimum number of PETS services offered and provided to each school district within the state. Then as these PETS services are provided, the services will be continually evaluated and changed for improvements that produce the best outcomes, either competitive employment or postsecondary education and training. Where there is a paucity of such PETS services in particular geographic areas of the state, GVRA will solicit both new service providers and/or new services to ensure the minimum of necessary PETS services. It should be noted that all PETS services statewide will also offer both during school and after school hours of availability; and GVRA will work collaboratively with each local school district to best fit the services to the community.
- Develop new and innovative services for both in-school and out-of-school career pathways. As a part of this, GVRA will utilize its current Georgia Career Pathways federal demonstration grant as the method to pilot new services that can be added to the array of PETS services. This will be done in collaboration with GaDOE, the individual local school district, and the local employers and businesses. For example, based on local employer involvement and feedback, GVRA may ask the local school district to tailor its current career pathway curriculum to fit the specific needs of the local employers, or may ask the school to include more opportunities for work-based learning, pre-apprenticeships, etc., especially for the PETS students. As new services are piloted, they will be evaluated and improved as needed, with a long range to roll out successful new services statewide. (Page 288)

## Employment Networks

Section identified but no detailed information specifically addressing disability focused implementation. (Page 303)

\* All enclosed information is cited directly from final state plan as of February 23, 2017

Find your local state plans here: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/ras/wioa/state-plans/index.html>