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Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP)

NYSCB will encourage staff to provide in-service presentations for OPWDD and OMH staff regarding blindness, vision rehabilitation therapy, orientation and mobility, as well as job site accommodations. NYSCB recognizes that collaboration with these partner state agencies is integral to the employment success of individuals served by multiple agencies. These partners are collaborating on Governor Andrew Cuomo’s Employment First initiative and have already begun to address barriers that exist in the provision of services between agencies. NYSCB will continue to participate in these initiatives advocating for individuals who are legally blind receiving NYSCB services and will continue to work to provide seamless services to consumers in conjunction with our partner state agencies. (Page 254) Title IV

Expand working relationships with agencies that typically serve individuals with disabilities other than blindness and offer vocational training and placement services. NYSCB staff participated in Chapter 515 meetings and discussions. These meetings included, ACCES-VR, OPWDD, and OMH and focused on the challenges facing mutual consumers and agencies serving these consumers including individuals of minority backgrounds, individuals who are deaf-blind and those in more isolated communities. NYSCB also continued to partner with OMH and OPWDD on the Governor’s Employment First initiative, as well the continued development of the Supported Employment program.

Support and promote the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) in order to increase business opportunities and successful outcomes. NYSCB worked closely with the State Committee of Blind Vendors (SCBV) to increase capacity in BEP. NYSCB nominated a BEP licensed manager to serve on the State Rehabilitation Council to reinforce the ongoing efforts of the SRC in promoting and marketing the program. As FFY 2017 ended, NYSCB continued work on developing a model to enhance communications and collaboration among VR and BEP field offices to identify potential licensed managers and provide other types of general support for the program. (Page 288) Title IV

Customized Employment

ACCES-VR works cooperatively, collaboratively and collectively with primarily non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers to increase access to competitive, integrated employment opportunities. The district offices work with vocational rehabilitation service providers to allocate resources that meet participant and business needs for employment outcomes. These programs, such as situational assessment, community-based training, supported
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employment, job coaching and direct placement services, assist participants in achieving community-based outcomes. ACCES-VR has approximately 340 Core Rehabilitation Service contracts with providers to conduct many of these services. The five-year contracts that were implemented January 1, 2014, were to expand ACCES-VR’s capacity, improve the quality of service delivery and increase competitive integrated employment outcomes. The contracts include specific vocational rehabilitation service deliverables, criteria for monitoring contract compliance and criteria to monitor the quality of services. Payment rates were modified and new services were added. Due to new service requirements in WIOA, ACCES-VR is planning to implement a new CRS contract in July 2018. Current contracts were reviewed to assess the number of participants employed, receiving job development and supported employment that obtained employment, the length of time it takes a participant to become successfully employed, the number of hours a participant is working per week, and hourly wages earned by the participant. The new contracts will expand and enhance many service areas including the use of summer youth employment and pre-employment transition services for students. The new CRS RFP was issued in 2017 for organizations, and current providers to offer vocational rehabilitation entry, assessment, assistive technology, rehabilitation technology, work readiness, job placement, driver rehabilitation and related adjunct services for individuals with disabilities throughout New York State. Supported Employment intensive service plans will be offered up to 24 months long and extended services for youth will be made available (up to age 24 and/or up to 4 years). (Page 185) Title IV

NYC: AT WORK. This is a 3-year pilot project (hereafter, Project) being designed to focus on the following goals: 1) increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities by educating businesses about disability awareness and employing people with disabilities; 2) enlist businesses that successfully employ people with disabilities to mentor and provide technical assistance to other businesses; 3) seek commitment of businesses to adopt policies and practices within their organizations around outreach to and the hiring and training of people with disabilities; and, 4) successfully place a minimum of 200 individuals with disabilities in competitive integrated employment each year. ACCES-VR will direct the work of the Project that is funded with vocational rehabilitation dollars to ensure compliance with federal regulations, and will continuously monitor the deliverables and outcomes to ensure adherence to Project goals and timelines. It is expected that this Project will assist ACCES-VR by obtaining direct input from business on developing strategies to better identify and train individuals to meet the skill sets required by the current and emerging labor markets. The Project is designed to meet the needs of businesses and individuals served by VR through local community and State partnerships. Currently, the MOPD partners with a 35 member Business Development Council, the city’s one-stop career centers, colleges and universities, local education agencies, State agencies and VR service provider agencies. The initiative will enhance these partnerships through its focus on active business engagement. There are specific outcome expectations for the development of a Business-to-Business Mentoring Program and development of written polices for recruiting, hiring and employing people with disabilities. The Project outcomes will be evaluated to assist ACCES-VR with expanding the successes statewide to further enhance the Workforce Development System as a whole. It is expected that the expansion efforts would be a combination of procuring contracts (e.g., RFP) and/or expanding ACCES-VR staff roles. The Project took additional time to launch, but at this time staff are on board and are engaging in
outreach and developing internships. Discussion is underway with the State Rehabilitation Council about how they can further support ACCES-VR IES’s to establish new relationships with business, and a discussion of customized employment with those businesses where the Agency has more established relationships. (Page 188) Title IV

Recommendation and action strategies CRPs are a critical stakeholder in the workforce development system. State agencies and other community stakeholders rely on these service providers to deliver high quality services to support competitive integrated employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The following series of action strategies are proposed to support the deepening of the NYS employment provider network’s capacity to innovate as they meet the employment support needs of individuals with disabilities. Brokering and offering training to NYS CRPs on providing effective services to students and youth, including out-of-school youth with disabilities. ACCES-VR currently provides SE training and organizational development support under a MOU with an external entity to their vendored partners. ACCES-VR is currently exploring making this training available to all employment service providers and will include strategies for working effectively with students and youth with disabilities, as well as out-of-school youth with disabilities. • Acquiring technical assistance to expand innovations like customized employment. As referenced earlier, ACCES-VR is currently mid-stream in development of an intensive technical assistance plan across the WINTAC and YTAC. • Training and technical assistance to CRP personnel on working with diverse VR participants. Based on the responses from CRP survey, it is relevant to include capacity building for CRP agencies in providing services for diverse ACCES-VR participants. ACCES-VR will work with existing training contractors to integrate this knowledge into existing training events across all levels of the organization. Coordination of services under IDEA to ascertain the coordination of services under title IV of WIOA and IDEA, a series of focus groups was conducted. VR professionals participated in three focus groups held in the Capital Region, Western NY (representing the Buffalo and Rochester DO), and the NYC Region (all five boroughs). These focus groups provided key data on barriers and facilitators for providing Pre-ETS, and collaboration with schools. Several major themes emerged from these focus groups. Participants felt strongly that youth cases take a longer time to process and that in many instances youth are not well prepared to take advantage of and participate in VR services. Two primary obstacles identified were the lack of parental involvement and transportation issues when serving youth. Participants reported that school-based transition programs varied from being well-developed and resourced to less developed and under-resourced, which poses a challenge in developing a unified approach to support schools across the state. Further, CRPs do not have adequate capacity and lack quality in their approach to serve youth, especially those who are in school. (Page 212) Title IV

In addition, ACCES—VR conducts provider onsite reviews. The fiscal reporting requirements are consistent with New York’s State Financial System (SFS). Scope of Supported Employment Services Supported Employment services are comprised of on—going services, including customized employment, needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in supported employment, that: • Are provided singly or in combination to assist an eligible individual to achieve a competitive integrated employment; • Are based on a determination of the needs of the individual and as specified in the IPE; and • Are provided by
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ACCES—VR for up to 24 months, unless an extension necessary to achieve the employment outcome identified in the IPE. Supported employment services provide all the services necessary to assist the person with: • Learning specific work duties and performance standards; • Learning formal and informal site—related expectations (e.g., time and attendance, dress, communication protocol); • Acquiring site— appropriate work—related behaviors when dealing with supervisors and co—workers; • Acquiring the sense of belonging to the work force; • Understanding and using the benefits of employment (e.g., spending pay, using leave, participating in employee programs, working under direction from the supervisor, socializing with co—workers); and • Developing a community support system that accommodates and positively reinforces the employee’s role as a worker. The strategies are customized to the needs of the individual and business to assist the individual in meeting business expectations and improving interpersonal skills. Job coaches use any available community resources in meeting consumer needs as a means of assisting the individual in maintaining employment. Supported Employment Data ACCES—VR, the NYS Commission for the Blind (NYSCB), OPWDD, and the Office of Mental Health (OMH) track participation of individuals in their respective supported employment programs. The New York State Employment Services System (NYESS) collects data on individuals with disabilities in supported employment programs. This interagency system integrates data from the respective State agencies coordinating supported employment. (Page 228) Title IV

Braiding/Blending Resources

Consistent with the strategic visions and goals advanced in the Combined Plan, NYS is committed to enhancing program alignment and service delivery. NYS has established an Interagency Work Group to analyze service delivery strategies and identify opportunities for improvement across all participant populations including Out-of-School Youth (OSY). NYS seeks to expand the Integrated Resource Team (IRT) model to OSY without regard to their disability status and provide the same level of service integration demonstrated in our multiple Disability Employment Initiative. The WIOA expanded maximum age (up to age 24) of OSY and the increased flexibility in the provision of Youth services found in the Final Regulations increases the opportunity to serve OSY in a Career Center environment and more fully engage the required and optional partners found therein. NYS believes that combining the system level intervention of the Interagency Work Group with the customer level coordination of services provided through IRTs creates an optimal service environment for OSY that will lead to improved outcomes. Page (125-126) Title III

DEI/Disability Resource Coordinators

OCFS/NYSCB entered into a Partnership Plus Agreement, which enables consumers with a Social Security Ticket to Work to obtain VR services from OCFS/NYSCB, as well as broad access to community providers to assist in the coordination of Social Security payments and other benefits and services.

Eleven non-profit organizations across NYS were approved as vendors to provide benefits advisement and support the development of economic self-sufficiency. The increased access to DRCs and other ENs increases support in maintaining employment after a consumer’s closure.
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from VR services.

OCFS/NYSCB uses funds to contract with two private agencies for individuals who are blind to provide pre-college programs for OCFS/NYSCB consumers entering their senior year of high school. The program goal is to provide students the opportunity to refine their academic, social, and independent living skills before beginning college. (Page 52) Title I

1. Efforts to connect with Disability Resource Coordinators (DRCs) in America’s Job Centers and to participate in Local Workforce Development Boards serve multiple purposes: connecting NYSCB to businesses, promoting knowledge about NYSCB and its services, and connecting job seekers to services at the job centers which may lead to more competitive outcomes. NYSCB will work with the core State Plan partners to implement the WIOA related strategies outlined in the Combined State Plan.

2. Participation by NYSCB staff in Chapter 515 meetings allows discussions among NYSCB, ACCES-VR, the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), and the Office of Mental Health (OMH) about the challenges facing mutual consumers including minorities and individuals who are deaf-blind and those in more isolated communities. The group works to achieve more effective transition from pre-employment programs to employment, identify barriers to participation in employment and distribute services to achieve equitable access. In planning and coordinating activities, including training, the group will help staff to increase skills needed to help consumers achieve integrated employment while increasing knowledge and access to each other’s services.

3. By supporting increased use of benefits planning through Independent Living Centers, DRCs and other qualified resources, NYSCB anticipates that more consumers will choose careers, and work hours, which will allow them to go off SSA benefits and achieve economic self-sufficiency. In addition, NYSCB has signed a Partnership Plus agreement with the OMH Administrative Employment Network. This will increase opportunities for consumers to obtain continued support to maintain their jobs after case closure. NYSCB works with ACCES-VR to allocate contract capacity for Supported Employment services to try to assure the services are available to individuals with most significant disabilities seeking those services. (Page 283) Title IV

NYSCB developed strategies and goals based on recommendations and findings from the recently conducted Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. NYSCB will continue to engage with DRC’s in America’s Job Centers, especially in rural areas. Rural participants may need to overcome transportation and location issues and when possible, using these sites for meetings and job leads, a local perspective can be provided and additional support generated for a participant to achieve an employment outcome.

The CSNA also identified an underserved participant group as those with English as a Second Language. A goal of NYSCB has been identified as increasing and improving consumer access to ESL training programs. Marketing will continue to include the provision of marketing materials in multiple languages as well as be distributed through a variety of community events.
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including culturally specific events. (Page 284) Title IV

### Financial Literacy/Economic Advancement

8. Increase provision of work incentives advisement to consumers by training counselors on the impact of work on SSI and SSDI and the importance of benefits advisement and financial literacy; and requiring documentation of the provision of work incentives advisement in consumers’ case records. NYSCB continued to access benefits counseling services for consumers by purchasing this service through the VR program. Benefits advisors must meet the certification requirements to provide this service. Advisors also work with consumers on understanding their financial status in regards to benefits and employment. NYSCB continues to offer training and will continue to collaborate with the NYSDOL on offering and accessing work incentives for employers hiring NYSCB consumers. (Page 288) Title IV

### School to Work Transition

OCFS/NYSCB and NYSED/ACCES-VR collaborate on a regular basis to provide guidance to educational agencies, vocational rehabilitation personnel, and community rehabilitation providers responsible for facilitating pre-employment transition services, transition services, and to provide information about consultation and technical assistance resources to assist schools and related community support entities in planning for transition of students who are legally blind and those who have other disabilities. At the state level, both agencies have designated personnel that provide oversight and leadership for the development of policies, procedures, interagency training and other state-level partnership activities for transition services. At the local level, VR counselors work closely with school district staff and local school districts have transition specialists that collaborate. The VR program will continue to work closely with schools to enable the provision of transition services to students with disabilities. (Page 32) Title I

In an effort to maximize the benefit of strong collaboration between the public workforce system and the education community, a stronger emphasis at the state level has been placed on Career Pathways and Sector Partnerships. Career Pathways is a system-wide framework that aligns education and training with specific advancement opportunities for a broad range of job seekers. All core partners under WIOA overseeing workforce development programs continue to re-orient their services toward career progression instead of stopping at job placement. This effort will include sector-focused bridge programs, skills training, job-relevant curricula, and work-based learning opportunities. The Career Pathways framework can build upon existing efforts in the state, such as the Career Pathways program operated by OTDA through 13 community based providers. These programs offer participants a clear course of action for building skills and obtaining industry recognized credentials to progress in their career. Individuals between 18 and 24 years of age are a priority population for these Career Pathway services.

A quality initial assessment results in information, similar to a résumé, being recorded in the customer’s case file and submitted into NYSDOL’s JobZone website, which utilizes the Skills Matching and Referral Technology (SMART) system. Job matching and referral takes place on multiple levels, from automated JobZone Job Scouts emailing job openings directly to the customer, to staff making referrals during seated interviews at the Career Center. (Page 51) Title
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Career Center staff work with all job seekers to plan the services best suited to their individual needs. Those needing CDS or seeking training receive a written Individual Employment Plan (IEP) that helps guide the customer as he/she works toward his/her employment goals. Customers identified as having barriers to employment such as language proficiency, disability, skills gaps, and ex-offender status, are provided services directly at the Career Centers by workforce experts. They may also be referred to supportive services and other agencies to work through perceived barriers and provide coordinated services via a case management system. (Page 51) Title I

- A Comprehensive Assessment, when it is determined that the customer needs individualized career services. Such services may be needed to address barriers to employment; establish an employment/occupational goal that is relevant to the local labor market; and/or identify deficiencies in occupational knowledge, skills, and abilities that can be rectified through skills development and training. This leads to the development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP). (Page 133) Title I

ACCES—VR considers the coordination of services to youth with disabilities as one of its main priorities. ACCES—VR works closely with the New York State Education Department (NYSED) Office of P—12 Education — Office of Special Education to ensure that students with disabilities are prepared for employment, postsecondary education, and community living when they leave school. ACCES—VR, through its vocational rehabilitation counselors (VRCs) and 15 district offices, also works closely with the local education agencies to provide transition services. ACCES—VR policy seeks school referrals within two years prior to high school exit to coordinate vocational rehabilitation (VR) services with school transition planning. Youth, as defined by ACCES—VR, are individuals with disabilities who are less than 25 years of age at application to the VR program. In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2014, ACCES—VR served 39,051 youth, a slight numerical decrease from the previous year, but at the same percentage of the whole. Caseload statistics for youth are monitored to determine the progress of ACCES—VR in serving and placing youth. ACCES—VR Transition and Youth Services (TAYS) Team was launched in April 2014, currently staffed with a Manager and Associate Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor in Central Administration and a dedicated Senior Vocational Rehabilitation (SVRC) assigned in each district office. The goals of the team are to: 1. Engage youth, parents, high schools, and other transition specialists in exploring and planning career choices that connect to a full range of post—secondary options for training, career development, and employment; 2. Improve the number, quality, and rate of employment outcomes for youth participating in VR services; 3. Collaborate with multiple stakeholders, including other state agencies, Special Education Quality Assurance (SEQA) and Regional Special Education — Technical Assistance Support Center (RSE—TASC) Transition Specialists; and 4. Substantiate the policies and practices that lead to increased outcomes through gathering and tracking data and using it to guide the implementation and continuous improvement efforts at building knowledge and skill of VR staff and our partners. TAYS began planning early in 2015 to build upon WIOA’s focus to increase the potential of people with disabilities who enter the VR system to meet with employment success, and the requirement to spend 15% of federal VR dollars on
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the provision of pre—employment transition services (PETS) for students. In 2016, ACCES—VR plans to issue a Youth Employment Initiative Request for Proposal (RFP) to develop specific programs and services, including PETS as appropriate, for VR eligible in—school students, and out—of—school disengaged youth, with a critical emphasis to engage and continue to engage youth until they obtain quality employment outcomes. The project is scheduled to start in the 2017 school year. (Page 180) Title I

There were 56 work readiness participants; 52 completed the work readiness, and there were 43 internship participants. Internal staff training on Counseling and Guidance with the youth population is being developed to enhance the VRC’s skill set and to provide tools to improve the VRC’s ability to work effectively with youth. Topic areas to be covered include counseling youth, transitioning from an Individualized Education Program (IEP) to an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), career maturity, the teen world, teens as involuntary consumers, and maximizing use of assistive technology most specifically for job exploration, transition or postsecondary education programs, work—based learning, and workplace readiness training. ACCES—VR plans to develop a request for proposal (RFP) in 2017 for a pre—college summer experience to provide the opportunity for high school students to participate in a program on a college campus during the summer between their junior and senior year to learn critical safety and social factors, learn self—advocacy skills, complete a writing assignment in the style and process of a college paper and gain skills and experience to make an informed decision about college. Data from the Office of Special Education is being reviewed to identify potential numbers of applicants for VR services. Outreach to both in—school and out—of—school disengaged youth is being increased through the use of flyers and posters, and presentations at professional conferences. ACCES—VR will work within its Case Management System to track the specific high school referral source of in—school youth and set improvement targets for high schools in need of attention. Identification of referral sources of out—of—school youth under 25 years of age will help assess the effectiveness of outreach efforts to that age group. (Page 182) Title I

• The Office of Special Education and ACCES—VR will continue to work together to implement consistent policies and procedures for transition planning and services, including, but not limited to, student referral and access to VR services. • The Office of Special Education and ACCES—VR will work in collaboration with LEAs and other State agencies to ensure a coordinated approach to the provision of transition services and to eliminate the duplication of assessments, services and reporting requirements. • ACCES—VR and the Office of Special Education will work in collaboration with Independent Living Centers to enhance their role in working with students with disabilities, their families and educational personnel during the transition planning and service delivery process. • When coordinating services through the IEP and IPE, the student and, as appropriate, the student’s family, are the primary source of information regarding the student’s needs, goals and services. (Page 183) Title I

Increased the use of options that promote participant choice; • Increased activity with regional business consortia and/or business advisory councils; • Promoted the development of entrepreneurship; • Facilitated school-to-work transition opportunities; • Established formal methods of assessing participant satisfaction; • Increased
coordination between ACCES-VR and mental health providers; • Increased coordination to enhance support services; • Restructured participant assessment methodology to a community-based approach; (Page 186) Title I "Manual Communication" or "Spanish Language" position are required to demonstrate proficiency in the manual sign language or in the Spanish language. Proficiency must be at a level which will permit them to perform the duties of the position satisfactorily. Civil Service Qualifications for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Assistant: ACCES-VR employs VRCAs to assist VRCs in the administrative, paraprofessional and routine communication tasks that enhance the vocational rehabilitation process. The VRCAs do not determine eligibility, develop the vocational goal, write the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), or determine case closures. To be eligible for employment, VRCAs must meet the following qualifications: Bachelor degree in vocational rehabilitation, social work, counseling, or psychology; or Bachelor degree and one year of qualifying experience; or 60 semester college credit hours and two years of qualifying experience; or Four years of qualifying experience. For the experience to be considered qualifying, the primary responsibilities of a position must have involved professional or paraprofessional duties in one of the following areas: providing direct services beyond routine personal care or supervision to physically, mentally or learning-disabled adults or adolescents in a rehabilitation program or facility; or providing vocational or educational services to adults or adolescents with disabilities in the areas of assessment, counseling, job coaching, guidance, placement or job development. (Page 194) Title I

• Autism and Related Disabilities: Putting Research into Practice. • Vocational rehabilitation counseling and professional conferences: including transition; customized training for transition team, engaging and preparing youth for employment; developing the IPE including counseling and guidance plans; motivational interviewing; ethical issues in rehabilitation; case management; managing challenging behaviors in employment; working with participants with: co-existing conditions; mental illness and substance abuse; autism, traumatic brain injury; multiple sclerosis; counseling; providing VR services to diverse and minority group of individuals with disabilities; post-secondary education plans; de-escalation and crisis management techniques; and working with sex offenders. • Rehabilitation technology, including Microsoft applications (i.e., SharePoint PowerPoint, Access and Excel). • Pre-employment transition services for students. • Job placement and employment: including labor market information; labor trends; placement initiatives and self-employment; work incentives; VR partnerships in employment; transferable skills; training techniques in employment setting; integration of recovery; re-entry for ex-offenders with disabilities; returning to work with a traumatic brain injury; placing transgender into the workforce; independent living; improving employment outcomes; and Americans with Disabilities Act. (Page 195) Title I

The data unit accesses the databases that exist (primarily CaMS), develops reports for performance indicators, perform statistical analyses for performance tracking, and try to summarize it in an actionable and user-friendly way. Interviewee’s referenced uses such as developing timelines, IPE development, lapses in client contact, evaluating staff performance, successes and challenges, counselor caseloads, status tracking, training needs, and more. For identifying areas of need, respondents said that data is useful for identifying gaps in services, evaluating particular vendors, types of services, and replicating best practices across school districts. “The district offices or the manager [can] work with the vendor, plan of improvement,
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provide technical assistance. Would use it to determine whether to renew contract, increase, decrease or not provided at all.” The DOL statistics are very useful for assisting our participants, to have sense of what the market is like not only where they live but where they want to live.” (Page 206) Title I

• Enhance marketing. In 2015, ACCES-VR contracted to have advertising on buses, trains, subway stations, and bus shelters. The primary audience was unserved/underserved individuals with disabilities. • Direct the work of the TAYS Unit to increase awareness in the postsecondary community of vocational rehabilitation services. Staff will offer on-site orientations at numerous college campuses throughout the state, meet with parent/student groups during the colleges’ summer orientations, and, attend college career events.

• Add service options that will more specifically address the needs of those on the Autism spectrum. • Engage the Independent Living Centers (ILCs) in a coordinated effort to include independent living services, such as peer mentoring and other offerings available at local ILCs that support a person to sustain their VR efforts as part of the VR process and IPE. (Page 220) Title II

NYSCB Transition Counselors also work closely with New York State Education Department Transition Specialists who work at one of ten Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Centers (RSE-TASC) throughout the state. The RSE-TASC was established to act as a coordinated statewide network of special education technical assistance centers. RSE-TASCs provides training targeted for parents, school districts and other agency providers on topics such as transition and the IEP, measurable post-secondary goals and work-based learning. The New York Deaf-Blind Collaborative (NYDBC) The NYDBC is a five-year (October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2018) federally funded project which provides technical assistance to improve services for children and youth who are deaf-blind (ages 0-21). The NYDBC is housed at Queens College in Flushing, New York and is funded by the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). NYSCB has agreed to collaborate on specific initiatives with NYDBC. Specifically, NYSCB assisted NYDBC in disseminating a state-wide needs assessment to increase the early identification of children who are deaf-blind in New York State. NYSCB staff also receive considerable technical assistance and training from NYDBC that will increase knowledge and skills in addressing the developmental and educational needs of children who are deaf-blind. NYSCB will also be involved in collaborative relationships with local, regional and statewide teams (as necessary) to support and improve systems to better serve children and youth. (Page 246-247) Title IV

Career Pathways

Local partnerships, which form the foundation of the workforce delivery system, are especially effective in meeting the workforce needs of NYS’s diverse population. Local plans describe how these partnerships will be coordinated to enable all customers to receive the full range of employment and training programs and supportive services, especially those that lead to jobs in high-wage, high-growth occupations along career pathways. The needs of individuals with multiple barriers to employment are being addressed quickly and thoroughly due to the wide
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<tr>
<th>Service Providers</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>NYS Office for the Aging</td>
<td>Spectrum of service providers joined together under the local workforce system. The NYS Office for the Aging, NYSED (including NYSED/ACCES-VR), the NYS Department of Health (NYSDOH), OCFS (including OCFS/NYSCB), the Office for Alcohol and Substance Abuse (OASAS), the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA), the State University of New York (SUNY), NYSDOL, and local community based organizations apply knowledge gained through regular communication, partnership collaborations, and cross-training to develop comprehensive service strategies to address the varying needs of our common participants. With the functional alignment approach and common customer flow in the Career Centers, partners are more aware of each agency's involvement with the participant instead of working in a vacuum. This greatly helps reduce duplication of services to participants. (Page 46) Title I</td>
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The term ‘community rehabilitation program’ (CRP) means a program that provides directly or facilitates the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities, and that provides, singularly or in combination, for an individual with a disability to enable the individual to maximize opportunities for employment, including career advancement. Utilization of CRP services and supports Based on the analysis of CaMS data, the most frequently utilized CRP services include (from highest to lowest): assessment, employment services, training, post-secondary education services, SE, and personal assistance services. (Page 209) Title II

Maintain email list serve of employed participants for sharing job notices. This allows the individual to pursue career advancement opportunities.

- Provide training to job placement providers on employment trends and business needs, including what constitutes a good resume for a particular field.

- Collaborate with the New York State Justice Center to develop innovative options around the purchase, use, and sharing of assistive technology to enable individuals to be successful in employment. The Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs administers the Technology Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities (TRAID) program. (Page 220) Title II

Apprenticeship

Since NYS does not have State certification or licensure for VR counselors, ACCES-VR elected to use the national standard established by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC). The two counselors who do not meet this standard are engaged in a training program to meet the standard or plan to retire by May 30, 2018. The participation of VRCs in an educational program to meet the standard is regularly monitored to evaluate compliance with SED personnel standards (cited below). ACCES-VR employs VRCs who have, or are eligible to obtain, qualification as a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC). All VRCs are required to have: A Master’s degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, including a supervised internship, from a CORE accredited program; or A Master’s degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or Counseling and notice of eligibility to participate in the CRCC certificate examination. VRCs considered for appointment to a “Manual Communication” or “Spanish Language” position are required to demonstrate proficiency in the manual sign language or in the Spanish language. Proficiency must be at a level which will permit them to perform the duties of the position.
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satisfactorily. Civil Service Qualifications for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Assistant: ACCES-VR employs VRCAs to assist VRCs in the administrative, paraprofessional and routine communication tasks that enhance the vocational rehabilitation process. The VRCAs do not determine eligibility, develop the vocational goal, write the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), or determine case closures. (Page (Page 193-194) Title IV

Work Incentives and Benefits

OCFS/NYSCB entered into a Partnership Plus Agreement, which enables consumers with a Social Security Ticket to Work to obtain VR services from OCFS/NYSCB, as well as broad access to community providers to assist in the coordination of Social Security payments and other benefits and services. Eleven non-profit organizations across NYS were approved as vendors to provide benefits advisement and support the development of economic self-sufficiency. The increased access to DRCs and other ENs increases support in maintaining employment after a consumer’s closure from VR services. (Page 52) Title I

Program (HEAP), Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), School Meals, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) State Supplement Program, public health insurance options, and a range of tax credits including federal and state earned income tax credits. (Page 48) Title I

In addition, OCFS/NYSCB provides assistive technology devices and training to current managers and manager trainees in the Randolph-Sheppard Business Enterprise Program, enabling them to manage their newsstands and food service operations in accordance with industry standards.

NYSED/ACCES-VR also has many initiatives in place that assist in opening opportunity for youth and adults with disabilities. For example, NYSED/ACCES-VR is a partner in the Promoting the Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income (PROMISE) demonstration project. This project is aimed at improving education and career outcomes for low-income children with disabilities and will advance postsecondary education and employment outcomes for 14-16 year olds receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI). (Page 53) Title I

2. Energizing the “Demand-Side” of the Equation: Redesign and reinvigorate the New York Business Leadership Network to pursue the aggressive goal of engaging 100 business partners. A business first platform can be established through promoting existing financial incentives, supporting businesses to pursue federal contracts, and harnessing the power of NYS’s regional economic development efforts.

3. New York Employment Services System (NYESS): The NYESS system has already distinguished NYS as the leader in moving individuals with disabilities into the world of employment as the largest Social Security Administration Ticket to Work (TTW) network in the nation. Ensuring the full adoption of the system across community providers and state agencies will utilize the power of NYS’s integrated employment case management system to comprehensively monitor and support employment outcomes in NYS.

4. Benefits Advisement: Benefits systems are complex and only limited resources are available
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to help individuals accurately understand eligibility requirements and the impact of employment on benefits. NYS can utilize emerging tools like Disability Benefits 101 (DB101) and a network of “life coaches” to expand benefits advisement. (Page 97) Title I

NYS continues to be at the forefront in providing services to individuals with disabilities with the implementation of NYESS and the opportunities the system allows. For example, in February 2012, the federal Social Security Administration announced that NYESS (www.nyess.ny.gov) was designated as the first statewide Administrative Employment Network (AEN) in the United States. An Employment Network (EN) is an entity that enters into an agreement with the SSA to either provide or coordinate the delivery of services to Social Security disability beneficiaries through the Ticket to Work program (https://www.ssa.gov/work/). The statewide AEN designation allows SSA the ability to collaborate directly with NYS to document employment outcomes for Ticket holders, and demonstrate the effectiveness of the Ticket-To-Work program.

As a statewide AEN, NYESS creates a network of EN providers working with multiple state agencies using a single, real-time employment data/case management system. This statewide effort generates thousands of dollars in incentive payments that are reinvested in expanded job supports for individuals with disabilities. (Pages 99) Title I

**Partnership Plus**

In Spring 2014, NYSCB entered into a Partnership Plus agreement with the Research Foundation for Mental Health. Partnership Plus enables consumers with a Social Security Ticket to Work are able to obtain the services they need from NYSCB. As they complete their services with NYSCB, consumers are given access to broad network of community providers from whom they can select to coordinate issues related to Social Security payments and other benefits and services. (Page 243) Title IV

NYSCB is on the steering committee for New York State PROMISE (Promoting the Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income), a research project developed to improve outcomes for eligible youth who are transitioning to adulthood and who receive supplemental security income (SSI). This five-year initiative strives to increase access to services for eligible youth and their families to improve academic and employment outcomes, increase financial stability, and reduce reliance on SSI. The priority for the steering committee is to engage local and state partners in defining a broad strategic approach that starts to describe a system of person and family centered intervention. NYSCB actively participates in the steering committee to assess services that are provided to legally blind students through other New York State organizations. (Page 248) Title IV

By supporting increased use of benefits planning through Independent Living Centers, DRCs and other qualified resources, NYSCB anticipates that more consumers will choose careers, and work hours, which will allow them to go off SSA benefits and achieve economic self-sufficiency. In addition, NYSCB has signed a Partnership Plus agreement with the OMH Administrative Employment Network. This will increase opportunities for consumers to obtain continued support to maintain their jobs after case closure. NYSCB works with ACCES-VR to allocate contract capacity for Supported Employment services to try to assure the services are available to individuals with most significant disabilities seeking those services. (Page 283) Title IV
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Continue to work with the National Employment Team (NET) of the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) and other employment networks to improve employment options for NYSCB consumers. NYSCB worked with both CSAVR and the NET to further business contacts and employment opportunities. The NYSCB representative is also the Region 2 representative and has taken a lead role in working with neighboring states on business engagement as well as any phone calls, webinars, and meetings with state and national business representatives. (Page 287) Title IV

Increase provision of work incentives advisement to consumers by training counselors on the impact of work on SSI and SSDI and the importance of benefits advisement and financial literacy; and requiring documentation of the provision of work incentives advisement in consumers’ case records. NYSCB continued to access benefits counseling services for consumers by purchasing this service through the VR program. Benefits advisors must meet the certification requirements to provide this service. Advisors also work with consumers on understanding their financial status in regards to benefits and employment. NYSCB continues to offer training and will continue to collaborate with the NYSDOL on offering and accessing work incentives for employers hiring NYSCB consumers. (Page 288) Title IV

4. Provide ongoing and continued training for ATC providers and consider having a baseline competency certification for approved providers. NYSCB developed new contact guidelines that increase the credentialing and continuing education requirements for the ATC trainers who are employed by not-for-profit partners. At least one member of the contractor's instructional staff must possess a certification or a degree in Assistive Technology training. The certification/degree must be from a nationally recognized organization, and include training/testing in all of the following areas the evaluation, acquisition, and selection of AT devices.

5. Continue to work with providers of employment services in understanding and utilizing employment tax credits, federal and local hiring authorities and the ticket to work system. NYSCB continued to partner with community providers and shared information on tax credits, federal and state hiring authorities, as well as ticket to work. NYSCB increased collaboration with the New York State Department of Labor and disseminated an information sheet on tax opportunities for businesses in New York State. NYSCB district office staff and community providers also worked closely with NYSCB home office staff on up-to-date information on state and federal hiring practices and opportunities. NYSCB continues to promote the Ticket to Work program through work with both employment service providers and state agency partners. (Page 290) Title IV

**Employer/Business**

Building upon the initiatives already in place to better align the public workforce system and educational entities, an increased emphasis will be placed on managing and enhancing the Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL). The ETPL was established in compliance with WIA and amended by WIOA to provide customer-focused employment training resources for adults and dislocated workers. Training providers who are eligible to receive Individual Training...
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Accounts (ITAs) through WIOA Title I-B funds are listed on the ETPL. NYS will work diligently to ensure the ETPL provides prospective training participants with reliable and objective information regarding program successes and affordability, useful for making training and career decisions that lead to employment in the state's workforce. (Page 65) Title I

State strategy engagement with other education and training providers including those on the ETPL are included in (E) above. (Page 66) Title I

Activity 5: Assessing VR practices responsiveness to labor market needs and employer engagement. This activity was designed to understand the extent to which VR policies and practices are aligned to be responsive to the needs of the local labor market to support employment of people with disabilities in high-growth sectors. It also highlighted practices that employers have found effective in engaging with the workforce development systems to align the VR systems with labor market needs. The online survey of VR and workforce development professionals included specific questions about their interactions with employers. In addition, focus groups were conducted in Manhattan and Western New York with employers to understand their current experiences. (Page 199) Title IV

Potential providers access an online application via the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) website (https://applications.labor.ny.gov/ETPL/). Providers fill out an in-depth electronic application and submit it. The application collects the following information on the provider: name, training school name (if different), Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN), address, website, and administrative and admissions contact information. If the provider is licensed, the provider will need to upload a copy of their license. For each training course, the provider will need to provide course information including the course title and skill level, course description, and course curriculum. The provider must also provide the tuition cost, and any other required or additional costs (i.e., books, lab fees, uniforms, tools, etc.). The completed application is forwarded to the appropriate LWDB, based on location, for review and approval. For approval, the LWDBs review against cost, performance (based on performance measures identified in WIOA) and legal matters, (i.e. is the provider licensed to operate in NYS, etc.). All of this information is captured on the ETPL during the application process. Note that while the state maintains the ETPL, it is the LWDBs that actually populate it through approvals of training providers and courses in their LWDA. LWDBs also determine if the training is eligible for funding. (Page 121) Title I

Further, that online capabilities broaden the possible means of approaching career exploration. Finally, research demonstrates that services and supports which broker the gap between VR and secondary schools are important for improving family and youth access to transition services, and improving the transition planning process at the school-level. ACCES-VR can deepen the efficacy of systems integration and interagency collaboration. ACCES-VR can build on its existing agreements with core WIOA partners to further the objectives of service coordination and early intervention in post-school planning. Research has demonstrated that collaborations by VR, school personnel, and other partners in the workforce development system have significant benefits for transitioning youth. One of the most valuable partnerships is between VR counselors and local schools—research shows that counselors are often not invited to participate in
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transition and post-school planning, despite evidence showing that VR can play an important role in guiding school policy and that their early involvement is associated with positive youth employment outcomes. Integrating community transition partners in the school setting is also important—these uniquely situated agencies can help students and families secure resources in the community, obtain work-based experiences and services, formulate transition plans, and improve the capacity of schools. Among VR counselors serving disadvantaged populations, cultural competency is a predictor of positive employment outcomes. Further, employer engagement skills by VR staff are an evidence-based practice associated with improved service outcomes. (Page 214) Title II

4. Developing a model comprehensive statewide needs assessment with corresponding training materials for State VR Agency staff and SRC Members (2009). InfoUse, Washington, DC. This report provided a structure and guidance with respect to overall CNA process in data collection, analysis, and presentation of the findings.

5. Announcement of Funding Opportunities: RFPGC18-004 (2018-2023 Core Rehabilitation Services). This request for proposals provided service definitions for the new Pre-ETS services and other youth employment services being launched by ACCES-VR in 2018. (Page 201) Title II

Data Collection

Most recent data show both adults and youth with disabilities in NYS apply for VR services at higher levels than nationally, however, the rates of service delivery and successful closure (based RSA-911 categories) are consistent with national averages. Research consistently demonstrates the importance of participation in employment-directed VR activities as a predictor of employment and pay outcomes. ACCES-VR demonstrating positive participation and experiences in VR. With the expanded WIOA scope for serving younger individuals with disabilities, ACCES-VR provides pre-employment transition services for in-school students with disabilities between the ages of 14—21 years in coordination with the students’ school-based transition programs. (Page 213) Title II

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Individuals with the most significant disabilities including their need for supported employment services An “individual with the most significant disability” is defined as an individual who meets the criteria for having a significant disability and in addition has serious limitations in two or more functional capacities in terms of an employment outcome, the amount of time needed for vocational rehabilitation services, and the number of vocational rehabilitation services needed. Employees receiving sub-minimum wage under section 14c of the Fair Labor Standards Act As of November 1, 2017, NYS had 112 employers operating under section 14(c) certificates under the Fair Labor Standards Act and approximately 9,200 individuals employed at subminimum wage. During 2016 and 2017, ACCES-VR implemented a statewide intervention to fulfill shared responsibilities of ACCES-VR and subminimum wage employers under section 511 of WIOA. The purpose of the intervention was to educate and support subminimum wage employees to understand employment options available to them and make informed choices regarding competitive integrated employment. This was accomplished through: 1) large group
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Presentations presented at subminimum wage employment locations throughout the state on how ACCES-VR can support competitive integrated employment; and 2) follow-up one-to-one counseling sessions with ACCES-VR personnel to determine subminimum wage employee interest in pursuing competitive integrated employment, obtain appropriate signatures to verify participation in the intervention and provide ACCES-VR applications to interested subminimum wage employees. In order to explore the impact of these intervention activities, two follow-up focus groups with sub-minimum wage employees and one follow-up focus group with ACCES-VR personnel who participated in the intervention were conducted, along with in-depth key informant interviews with subminimum wage employer staff. This study provided initial insights into the overall utility of the section 511 intervention for workers with disabilities in subminimum wage work that was conducted by ACCES-VR in 2016 and 2017. It is important to note that this work is limited by its sample size and that observations were conducted only in two local subminimum wage employment settings. Further, there was a substantial recall bias involved in the design, especially given the functional limitations of the subminimum wage informants. (Page 201) Title II

3. Business 14(c) Certificate Holders List, U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division (https://www.dol.gov/whd/specialemployment/BusinessCertList.htm). This report helped in identifying providers of this service and understand their active caseload of individuals with disabilities in sub-minimum wage settings. It is important to note that there is no currently existing data base of individuals with disabilities employed in sub-minimum wage settings that is available for analysis.

4. Developing a model comprehensive statewide needs assessment with corresponding training materials for State VR Agency staff and SRC Members (2009). InfoUse, Washington, DC. This report provided a structure and guidance with respect to overall CNA process in data collection, analysis, and presentation of the findings. (Page 202) Title II

Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination: Section 188

Accessibility is an important component within the public workforce system. NYS assures that all partners in the workforce development system described in this plan recognize the importance of the physical, programmatic, and communications accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities and English language learners in the Career Centers.

Under WIA, NYSDOL’s Methods of Administration outlined the policies, procedures, and systems NYS designed and put in place in order to provide a reasonable guarantee that NYS and its recipients of Title I WIA funds complied with the Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity requirements of WIA Section 188 and its implementing regulations. It is still available online at https://labor.ny.gov/workforcenypartners/ta/ta02-101.htm. The guidance is currently being revised to reflect new WIOA regulations, and will now be known as the Non-Discrimination Plan (NDP). (Page 99) Title I
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### Vets

Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) are trained to assist Veterans; DRCs are trained to assist individuals with disabilities; and Offender Employment Specialists are trained to assist ex-offenders. In addition, central office staff provides periodic webinars and/or technical assistance conference calls to engage all Career Center staff on topics around serving customers with barriers to employment.

Case management of customers with barriers to employment is further enhanced by the availability of NYESS. NYESS (implemented in December 2011) currently provides system access to the following seven state agencies and their network of service providers: OMH; NYSDOL; OPWDD; NYSED/ACCES-VR; OCFS/NYSCB; OASAS; and NYS Office for the Aging. (Page 99) Title I

The Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 established a nationwide system of public employment offices known as the Employment Service. The Act was amended by WIA to make the Employment Service part of the One-Stop services delivery system and under WIOA to eliminate stand-alone Wagner-Peyser Employment Service Offices.

Within the context of NYS’s functional alignment, and in recognition that UI claimants comprise over 65% of the shared job seeker customer pool of the NYS one-stop system (Wagner-Peyser, Vets, WIOA, and TAA combined customer base), NYS implemented a statewide strategy to coordinate services to UI claimants that ensures claimants are afforded common service expectations and are held to common program requirements. (Page 131) Title II

### Mental Health

Operating under a holistic philosophy, NYS also successfully integrated several employment services systems into a single system, using the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant as a catalyst. This comprehensive employment system is called the New York Employment Services System (NYESS) and provides all New Yorkers, regardless of their (dis)ability, with a single point of access to all employment-related services and supports, including job matching with the approximately 125,000 jobs currently posted by businesses on the NYS Job Bank. NYESS includes the following state-level agencies: NYS Office of Mental Health (OMH), NYSDOL, NYSED, OASAS, NYS Office of Persons with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), NYS Office for the Aging, and the NYS Division of Veterans Affairs. Providers of employment-related supports and services licensed by, or contracting with, one of the participating state agencies are also able to sign up to utilize this system. NYESS creates the ability to centralize employment service/support information, greatly improving the ability to coordinate employment supports and services among multiple providers and across multiple systems. (Page 46) Title I

- Memorandum of Interagency Understanding regarding Supported Employment, between ACCES-VR, Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS)-NYS Commission for the Blind (NYSCB), Office of Mental Health (OMH) and Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), January 2001
- Joint Agreement between NYSED ACCES-VR and the
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Office of P-12 Education — Office of Special Education, regarding the Provision of Transition Services, January 2018 • MOA for the Workforce Investment Act: Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy between the NYSED and Local Workforce Investment Boards (WIB), June 30, 2000 • MOA to Provide Services to Individuals who are Deaf/Blind, November 1999 between ACCES-VR and NYSCB • MOU between the NYSED ACCES-VR and OMH, October 1999 • MOU between the NYSED ACCES-VR and the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), July 2010 • MOA to promote and expand vocational rehabilitation services between ACCES-VR and the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, September 2010. • Statement of Collaboration between the NYSED ACCES-VR and New York State Financial Aid Administrators Association (NYSFAAA), March 1, 1998 • Joint Agreement between the NYSED ACCES-VR and the Office of Higher and Professional (Title II) Promoted the development of entrepreneurship; • Facilitated school-to-work transition opportunities; • Established formal methods of assessing participant satisfaction; • Increased coordination between ACCES-VR and mental health providers; • Increased coordination to enhance support services; • Restructured participant assessment methodology to a community-based approach; • Coordinated job development and placement activities; • Promoted cost effectiveness through innovative service delivery mechanisms; and, • Coordinated program development, requests for proposal (RFP) and program evaluation activities. ACCES-VR engages the provider and business communities in identifying innovative approaches. Further dialogue will take place to identify strategies for: • Increasing the use of assistive technology; • Addressing concerns around liability as it relates to businesses being willing to serve as mentors or to provide short-term volunteer opportunities; and, • Providing benefits advisement both early in the process and at the time of placement in a job. Provider Guidelines for Supported Employment: ACCES-VR revised the “Provider Guidelines for Supported Employment” in 2014 to reflect contract changes. The Guidelines assist in establishing a common base of accepted practices and procedures for supported employment. These guidelines, which are on the ACCES-VR website, are intended to facilitate service delivery and cooperation between ACCES-VR and employment service providers. The guidelines will be revised to reflect the contract changes that are set to be implemented in July 2018. ACCES-VR has been assigned the responsibility for administering, establishing standards and monitoring the intensive service component of supported employment programs. ACCES-VR also has responsibility for the provision of extended services to individuals who are not eligible for such services through other sources. ACCES-VR’s Quality Assurance Unit conducts reviews at provider agencies. Partner state agencies that provide extended services are invited to participate in those reviews. (Page 186-187) Title II

The SRC and NYSCB comprise a collaborative partnership. SRC members include current and former participants in the NYSCB vocational rehabilitation program; representation from SUNY/CUNY, Native American VR Programs, the National Federation of the Blind, American Council for the Blind, Statewide Workforce Investment Board, Client Assistance Program, Independent Living Centers, New York State Education Department, parents of children with disabilities; and representatives from business, industry and labor. The SRC assists NYSCB in developing and reviewing the State Plan, including NYSCB’s goals and strategies. The SRC provides policy advice and reviews consumer needs and satisfaction with services.
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Comment 1: In Description o: State’s Strategies, the SRC would like to see Strategy 1 moved to Goal 4, Increase staff capacity to deliver quality services to consumers.

Comment 2: In Description o: State’s Strategies, the SRC suggested that the words “and expanded” be added to Strategy 3, to read: Continue to foster and expand current working relationships with Office of Mental Health and the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities on both the local and state level.

Comment 3: In Description o: State’s Strategies, the SRC commented that the four core partners’ agency names should be identified in Goal 2, Strategy 3. (Page 238) Title II

As noted above, ACCES-VR provides multiple training paths for staff. Additionally, ACCES-VR collaborates with other State agencies and disability organizations to jointly develop or provide disability and/or systems trainings for staff. These partnerships provide trainings for CRCs to earn continuing education credits and to meet the Ethics certification requirements. Key partnerships exist with the: Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS); NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD); New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH); Association for Persons in Supported Employment (APSE), New York State Rehabilitation Association (NYSRA), New York Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services, Inc. (NYAPRS), New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals (NYATEP) and the New York State Independent Living Council (NYSILC). These relationships also include opportunities to share information and acquire training and knowledge. Currently the WIOA Interagency Team has a workgroup charged to develop a Workforce System Training agenda. Along with WIOA partners, ACCES-VR is engaged with this Training and Assistance Workgroup (see combined section of the plan for additional detail), which includes linkage to local American Job Centers. The Training and Assistance Workgroup is developing and will maintain a system inventory of training. Information will be shared and all staff within the system will be provided with access to ongoing, collaborative training opportunities. Training is provided through a variety of modalities such as distance learning, video-conference, seminars, workshops, individual district office training, and attendance at local, regional and statewide training programs and conferences. ACCES-VR utilizes video-conferencing training as much as possible to facilitate training opportunities and to minimize costs. Consideration is given to the diversity of staff, skill levels, and experiences and needs when developing training programs. (Page 196) Title II

In spring 2014, NYSCB entered into a Partnership Plus agreement with the Research Foundation for Mental Health. Partnership Plus enables consumers with a Social Security Ticket to Work are able to obtain the services they need from NYSCB. As they complete their services with NYSCB, consumers are given access to broad network of community providers from whom they can select to coordinate issues related to Social Security payments and other benefits and services.

NYS PROMISE Initiative

NYSCB is on the steering committee for New York State PROMISE (Promoting the Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income), a research project developed to improve outcomes for eligible youth who are transitioning to adulthood and who receive supplemental security
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income (SSI). This five-year initiative strives to increase access to services for eligible youth and their families to improve academic and employment outcomes, increase financial stability, and reduce reliance on SSI. The priority for the steering committee is to engage local and state partners in defining a broad strategic approach that starts to describe a system of person and family centered intervention. NYSCB actively participates in the steering committee to assess services that are provided to legally blind students through other New York State organizations. (Page 243) Title II

Because blindness is a low incidence disability, NYSCB continues to be challenged in anticipating service needs and distributing the limited funds available. The lack of extended services funds further limits the number of individuals who can enter intensive supported employment services. NYSCB plans to work more closely with ACCES-VR in the future to determine the distribution of funds available for intensive and extended services, while providing information and training to enable staff to better access extended services through the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) or Office of Mental Health (OMH), as appropriate. (Page 251-252) Title II

NYSCB collaborates with the Office for Persons with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) and Office of Mental Health (OMH) in the provision of employment and supported employment services. NYSCB plans to work to increase collaboration and communications with partner state agencies and will focus on sharing specific knowledge and expertise in the area of vision loss. The encouragement of a multi-disciplinary approach will be promoted at both a regional and state level. (Page 254) Title II

**RTW/SAW**

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

*All enclosed information is cited directly from final state plan as of June 30, 2019

Find your local state plans here:

https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/rsa/wioa/state-plans/index.html