



March 1, 2021

Dear Stakeholders,

With shared enthusiasm the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education (BSE) and the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) are pleased to announce completion of a revised Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The revision of the MOU is a product of ongoing collaboration between both agencies to strengthen agency partnership and enhance transition outcomes for students with disabilities in the Commonwealth.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, amended by Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (Rehabilitation Act), requires coordination and collaboration between OVR and BSE. The Rehabilitation Act also requires OVR to collaborate with BSE to provide or arrange pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities.

The foundation of the MOU is derived from the core goals and values of the IDEA and Rehabilitation Act. The agencies seek to provide students with disabilities seamless access to services and supports to achieve their transition goals.

The MOU emphasizes the collaboration between OVR and BSE by outlining key roles and responsibilities of each agency. BSE and OVR recognize an active, collaborative partnership between OVR, schools, and families is beneficial for students with disabilities.

OVR and BSE are currently working with parent/youth stakeholders to develop an MOU Toolkit and a webinar series to support the statewide goals of the MOU. These resources also will help schools, families, and other agencies/organizations, schools, and families establish and build partnerships that improve transition outcomes for students with disabilities. Once released, the toolkit and webinars can be accessed at: <https://tinyurl.com/EDOVR>.

We look forward to strengthening partnerships to improve transition outcomes that ensure students with disabilities are provided with meaningful opportunities that maximize their independence and self-sufficiency in their communities and prepare them for competitive integrated employment.

Sincerely,

*Shannon Austin*

Shannon Austin, M.S., Executive Director of Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

*Carole L. Clancy*

Carole L. Clancy, Bureau Director of Special Education