

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION  
December 7, 2016  
Penn\*Link

TO: School District Superintendents  
School District Special Education Directors  
Charter School Chief Executive Officers  
Charter School Special Education Directors  
Intermediate Unit Executive Directors  
Intermediate Unit Special Education Directors

FROM: Patricia Hozella, Director  
Bureau of Special Education

SUBJECT: Transition and Work Experience Data Collection

PA House Bill 400, now Act 26 of 2016, the “Work Experience for High School Students with Disabilities Act”, was signed into law by Governor Wolf on May 17, 2016. Act 26 directs the PA Department of Labor and Industry’s Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) to provide pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities and facilitate the process of job and career development between local educational agencies (LEAs) and public and private employers to ensure the successful transition of high school students with disabilities into competitive integrated employment. Competitive integrated employment is defined as work in the competitive labor market that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis in an integrated setting for which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who do not have disabilities.

Through collaboration with officials of LEAs and other relevant public agencies, OVR will provide information for the development of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for high school students with disabilities ensuring that job skill training is included in their IEPs when appropriate; arrange for work-based learning experiences (which may include in-school or after-school opportunities or experience outside the traditional school setting, including internships, at competitive wages in integrated settings with public or private sector employers); provide professional guidance relative to job coaching services to eligible individuals when the services are included in an IEP for employment by OVR; provide counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education; and publish data pertaining to the implementation of Act 26.

To assist the PA Department of Labor and Industry in meeting the data collection requirements of Act 26 and to minimize any redundancy in data collection and reporting procedures, the Bureau of Special Education (BSE) is adding the relevant work experience/transition Data Elements to the existing July Special Education Snapshot data submission.

During the current 2016-17 school year, LEAs will collect data based on the data items pertaining to work experience for students with disabilities involved in transition planning as part of their IEPs. This includes IEPs that were developed since the beginning of the 2016-17 school year. The data collected during the 2016-17 school year will serve as a baseline for subsequent data collections. The data elements are to be reported on the July 1, 2017 Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS) Special Education Snapshot for students 14 years of age or older or any student who has a transition plan as part of their IEP. The current annotated IEP located on the PA Training and Technical Assistance Network website has been revised to include questions pertaining to the data collection items for IEP teams to consider. Teams can access the revised annotated IEP at [www.pattan.net](http://www.pattan.net).

At present, BSE is not mandating a revision to the current IEP format to specify the method by which LEAs must record this data during IEP team meetings. LEAs should develop and utilize a recording method which will provide ease of access for reporting during current PIMS required submissions.

The following data questions must be addressed by IEP teams:

- Does the student have a transition plan as part of their IEP? (If yes, then all the following questions are required to be answered.)
- Does IEP contain new services that support paid work-based learning experiences in a competitive (at least minimum wage) integrated setting?
- Does IEP contain services that include job supports/coaching?
- Does IEP contain services that include career development and job exploration?
- Has the transition IEP been modified to include services that support paid work-based learning experiences in a competitive (at least minimum wage) integrated setting?

Subsequent to this July 2017 PIMS data collection, BSE will be sharing this aggregated data with OVR for inclusion in its annual Act 26 reporting.

If you have questions regarding this information, please contact John Gombocz at [jgombocz@pa.gov](mailto:jgombocz@pa.gov) or by phone at 717.772.3745 or Patrick Scanlon at [pascanlon@pa.gov](mailto:pascanlon@pa.gov) or by phone at 724.465.6535.