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# Making the Transition from School to Community Living

An Interim Report to the 112th Maine Legislature

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Select Committee to Address Training and Employment Opportunities for  
Handicapped Persons Beyond School Age

# Making the Transition from School to Community Living

An Interim Report to the 112th Maine Legislature

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May, 1985

for the  
Select Committee to Address Training and Employment Opportunities for  
Handicapped Persons Beyond School Age



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May 10, 1985

The Honorable Charles P. Pray  
President of the Maine Senate  
State House  
Augusta, Maine 04333

The Honorable John L. Martin  
Speaker of the Maine House  
State House  
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear President Pray and Speaker Martin:

On behalf of the Select Committee to Address Training and Employment Needs for Handicapped Persons Beyond School Age, we are pleased to transmit our report to the Legislature. The report was mandated by resolve of the 111th Legislature and prepared with funding from the Maine Advisory Council on Developmental Disabilities. Additional staff support was provided by the Bureau of Rehabilitation and the Bureau of Mental Retardation.

The Select Committee is composed of representatives of the many groups who play a role in the transition of handicapped youth from school to community living.

Maine has made a considerable investment in special education for handicapped students. It is now time to consider how this commitment can be extended to assure appropriate employment opportunities for handicapped young adults. Each year more than 1000 handicapped students leave Maine high schools; for the majority, unsubsidized employment will never be a reality without additional training.

The Committee's principal recommendation to the Legislature is to mandate an interagency approach to the transition process. This, coupled with additional resources for vocational training, will enable significant improvement.

Sincerely yours,

Richard M. Balser, Chairperson  
Select Committee to Address  
Training and Employment Needs  
for Handicapped Persons Beyond  
School Age

RMB/c

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR HANDICAPPED PERSONS BEYOND SCHOOL AGE

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## INTRODUCTION

Every year approximately 1,000 special education students "graduate" from public schools in Maine. Graduation doesn't necessarily mean the student has successfully mastered the required academic competencies. Instead, many students simply reach the age of 20 and are, by law, no longer eligible for special education. Their need for education and training continues, but school-funded services come to an end.

Most of these handicapped young adults have no plans to attend college or a post-secondary vocational school. In many cases they have no plans, period. Eased through a system geared to produce college-bound and vocationally trained youth, they are misfits. They lack the skills, information and even the values that would allow them to succeed in the labor market.

The President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped in a study of career education for handicapped youth, found that the future for special education graduates looks something like this:

- 21% will become fully employed or enrolled in college.
- 40% will be underemployed and at the poverty level.
- 8% will be in their home community and idle much of the time.
- 26% will be unemployed and on welfare.
- 3% will be totally dependent and institutionalized.

All students face challenges as they leave school; few high school graduates are fully prepared for the responsibilities of adult living. For students with disabilities there may be even less readiness. The major problems which affect Maine, and the nation's, special education graduates are:

- low expectations, both by students and society;
- lack of coordination between education and adult service programs;
- lack of coordination among adult service agencies; and
- inadequate opportunities for meaningful work.

Meaningful work has been described by Lou Brown as paid work, which if not performed by a disabled person, must be performed by a non-disabled person.\*

To address these problems will require parents, educators and service providers to re-examine long held assumptions about what is appropriate for handicapped students. It will require dissolving the boundaries that characterize a social service system based on categorical funding. And, most

\*Brown, L., et. al. (Draft) Teaching Severely Handicapped Students to Perform Meaningful Work in Non-Sheltered Vocational Environments. Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1983.



importantly, it will mean adapting existing employment and training programs to accommodate larger numbers of handicapped young adults. Ideally, the employment and training needs of handicapped youth should be considered as part of an overall assessment of youth employment programs. What must be avoided is the development of a separate, parallel employment and training system for handicapped young adults. That approach is not only costly and duplicative, but contrary to the goal of full integration of disabled persons into the mainstream of Maine life. The goal of all the activities mentioned in this report is to enable each handicapped student to achieve maximum vocational functioning; independent living skills; and to facilitate full participation in the mainstream of society.

Lack of resources is at the root of some of the problems, but many improvements can be accomplished without additional appropriations. Getting to work on the system coordination issues can only increase the cost benefit of any additional funding.

#### Select Committee to Address Training and Employment Opportunities for Handicapped Persons Beyond School Age

In January 1984 the Maine Committee on Problems of the Mentally Retarded conducted a series of hearings on the needs of handicapped students exiting the public school system. In response to the needs identified at those hearings the Legislature appropriated \$750,000 to the Bureau of Mental Retardation to expand services to this population. The Committee also recommended further study of the transition issue.

The Select Committee was established by resolve of the 111th Legislature in September 1984. The Committee was charged with the tasks of evaluating the current system for transition from school to work; developing a five-year plan for improving the system; and reporting back to the Legislature by December 1984. That gave the Committee less than three months to come up with recommendations on an issue that three departments of state government have been working on for four years. Since it was clear at the outset that the charge was far greater than the time available, the Select Committee chose to prepare an interim report.

The Committee's principal recommendation is that the Legislature act to establish an inter-departmental committee to plan, advocate for and evaluate transitional services for handicapped young adults.

All recommendations made by the Committee are summarized on the next several pages. The key areas addressed by the recommendations are:

- Personnel Preparation and Training
- High School Programming
- Transition from School to Community
- Post-High School Employment and Training

I. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Select Committee to Address Training and Employment Opportunities  
for Handicapped Persons Beyond School Age

RECOMMENDATIONS		LEAD AGENCIES(*)	BY WHEN	NEW FUNDS REQUIRED ANNUALLY	LEGISLATIVE/ REGULATORY ACTION
PERSONNEL PREPARATION AND TRAINING	1. Revise University of Maine pre-service curriculum for special education teachers to include preparation in pre-vocational and vocational programming for handicapped young adults.	University of Maine (UM) (all campuses)	9/87	Yes	
	2. Revise the certification process for special education teachers and consider adopting separate certification standards for grades K-8 and 9-12.	State Board of Education	9/87	No	Regulation
	3. Revise the curriculum at the University of Maine graduate program in education, counseling and public policy to include more preparation in work with handicapped adults.	University of Maine	9/86	No	Regulation
	4. Plan and deliver coordinated in-service training on vocational programming for handicapped young adults.	Inter-agency Committee	9/87	Yes	
	5. Amend certification standards for vocational education instructors to include courses in teaching handicapped students.	State Board of Education	9/87	No	Regulation
	6. Revise the certification standards for regular classroom teachers to include 6 hours of special education coursework.	State Board of Education	9/87	No	Regulation

(\*)"Lead Agency" refers to that group which should have primary responsibility for implementation of a recommendation, however, in practice, all recommendations will involve the cooperation of a number of agencies.

	RECOMMENDATIONS	LEAD AGENCIES	BY WHEN	NEW FUNDS REQUIRED ANNUALLY	LEGISLATIVE/ REGULATORY ACTION
HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMMING	1. Study the feasibility of revising Maine's Special Education regulations to allow, as approved expenditures for inclusion in the state/local allocation the services of a non-certified provider in cases where this is recommended by the PET.	Division of Special Education	1/86	No	
	2. Address independent living issues in the students' individualized education plan beginning no later than age 12 and vocational issues no later than age 14.	Local Education Agencies (LEA)	9/86	Yes	Legislation
	3. Develop a grade 7-12 curriculum which emphasizes life and work skills; and provide technical assistance to local units that wish to implement it.	Division of Special Education	9/87	No	
	4. Consult with groups outside the school system, particularly employers, on the development of a functional skills curriculum.	Division of Special Education	9/87	No	
	5. Develop, and approve for reimbursement, appropriate secondary vocational programs and support services. These should include the development of community-based satellite programs jointly funded with other agencies such as JTPA and Bureau of Rehabilitation	Bureau of Vocational Education	9/87	Yes \$300,000	Legislation
	6. Coordinate the design and delivery of vocational evaluation services to secondary special education students.	Bureau of Vocational Education	9/86	Yes	Regulation

	RECOMMENDATIONS	LEAD AGENCIES	BY WHEN	NEW FUNDS REQUIRED ANNUALLY	LEGISLATIVE/ REGULATORY ACTION
TRANSITION	1. Require the development of an Individualized Transition Plan for special education students with identified needs for post-school services.	Local Education Agencies	9/86	Yes	Legislation
	2. Adopt regulations for the Individualized Transition Plans that address:	Division of Special Education	9/86	Yes	Regulation
	a. time frame for development;				
	b. state and local agencies' participation;				
	c. vocational evaluation;				
	d. employment objectives;				
	e. career exploration opportunities;				
	f. identification of a lead State agency to be responsible for monitoring implementation of ITP;				
	g. post-secondary training/support services and anticipated length of time they will be required; and				
	h. measurable performance objectives for student and for other service providers.				
	3. The designated lead State agency shall review and revise the transition plan on an annual basis until the long term goals are achieved.		On-going	No	
	4. Design and implement a system for tracking special education students for up to 3 years after they leave school.	Division of Special Education	9/86	Yes	Legislation
	a. Data collected by designated lead agency and reported to Division of Special Education.				
	b. Data to be used by local schools, Division of Special Education and adult service agencies to design programs that will better suit the needs of handicapped students.				

RECOMMENDATIONS		LEAD AGENCIES	BY WHEN	NEW FUNDS REQUIRED ANNUALLY	LEGISLATIVE/ REGULATORY ACTION
TRANSITION (con't)	5. Amend existing cooperative agreements to reflect responsibility for Individual Transition Plan (ITP)	Division of Special Education	9/86	No	Regulation
	6. Assure that parents are informed about and involved in vocational and independent living options for handicapped students.	Division of Special Education	9/86	Yes	

	RECOMMENDATIONS	LEAD AGENCIES	BY WHEN	NEW FUNDS REQUIRED ANNUALLY	LEGISLATIVE/ REGULATORY ACTION	
POST-HIGH SCHOOL	<p>1. Establish and staff an Inter-agency committee (DHS, DMH/MR, DOL, DECS) to coordinate post-high school services for students aging-out or leaving special education programs. Tasks to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Integrate existing cooperative agreements and add new agencies (e.g. Adult Education, Bureau of Mental Health, Department of Labor);</u></li> <li>b. needs assessment/planning;</li> <li>c. monitoring transition planning process;</li> <li>d. assigning lead agency in disputed cases;</li> <li>e. centralized grievance process;</li> <li>f. resource development;</li> <li>g. coordinate inter-agency training; and</li> <li>h. evaluation of transition planning/programming.</li> </ul>		1/86	Yes	Legislation	
	2. Establish a state-funded supported employment program for handicapped adults.	BR	10/85	\$300,000	Legislation	7
	<p>3. Establish the case management services necessary to support the participation of mentally ill young adults in employment and training programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Statewide service for 200 clients.</li> </ul>	Bureau of Mental Health (BMH)	7/86	Yes \$250,000	Legislation	
	4. Assure an adequate and appropriate range of post-secondary training and employment options for all handicapped young adults, including:		7/86	Yes	Legislation	
	a. Practical/Fundamental Life Activities	Bureau of Mental Retardation		\$875,000		
	b. Independent Living Skills Training	Bureau of Mental Health/Bureau of Rehabilitation		\$250,000		
	c. Pre-vocational Training	Bureau of Mental Retardation		\$300,000		
	d. Shelter Employment	Bureau of Rehabilitation		\$175,000		
	e. Post-secondary Vocational Training	Bureau of Vocational Education		N/A		

	RECOMMENDATIONS	LEAD AGENCIES	BY WHEN	NEW FUNDS REQUIRED ANNUALLY	LEGISLATIVE/ REGULATORY ACTION
POST-HIGH SCHOOL (con't)	5. Promote the availability and accessibility of adult education for handicapped adults through increased subsidy for these services. (a. 150 adult learners at \$450/year)	Division of Adult Education	7/86	Yes \$67,500	Legislation
	6. Create 5 additional VR counselor positions to work with school referrals and to provide technical assistance in vocational programming.	BR	7/86	Yes \$125,000	Legislation
	7. Add 7 positions to Bureau of Mental Retardation case management staff to serve "aging out" referrals.	BMR		\$175,000	
	8. Assure that Maine Job Training Council has a member who represents interests of handicapped workers.	MJTC	7/85	No	
	9. Select Committee on Transitional Services to meet periodically to advise Inter-Agency Committee.		1/86	No	∞
	10. Develop, in consultation with other agencies, a package of wage and tax incentives to encourage employers to hire handicapped young adults.	Maine Job Training Council (MJTC)	1/86	Yes	Legislation
	11. Educate SSI recipients, parents and service providers about work incentive provision of SSI program.	Advocates for the Developmentally Disabled	7/85	Yes	

## II. WHAT ARE THE NEEDS OF MAINE'S HANDICAPPED YOUNG ADULTS

### A. SUMMARY

The Select Committee had neither the time nor the resources to systematically assess the service needs of handicapped students who are graduating or "aging-out" of Maine schools. A comprehensive assessment would solicit information from parents; students; special and vocational educators; adult service agencies; colleges and universities; and employers.

In looking for a single and easily accessible source of information statewide, special education directors appeared to be the most feasible group to survey on the post-high school needs of handicapped students. There were two disadvantages to this approach. First was that this group might not be aware of available community resources; and second, special education directors might underestimate the employment potential of severely handicapped students. The survey results countered both perceptions; directors are aware of community resources, and, they see competitive employment as a goal for the majority of handicapped students.

Another purpose of the survey was to compare the findings with those of a similar survey conducted in 1983 by the Division of Special Education. Although the 1983 survey was specific to the needs of mentally retarded students, its major findings are consistent with the survey conducted by the Select Committee.

The information presented in this section is based on a survey conducted in February 1985. A survey questionnaire was mailed to 133 special education directors. Sixty-six (66) school systems responded to the survey, a response rate of 50 percent. The following were the major findings:

- Number of Students Leaving School. As of June 1985 a total of 563 students, ages 16 - 20, will leave school; 48 percent of them (269 students) will require special services subsequent to leaving school. Since respondents represent slightly over one-half of the student population, we can estimate that 1,000 students leave school annually, and 500 to 600 will need on-going services.
- Post-High School Employment and Training Needs. Preparation for employment and assistance in finding full-time and part-time competitive employment were viewed by the school systems as the greatest needs.
- Community Living Needs. Semi-independent and independent living and transportation were perceived as the most needed community services.



- Support Services. Mental health counseling was reported to be the major support service which will be required by this student population.
- Student Population Requiring the Broadest Range of Services. The school systems indicated that students with mental retardation will require the broadest range of services in all three of the major service area categories: (1) post-secondary employment and training; (2) community living; and (3) support services. The second greatest array of special services will be needed by the learning disabled student population. Students with health/orthopedic or sensory impairments will require the least array of special services.
- Geographic Distribution -- Need for Services. Fifty percent of the students (139) who will need special services upon leaving school currently reside in four of the 14 counties represented by the survey: Cumberland, York, Kennebec and Penobscot.

Figure II-1

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO (1) WILL LEAVE SCHOOL AS OF  
JUNE 1985 AND (2) WILL NEED SPECIAL SERVICES

Age	Number Leaving School	Number Needing Services
16	21	16
17	36	13
18	241	87
19	168	76
20	97	77
Total	563	269

Two counties are not represented by the 1985 survey results; no questionnaires were returned by special education directors in Lincoln and Sagadahoc Counties. The four most densely populated counties (Cumberland, York, Kennebec and Penobscot) represent just over one-half of the students that special education directors predicted would leave school at the end of this school year. The number of handicapped young adults expected to leave the school system in June, 1985 are presented below.

Figure II-2

NUMBER OF STUDENTS BY COUNTY

County	Number of Students
Cumberland	43
Kennebec	39
Penobscot	33
York	34
Washington	21
Aroostook	21
Franklin	16
Hancock	15
Oxford	13
Androscoggin	12
Knox	11
Waldo	6
Piscataquis	5
Somerset	4
Lincoln	Unknown
Sagadahoc	Unknown
Total	273

## B. POST-HIGH SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING NEEDS

As apparent from Figure II-3, young adults with mental retardation constitute the largest proportion (63%) of the disabled student population who will leave school in June 1985; students with health/orthopedic or sensory impairments represent the smallest proportion of students (4%).

Figure II-3

### NUMBER OF STUDENTS BY DISABILITY BY COUNTY

County	Mental Development & Maturation (MR)	Behavior (Emotionally Handicapped)	Cerebral/ Perceptual (LD)	Multi- Handicapped	Health/Orthopedic or Sensory Impaired	Total Students
Androscoggin	6	2	3	1	--	12
Aroostook	16	1	2	2	--	21
Cumberland	30	6	4		3	43
Franklin	8	1	3	3	1	16
Hancock	15	--	--	--	--	15
Kennebec	18	5	11	2	3	39
Knox	4	3	2	2	--	11
Lincoln	--	--	--	--	--	--
Oxford	11	1	1	--	--	13
Penobscot	16	9	7	--	1	33
Piscataquis	1	--	4	--	--	5
Sagadahoc	--	--	--	--	--	--
Somerset	2	--	--	1	1	4
Waldo	6	--	--	--	--	6
Washington	14	5	--	--	2	21
York	24	1	5	4	--	34
Total Number	171	34	42	15	11	273
Percent of Total	62.6	12.5	15.4	5.5	4.0	100.0

Special education directors perceived job placement (competitive, full-time and part-time employment) as the greatest need of exiting students. The need areas are presented below in order of magnitude based on the projected number of students needing each service.

● Competitive Employment (full-time and part-time)	80
● Vocational Skills Training	74
● Post-Secondary Vocational Training	72
● Work Adjustment/Prevocational Training	62
● Practical Life/Independent Living Skills Training	58
● Sheltered Employment	53
● Fundamental Life Activities	35
● Work Activity Program	20
● Other	5

As apparent from Figure II-4, mentally retarded and multiply handicapped students will require the greatest range of services. However, post-secondary vocational training for learning disabled young adults also was perceived as an important need. The types of service needs range from practical life/independent living skills training to preparation for and assistance in finding employment.

Figure II-4

POST-HIGH SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

Needs	Behavior Mental Development & Maturation (MR)	Behavior (Emotionally Handicapped)	Cerebral/ Perceptual (LD)	Multi- Handicapped	Health/Orthopedic or Sensory Impaired	Total
• Fundamental Life Activities	22	2	--	9	2	35
• Practical Life/ Independent Living Skills Training	43	4	1	7	3	58
• Work Activity Program	10	4	1	5	--	20
• Work Adjustment/ Prevocational Training	40	6	4	11	1	62
• Vocational Skills Training	37	9	16	5	7	74
• Job Placement	37	9	3	4	--	53
- Sheltered	43	1	10	3	4	61
- Competitive	10	2	3	3	1	19
• Post-Secondary Vocational Training	29	6	29	4	4	72
• Other	1	1	3	--	--	5
Total	272	44	70	51	22	459

### C. COMMUNITY LIVING NEEDS

The availability of semi-independent living accommodations appears to be the greatest need; supervised living in ICF/MR's and residential treatment appears to be the least needed. The community living need areas listed below are based on the estimated number of students requiring each as projected by the responding school systems.

● Semi-Independent Living	80
● Transportation	71
● Independent Living	65
● Boarding Home	49
● Recreation	49
● Health Care	39
● Foster Care	13
● Other	7
● ICF/MR	6
● Residential Treatment	6

As with post-high school employment and training need categories, special education directors indicated that the mentally retarded and multiple handicapped student population need the greatest range of services as related to community living. (Figure II-5)

Figure II-5

#### COMMUNITY LIVING NEEDS

Needs	Mental Development & Maturation (MR)	Behavior (Emotionally Handicapped)	Cerebral/ Perceptual (LD)	Multi- Handicapped	Health/Orthopedic or Sensory Impaired	Total
● Independent Living	42	7	13	2	1	65
● Semi-Independent Living	57	8	4	5	6	80
● Supervised Living						
- Boarding Home	46	1	--	2	--	49
- Foster Care	11	--	--	2	--	13
- ICF/MR	3	1	--	2	--	6
- Residential Treatment	3	2	--	1	--	6
● Transportation	53	2	9	6	1	71
● Recreation	35	1	7	5	1	49
● Health Care	30	--	4	4	1	39
● Other	6	1	--	--	--	7
Total	286	23	37	29	10	385

## D. SUPPORT SERVICES

Survey results indicate that disability groups with the greatest need for employment/training services, and community living needs, will also require a greater array of support services.

The support services needed by the student population subsequent to leaving the school system are listed below according to magnitude of need as reported by the responding school systems.

● Mental Health Counseling	70
● Guardianship	29
● Adult Basic Education	25
● Speech/Language Therapy	23
● Occupational Therapy	21
● Respite Care	11
● Physical Therapy	9
● Mobility Equipment	6
● Other	5
● Adaptive/Communication Devices	3
● Vision/Hearing Aids	2

Figure II-6

### SUPPORT SERVICES

Service	Mental Development & Maturation (MR)	Behavior (Emotionally Handicapped)	Cerebral/Perceptual (LD)	Multi-Handicapped	Health/Orthopedic or Sensory Impaired	Total
● Mental Health Counseling	28	33	7	2	--	70
● Respite Care	7	1	--	3	--	11
● Occupational Therapy	17	--	1	3	--	21
● Physical Therapy	6	--	--	2	1	9
● Speech/Language Therapy	16	2	1	2	2	23
● Vision/Hearing Aids	2	--	--	--	--	2
● Adaptive/Communication Devices	2	--	--	1	--	3
● Mobility Equipment	4	--	--	1	1	6
● Guardianship	25	1	1	2	--	29
● Adult Basic Education	14	3	7	1	--	25
● Other	3	1	1	--	--	5
Total	124	41	18	17	4	204

### III. EXISTING RESOURCES FOR POST-HIGH SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

#### A. AVAILABILITY AND UTILIZATION OF RESOURCES

The survey of special education directors included questions about the extent to which community-based employment and training programs are available and used. This section also includes information about handicapped students served by Vocational Rehabilitation.

##### Availability

Over ninety percent of the responding school systems indicated that both vocational rehabilitation and mental retardation services were available in their regions. Rehabilitation facilities and independent living programs were cited as the least available resources.

Figure III-1

##### AVAILABILITY OF POST-HIGH SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resource	Available		Not Available	
	#	%*	#	%*
Vocational Rehabilitation	62	93.9	1	1.5
Bureau of Mental Retardation	61	92.4	1	1.5
Community Mental Health Center	51	77.3	7	10.6
Adult Basic Education	49	74.2	7	10.6
University/College	46	69.7	11	16.7
Vocational Technical Institute	42	63.6	13	19.7
JTPA - Job Training Programs	37	56.1	13	19.7
Regional Transportation Services	37	56.1	15	22.7
Rehabilitation Facilities	24	36.4	25	37.9
Independent Living Programs	24	36.4	30	45.5
Other Job Training Programs	23	34.9	23	34.9
Other	2	3.0	0	0.0

\*Percent based on the number of school systems (66) that responded to the 1985 mail survey

##### Utilization

In comparing the utilization of resources based on their reported availability, community mental health services are most utilized followed by vocational rehabilitation and programs for mentally retarded individuals. The least utilized available resource appears to be universities/colleges. Although 46 school systems reported that universities/colleges were an available resource, only 52 percent (24 school systems) indicated that they used this resource. (Figure III-2)

Figures III-2

UTILIZATION OF POST-HIGH SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resource	Available	Utilitize	Percent*
Vocational Rehabilitation	62	53	85.5
Bureau of Mental Retardation	61	52	85.2
Community Mental Health Center	51	44	86.3
Adult Basic Education	49	31	63.3
University/College	46	24	52.2
Vocational Technical Institute	42	25	59.5
JTPA - Job Training Programs	37	21	56.8
Regional Transporation Services	37	20	54.1
Rehabilitation Facilities	24	13	54.2
Independent Living Programs	24	14	58.3
Other Job Training Programs	23	17	73.9
Other	2	1	50.9

\*Utilization as a percent of availability

In examining the availability and utilization of post-secondary educational resources by county, the following were the major findings.

- Vocational Rehabilitation. One school system in Oxford County indicated that VR resources are not available; 4 school systems, in Cumberland, Oxford and Somerset Counties, indicated non-utilization of this resource.
- Bureau of Mental Retardation. One school system indicated non-availability of mental retardation services in Androscoggin County; 7 school systems indicated non-utilization -- in Androscoggin, Cumberland, Kennebec, Oxford and Somerset Counties.
- Community Mental Health Centers. Five School systems reported non-availability in Aroostook, Oxford, Penobscot and Piscataquis Counties; 8 school systems located in Cumberland, Franklin, Piscataquis, Somerset and York Counties indicated non-utilization of this resource.
- Rehabilitation Facilities. Twenty-four school systems in 12 counties reported that rehabilitation facilities were not available.
- JTPA - Job Training Programs. Twelve school systems in 8 counties indicated JTPA was not available as a resource; 22 school systems in 12 counties said that they did not use JTPA funded services.



- Adult Basic Education. Seven school systems in 6 counties reported that this resource was not available to them; 19 school systems in 10 counties indicated that they did not utilize this resource.
- Vocational Technical Institutes. Thirteen school systems in 10 counties indicated that VTI's were not available; 21 school systems, also in 10 counties, said they did not use VTI's
- Universities/Colleges. Eight school systems in 7 counties reported that university/college affiliated resources were not available; 23 school systems in 11 counties said they did not use these resources.
- Independent Living Programs. Twenty-nine school systems located in 12 counties indicated that independent living programs were not available; 24 school systems in 9 counties indicated non-use of such programs.
- Other Job Training Programs. Twenty-two responding school systems in 10 counties indicated that such resources were not available; 9 systems in 10 counties said they did not use such programs.
- Regional Transportation. Thirteen school systems in 8 counties said transportation services were not available; 22 systems in 10 counties indicated they did not use such services.

Figure III-3(a)

AVAILABILITY AND UTILIZATION OF POST-HIGH SCHOOL RESOURCES BY COUNTY

County	Number of School Systems	Resources															
		VR				BMR				CMHC				Rehab. Fac.			
		Avail.	Util.	Yes	No	Avail.	Util.	Yes	No	Avail.	Util.	Yes	No	Avail.	Util.	Yes	No
Androscoggin	3	3	-	3	-	2	1	2	1	2	-	2	-	2	1	1	1
Aroostook	8	8	-	8	-	8	-	7	-	7	1	7	-	-	5	-	2
Cumberland	10	11	-	10	1	10	-	8	2	9	-	7	2	7	2	2	5
Franklin	2	2	-	2	-	2	-	2	-	2	-	1	1	-	1	-	-
Hancock	1	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	1
Kennebec	8	7	-	7	-	7	-	5	2	7	-	6	-	4	3	3	3
Knox	3	3	-	2	-	3	-	2	-	2	-	2	-	-	1	-	1
Lincoln	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Oxford	5	4	1	4	1	4	-	3	1	3	1	3	-	2	2	1	3
Penobscot	6	6	-	5	-	6	-	4	-	3	2	3	-	2	2	2	1
Piscataquis	2	2	-	2	-	2	-	2	-	1	1	1	1	2	-	1	1
Sagadahoc	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Somerset	3	2	-	1	2	3	-	2	1	1	-	-	2	-	1	-	2
Waldo	3	2	-	2	-	2	-	2	-	2	-	2	-	1	-	1	-
Washington	3	3	-	2	-	3	-	3	-	3	-	3	-	1	2	1	2
York	6	6	-	6	-	6	-	6	-	6	-	4	2	3	3	-	5
Statewide	63	60	1	55	4	59	1	49	7	49	5	42	8	24	24	12	25

(Continued on next page.)

Figure III-3(b)

AVAILABILITY AND UTILIZATION OF POST-HIGH SCHOOL RESOURCES BY COUNTY

County	Number of School Systems	Resources															
		Univ-Col				Indep. Living				Other Job Trng.				Reg. Trans.			
		Avail.		Util.		Avail.		Util.		Avail.		Util.		Avail.		Util.	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Androscoggin	3	2	-	2	-	2	1	2	1	2	-	1	-	2	1	-	1
Aroostook	8	6	1	3	3	2	5	2	-	2	5	1	2	6	1	1	6
Cumberland	10	8	1	6	2	8	-	3	5	4	1	4	1	7	-	5	3
Franklin	2	2	-	2	-	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	-	2	-	1	1
Hancock	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	1
Kennebec	8	6	-	2	4	3	4	2	4	5	2	5	1	3	2	3	-
Knox	3	2	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	2	-	1	1
Lincoln	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Oxford	5	3	1	2	2	-	4	-	4	2	2	2	1	4	-	1	4
Penobscot	6	4	2	3	1	2	3	-	2	1	1	-	1	2	2	1	2
Piscataquis	2	2	-	1	1	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Sagadahoc	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Somerset	3	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	-
Waldo	3	1	1	-	2	1	1	1	-	-	2	-	1	1	1	1	1
Washington	3	2	1	1	2	-	3	-	2	1	2	1	1	-	3	-	2
York	6	6	-	2	4	2	3	1	4	1	5	-	4	6	-	5	1
Statewide	63	45	8	25	23	22	29	13	24	22	22	17	13	36	13	20	22

## B. SATISFACTION WITH POST-HIGH SCHOOL RESOURCES

The survey questionnaire contained a question concerning satisfaction with post-high school resources. School systems were asked to rate, on a five-point scale, each of eleven resources, based on their experience with the particular resource. Comparing utilization with satisfaction ratings shows that special educators are more satisfied with less frequently used resources. It may be that they are more selective about referrals to these resources, thus, enhancing the potential for success. The overall rating, for all eleven resources, was 3.2; the average rating for each resource is presented below.

Adult Basic Education	3.8
Universities/Colleges	3.8
Vocational Technical Institutes	3.6
Independent Living Programs	3.5
JTPA-Job Training Programs	3.3
Bureau of Mental Retardation	3.2
Other Job Training Programs	3.2
Community Mental Health Centers	3.1
Regional Transportation Services	2.9
Vocational Rehabilitation	2.8
Rehabilitation Facilities	2.8

Special Education directors are most satisfied with post-high school programs whose purpose is primarily educational and, thus, similar to their own. Because they are familiar with the mission of these programs they probably are making more appropriate, and more selective, referrals. This would explain the higher satisfaction with, yet relatively lower utilization of, these programs. On the other hand, there is less satisfaction with such adult service agencies as vocational rehabilitation and rehabilitation facilities. The explanation for this may be that schools, being less familiar with these agencies, either are making inappropriate referrals or have unrealistic expectations for what they can do.

Figure III-4

### SATISFACTION WITH POST-HIGH SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resource	Rating Scale					Total	Average
	Lo (1) # %	(2) # %	(3) # %	(4) # %	(5) HI # %		
Vocational Rehabilitation	0 13.8	15 25.9	19 32.8	13 22.4	3 5.2	58	2.8
Bureau of Mental Retardation	2 3.7	10 18.5	22 40.7	17 31.5	3 5.6	54	3.2
Community Mental Health Center	5 10.9	6 13.0	17 37.0	16 34.8	2 4.3	46	3.1
Rehabilitation Facilities	2 15.4	2 15.4	6 46.2	2 15.4	1 7.7	13	2.8
JTPA - Job Training Programs	0 --	5 21.7	8 34.8	9 39.1	1 4.3	23	3.3
Adult Basic Education	0 --	0 --	11 33.3	16 48.5	6 18.2	33	3.8
Vocational Technical Institute	1 4.0	0 --	10 40.0	12 48.0	2 8.0	25	3.6
Universities/Colleges	0 --	1 4.5	7 31.8	10 45.5	4 18.2	22	3.8
Independent Living Programs	0 --	0 --	8 53.3	6 40.0	1 6.7	15	3.5
Other Job Training Programs	0 --	5 25.0	9 45.0	3 15.0	3 15.0	20	3.2
Regional Transportation Services	2 10.0	2 10.0	9 45.0	7 35.0	0 --	20	2.9
Other	0 --	0 --	0 --	0 --	1 100.0	1	---
Overall Rating							3.2

NOTE: The %'s are based on the total number of school systems that rated each resource.

### C. BUREAU OF REHABILITATION

Since the initiation of the Education/Rehabilitation Cooperative Agreement, the Bureau of Rehabilitation has monitored the number of handicapped students referred for vocational rehabilitation services. Vocational Rehabilitation is a state-federal program that provides rehabilitation services to those who meet the agency's federally-mandated eligibility criteria. To qualify, an individual must have a disability that poses a handicap to employment; and there must be a reasonable expectation that the individual can achieve a vocational goal.

The actual number of student referrals, about 200, has remained constant over the last three years; however, the number of successful rehabilitations has increased. The average weekly earnings of rehabilitated students is higher than that of other rehabilitated clients.

Handicapped persons under the age of 21 are referred by sources other than schools. In fact, it is interesting to note that the majority of persons, 21 years or younger, referred to VR have not been referred by schools.

Figure III-5(a)

#### HANDICAPPED STUDENTS AND YOUNG ADULT VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CASES; FFY'1982-84

VR Case Status	FFY '82			FFY '83			FFY '84		
	No. All Cases	No. Student Referrals	No. Referred Under 21 Yrs.	No. All Cases	No. Student Referrals	No. Referred Under 21 Yrs.	No. All Cases	No. Student Referrals	No. Referred Under 21 Yrs.
• Referrals	3,974	176	554	3,474	228	557	3,266	179	506
• Applicants	3,168	159	485	3,066	213	506	2,951	173	468
• Applicants Not Accepted	1,241	18	159	1,427	42	189	1,271	54	185
• Acceptances	1,647	65	254	1,573	95	261	1,550	105	248
• Accepted Cases Closed, Rehabilitated	941	7	135	869	13	157	972	31	150
• Accepted Cases Closed, Not Rehabilitated	604	4	87	655	4	101	501	10	85

Source: Maine Bureau of Rehabilitation VR Management Information System

Notes: "All Cases" refer to all VR cases regardless of referral source or age at referral.

"Student Referral" refers to VR cases referred by school personnel.

"Referred Under 21 Years" refers to all VR cases less than 21 years of age at the time of referral to VR.

"Applicants" refers to all persons referred to VR who request services and sign an application.

"Applicants Not Accepted" refers to all applicants whose case is closed because the individual is ineligible for, unavailable for, or no longer interested in VR services.

"Acceptances" refers to all applicants found eligible for VR services.

"Rehabilitated" refers to all accepted cases successfully employed or functioning as a homemaker for at least 60 days as a result of the provision of VR services.

Figure III-5(b)

**APPLICATION, ACCEPTANCE AND REHABILITATION RATES OF  
HANDICAPPED STUDENTS, YOUNG ADULTS AND ALL VR CASES; FFY 1982-84**

	FFY '82			FFY '83			FFY '84		
	Student Referrals	Referrals 21 Yrs.	All Cases	Student Referrals	Referrals 21 Yrs.	All Cases	Student Referrals	Referrals 21 Yrs.	All Cases
• Application Rate	90.3%	87.5%	79.7%	93.4%	90.8%	88.3%	96.6%	92.5%	90.4%
• Acceptance Rate (Of Applicants)	78.3%	61.5%	57.0%	69.3%	58.0%	52.4%	66.0%	57.3%	54.9%
• Rehabilitation Rate	63.6%	60.8%	61.1%	76.5%	60.9%	57.6%	75.6%	63.8%	66.8%

Source: Maine Bureau of Rehabilitation VR Management Information System

Notes: "All Cases" refer to all VR cases regardless of referral source or age at referral.

"Student Referral" refers to VR cases referred by school personnel.

"Referred Under 21 Years" refers to all VR cases less than 21 years of age at the time of referral to VR.

"Applicants" refers to all persons referred to VR who request services and sign an application.

"Acceptances" refers to all applicants found eligible for VR services.

"Rehabilitated" refers to all accepted cases successfully employed or functioning as a homemaker for at least 60 days as a result of the provision of VR services.

"Application Rate" the number of cases who apply for VR services divided by the number of cases who are referred to VR during the time period identified-expressed as a percentage.

"Acceptance Rate (of applicants)" the number of cases accepted for VR services divided by the sum of that number plus the number of of applicants not accepted for VR services during the time period identified-expressed as a percentage. This rate is not the same as the more common "Acceptance Rate" measure.

"Rehabilitation Rate" the number of cases closed, rehabilitated divided by the sum of that number plus the number of cases closed, not rehabilitated for the time period identified expressed as a percentage.

#### IV. COORDINATING THE SCHOOL-TO-COMMUNITY TRANSITION

##### A. PERSONNEL PREPARATION AND TRAINING

###### Findings

Our expectations of educators; rehabilitation counselors; caseworkers; and employment and training professionals are changing faster than the systems which prepare them. These systems include undergraduate and graduate programs; and in-service training for those already on the job. If we ask, for example, if special education teachers learn all they need to know about vocational programming for handicapped youth; the answer is "no." If we ask whether vocational instructors and regular classroom teachers have coursework or in-service training on how to work with handicapped youth; the answer is "minimal or none." If we ask whether vocational rehabilitation counselors and other employment and training professionals understand their role in the handicapped student's transition from school to work; the answer is "not often."

We look to special education to move away from an emphasis on academic remediation and toward teaching practical life skills. We expect vocational schools to include more handicapped students in mainstream vocational programs. On the community end, we want vocational rehabilitation and others to "finish the job;" although many handicapped young adults come to them lacking the most basic job retention and social skills.

Typically, special education teachers are trained to work with children; and employment and training programs are oriented to serving adults. Consequently, neither group is adequately prepared to deal with the unique needs of the handicapped young adult as he or she moves from the school to community living.

State teacher certification requirements for regular classroom teachers do not include competencies in teaching handicapped students. However, most special education students spend more than half of their instructional time in the regular classroom setting. The "up" side of this is that it may mean many handicapped students are ready to be in a regular classroom. The "down" side is that, because of a severe shortage of special education teachers and other support personnel, these students are in the regular classroom for lack of an alternative.

Transforming new expectations into practice means re-examining our assumptions about the potential of handicapped students. It requires incorporating a commitment in teacher training programs to preparing students for optimal independence. And it calls for establishing better on-the-job linkages between schools and adult service agency personnel. Interdisciplinary training using a joint in-service model is an effective way of promoting interagency communication.

Recommendations: Personnel Preparation and Training

- Revise University of Maine pre-service curriculum for special education teachers to include preparation in pre-vocational and vocational programming for handicapped young adults.
- Revise the certification process for special education teachers and consider adopting separate certification standards for grades K-8 and 9-12.
- Revise the University of Maine graduate program curricula in education, counseling and public policy to include more preparation in work with handicapped youth.
- Plan and deliver coordinated in-service training on vocational programming for handicapped young adults.
- Revise the certification standards for regular classroom teachers to include 6 hours of special education coursework.
- Amend certification standards for vocational education instructors to include courses in teaching handicapped students.

## B. HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS

### Findings

The current research on high school special education programs recognize that the most appropriate curriculum for the handicapped student is one designed to prepare each student for an adult living and working environment. We also know that severely handicapped students share some or all of the following characteristics:

- less likely to transfer or generalize skills learned in one environment to another;
- will lose skills without frequent practice;
- require more direct instruction;
- acquire fewer skills than non-handicapped peers over an equal period of time; and
- little or no work experience during high school.

It's clear that a traditional academic program probably will not succeed in giving these students the skills necessary to make a successful transition to the world of work.

Society's expectations for handicapped high school students fall short in other areas as well. By the time they leave high school non-handicapped students have had many more work experiences than their handicapped peers. This situation results in complaints from vocational instructors and employers about handicapped students lacking the most basic work and social skills needed for keeping a job.

While no one curriculum will meet the needs of all handicapped students, a more relevant high school program should include the following elements:

- establish goals for moving to integrated rather than sheltered environments;
- plan a program that is as age-appropriate as possible;
- use real settings for instruction, with an emphasis on non-school, community-based sites;
- teaching independent living skills; and
- adapt vocational programs to allow at least partial participation when full integration isn't feasible.



### Vocational Education

Vocational education, in Maine and nationally, is at a crossroad. The federal funds which largely supported the program have been drastically reduced. As vocational educators look to the Legislature to make up the shortfall, they also must deal with how the current education reform movement will affect the future of vocational education.

The National Commission on Secondary Vocational Education in a report titled, "The Unfinished Agenda: The Role of Vocational Education in the High School" states that an increased emphasis on academics, which may be the best preparation for college, may not be the best preparation for life. Increasing graduation requirements "ignores differences in student interest and ability, and ignores the needs of those high school students who do not plan to go on to college." The Commission asserts that vocational education has an important role in fulfilling the goals of an educational system designed to help students achieve intellectual, social, vocational and personal goals.

Special educators, parents and advocacy groups also have been taking a look at vocational education as an alternative for handicapped students. Not surprisingly, they concluded that vocational education should and could be doing more for handicapped students. However, vocational educators who want vocational education to be viewed as a legitimate and quality alternative resist the goal of including more special education students. They fear that secondary vocational schools could become catch-alls for slow learners and others who "don't fit the mold."

The challenge is to overhaul the vocational education system to achieve the goal of providing programs appropriate to varying levels of ability. Currently, the participation of handicapped students in vocational education varies enormously across the state. Some vocational centers have taken advantage of federal funds and created innovative programs. Others claim that they don't have the resources, nor do their instructors have the training, to accommodate more handicapped students. Because the Advocates for the Developmentally Disabled are presently studying the issue of handicapped student access to vocational education, the Select Committee limited its attention in this area, pending the report from the ADD's.

During the 1983-84 school year, secondary vocational schools served approximately 8,600 high school students. Of the total, 12.4% were identified as handicapped students. (See Figure IV-1) Handicapped students participate either in a regular vocational program or a special vocational program. Special vocational programs are approved Diversified Occupations or General Trades programs. The rate of handicapped student participation in special, or segregated, programs has doubled since 1981. One reason for the increase is that six new special vocational programs have been established in the last three years.

Figure IV-1

HANDICAPPED STUDENT ENROLLMENT IN SECONDARY VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS 1983-1984

CENTER/REGION	TOTAL VOCATIONAL ENROLLMENT	TOTAL HANDICAPPED ENROLLEMENT	% HANDICAPPED	TOTAL HANDICAPPED ELIGIBLE	% TOTAL HANDICAPPED ELIGIBLE ENROLLMENT
Capitol Area	555	81	14.6%	192	42.2%
Bath	257	14	5.5%	229	6.1%
Biddeford	386	54	14.0%	198	27.3%
Caribou	266	50	18.8%	193	25.9%
Lake Region	127	14	11.2%	112	12.5%
Portland	1203	195	16.3%	501	38.9%
Presque Isle	250	8	3.2%	157	5.1%
Sanford	490	53	10.9%	309	17.2%
Skowhegan	262	7	2.7%	115	6.1%
Waterville	442	62	14.1%	183	33.9%
Westbrook	298	23	7.8%	171	13.5%
Dexter	269	15	5.6%	121	12.4%
Ellsworth	101	22	21.8%	147	15.0%
Kenneth Foster	268	28	10.5%	111	25.2%
Lewiston	687	75	11.0	228	32.9%
So. Aroostook	348	56	16.9%	63	88.9%
So. Penobscot	715	63	8.8%	208	30.3%
Waldo	208	61	29.4%	96	63.5%
No. Aroostook	184	26	14.1%	70	37.1%
No. Penobscot	309	7	2.5%	81	8.6%
Washington County	52	6	11.6%	36	16.7%
Knox County	324	73	22.5%	106	68.9%
No. Oxford County	108	21	19.4%	88	23.9%
E. Cumberland	283	46	16.2%	178	25.8%
So. Oxford County	235	14	6.0%	69	20.3%

Source: Department of Educational Services "Three Year State Plan for Vocational Education 1986-88"

Recommendations: High School Programs

- Study the feasibility of revising Maine's special education regulations to allow, as approved expenditures for inclusion in the state and local allocation, the services of a non-certified provider in cases where this is recommended by the Pupil Evaluation Team.
- Address independent living issues in the students' individualized education plans beginning no later than age 12 and vocational issues no later than age 14.
- Develop a grade 7-12 curriculum which emphasizes life and work skills; and provide technical assistance to local units in its implementation.
- Consult with groups outside the school system, particularly employers, on the development of a functional skills curriculum.
- Develop, and approve for reimbursement, appropriate secondary vocational programs and support services. These should include the development of community-based satellite programs jointly funded with other agencies such as JTPA and the Bureau of Rehabilitation.
- Coordinate the design and delivery of vocational evaluation services to secondary special education students.

## C. TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO COMMUNITY LIVING

### Findings

Transition refers to that process whereby students leave the structure and security of school and family and assume the risks and responsibilities of adult life. The transition for students with disabilities is more difficult because they need to arrange for services needed to adjust to adult living.

The transition process begins in school but it cannot succeed without the involvement of the student, his/her family and the adult service system. The family is critical to the process because they usually are the handicapped student's primary support in coping with the complex personal, social, financial and vocational demands of adult life. Adult service system refers to the array of programs and agencies with which the student will interact to obtain services after leaving school.

Normally, we think of transition planning as taking place near the end of the student's school program. Actually, transition is one phase of a continuum that begins at the pre-school and elementary levels. The ideal continuum proposed by the Eleventh Institute on Rehabilitation Issues is illustrated on the following page. Unfortunately, many of the services depicted either are not available at all, or are available only in certain regions of the state.

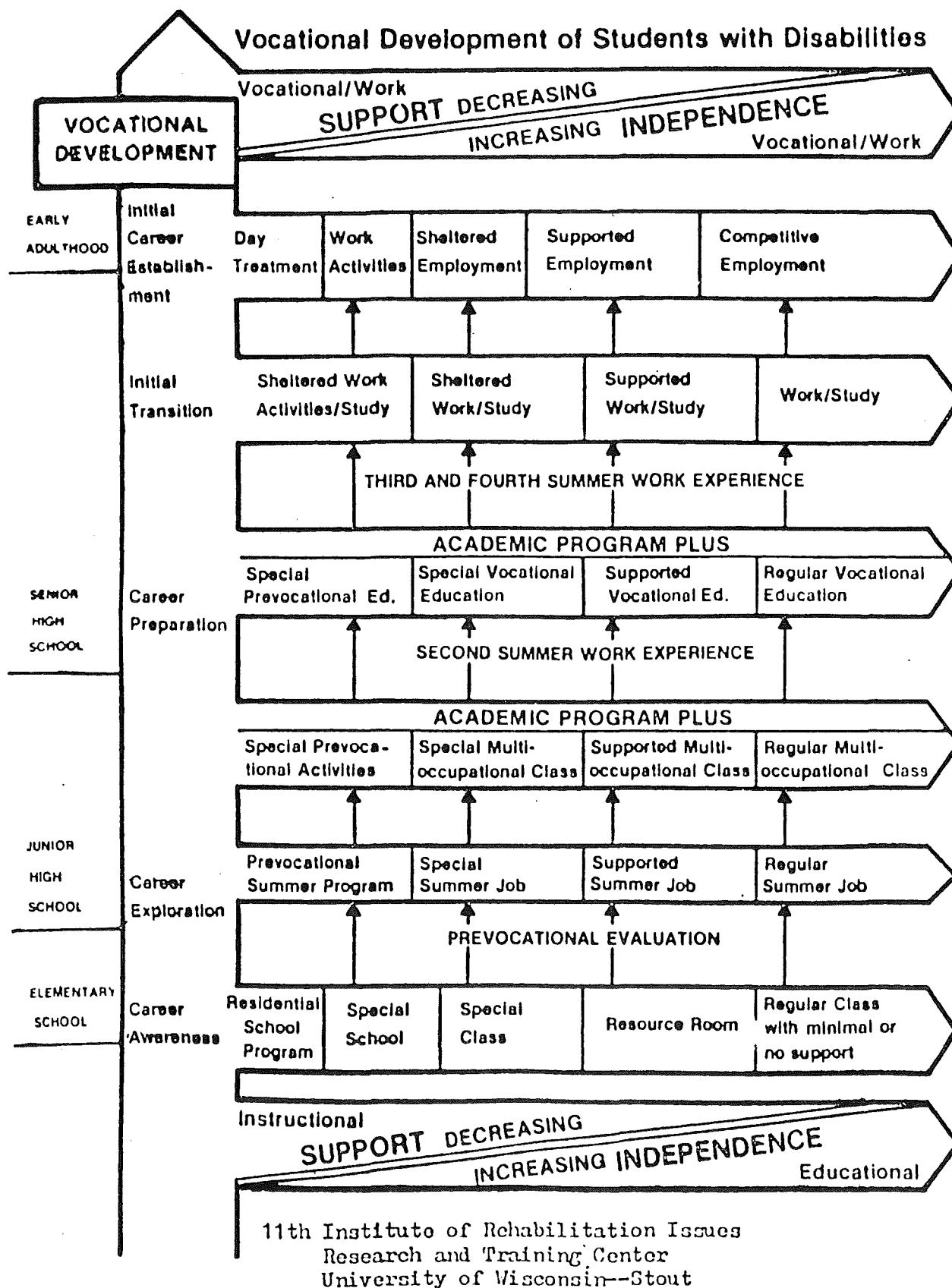
Major transitional concerns are how to:

- identify, long before the student leaves school, the types of on-going services required;
- involve adult service agency personnel in planning for post-high school services; and
- appropriately assign financial and program planning responsibility.

The key to resolving these concerns is interagency, or interdisciplinary, cooperation. This, of course, is more easily talked about than practiced. The barriers are numerous and include:

- Conflicting regulations, eligibility criteria and service goals.
- Lack of services.
- Minimal experience in operationalizing the concept of interagency cooperation.
- Programs are established without an adequate needs assessment; this results in duplication in some areas and a service void in others.
- Little or no data on post-high school experiences of special education graduates.

Figure IV-2



Just as a single curriculum will not meet the needs of all handicapped students, transition needs vary. Handicapped students generally fall into one of three sub-groups:

- Those who could participate in regular post-secondary education and employment training programs if they had better secondary preparation.
- A middle group for whom post-secondary education is not an option, but who could be employed if they had high school vocational education and then short-term, specialized training. Some might need minimal on-going support.
- The severely physically, mentally and/or emotionally disabled young adult for whom competitive employment is a very long range goal. This group will need a variety of long-term support services.

Because successful transition usually requires the interaction of disparate service delivery systems, it is necessary to have a process for defining responsibilities of participating agencies.

#### Cooperative Agreements

Maine took the first steps toward formalizing the transition planning process in 1980 with the development of a cooperative agreement among the Division of Special Education, Bureau of Vocational Education and the Bureau of Rehabilitation. The Division of Special Education and the Bureau of Mental Retardation negotiated a separate cooperative agreement in 1984. The purpose of the cooperative agreements is to define roles and responsibilities; to assure a continuum of services; and to eliminate duplication and gaps in services for students.

The Interagency Team responsible for monitoring the Education/Rehabilitation cooperative agreement has continued to identify unresolved issues, many of which relate to the financing of needed services. Other benefits of the cooperative agreement have been joint in-service training; and joint funding of innovative projects in vocational preparation of handicapped high school students. A corollary activity of the Interagency Team was the publication of two resource manuals for local schools: "Programming for Secondary Age Handicapped Students" and "Assessment of Secondary Age Students."

Unfortunately there has been no independent evaluation of either the Education/Rehabilitation or Special Education/Mental Retardation agreements. Therefore, it's difficult to counter the criticism of parent and advocacy groups who question the extent to which all this activity has improved programs for students. They see a need for a cooperative model in which individual agencies can be held more accountable.

Recommendations: Transition from School-to-Community Living

- Require the development of an Individualized Transition Plan for all special education students.
- Adopt regulations for the Individualized Transition Plans (ITP) that address:
  - time frame for development;
  - state and public/private agencies' participation;
  - vocational evaluation;
  - employment objectives;
  - career exploration opportunities;
  - identification of a lead state agency to be responsible for monitoring implementation of ITP
  - post-secondary training/support services and anticipated length of time they will be required; and
  - measurable performance objectives for students and for service providers.
- Assure that parents are informed about and involved in vocational and independent living options for handicapped students.
- Designate a "lead" state agency to review and revise the transition plan on an annual basis until the long-term goals are achieved.
- Design and implement a system for tracking special education students for up to 3 years after they leave school. The data would be collected by the "lead" agency and reported to the Division of Special Education. The Division and other agencies would use the information for program planning and evaluation.
- Amend existing cooperative agreements to reflect responsibility for Individualized Transition Plan development and monitoring.

#### D. POST-HIGH SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

"Almost as important as the financial penalty paid by the powerless is the suffering that comes from being shut out of paid and recognized work. Without it we lose much of our self-respect and ability to prove that we are alive and making some differences in the world."\*

##### Findings

Handicapped young adults hold a prominent place in today's youth unemployment picture. Their rate of unemployment is at least three times that of their non-disabled peers. Many of these young people graduate or drop out of high school only to find that the "mainstream" employment and training system is not prepared to assist them in becoming contributing members of society. For a small minority, the road to independence will be very long; they need an expensive array of support services. However, many could benefit from traditional post-high school programs. They also need new program options, such as supported employment, that are not now available in Maine.

Current program options for handicapped young adults typically include: no program; segregated programs, such as work activity centers and sheltered workshops; transitional employment; job placement; adult education; JTPA programs; and for the very few, higher education. These resources have developed over time and were not designed with handicapped young adults in mind.

Post-high school programming for handicapped young adults can be described in one word -- fragmented. No fewer than four departments of state government manage the services, which are delivered primarily through private agencies. Coordination among departments, while improving, is far from adequate.

Whether resources exist often depends on a person's particular disability and where s/he lives. Not only are there more resources in the southern part of the state but there are more disability-specific services. Where resources do exist, regulatory barriers prevent certain groups from receiving services. For example, who pays for post-high school services for a severely physically disabled young adult who doesn't meet the eligibility criteria of the Bureau of Mental Retardation or Vocational Rehabilitation?

\*Steinem, G., Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1983.



It is difficult to generalize across disability groups about the adequacy of existing services. Visually impaired and mentally retarded individuals have a comparatively good service system. The emotionally disturbed and severely physically disabled groups have far fewer existing resources.

Providing appropriate opportunities for handicapped young adults will require re-structuring the public policy context in which we hold handicapped persons. The general view has been that handicapped persons need to be "taken care of." This resulted in institutionalization for the more severely disabled, and subsidized day activity programs for the less severely disabled. As a society we have created a needlessly large pool of dependent people. What we know now is that all disabled people have potential and even the severely disabled can move from expensive, dead-end placements to less sheltered environments.

The Bureaus of Rehabilitation and Mental Retardation have taken steps to develop programs which place greater emphasis on training for unsubsidized, competitive employment. The danger, however, is that we may find ourselves with a continuum that has a beginning and an end, but no middle. In our enthusiasm for an "employment for all" goal, we may lose sight of those who need more and longer preparation. Twenty years ago sheltered employment was considered a terminal and optimal placement for most severely handicapped people; sheltered employment was the end of the continuum. The challenge today is to push out the limits of that continuum to include unsubsidized employment, and, to fund the services that are needed to get people there. A more comprehensive range of program options should include post-employment support services, commonly known as supported employment.

### Supported Employment

Supported work is a concept that has been successfully demonstrated with many groups of disadvantaged workers: ex-offenders, school drop-outs, AFDC recipients, ex-addicts and handicapped individuals. It is based on principles of: defined performance expectations; commensurate wages; supervision; and peer support. Participants are matched to the job and are trained on the job-site.

Supported employment can fill a large gap in the existing continuum. It is particularly appropriate for the special education graduates who don't need sheltered environments but who do need some coaching along the way to competitive employment.

### Case Management

The concept of case management turns up time and again in the social services lexicon. It implies that one person, or agency, is knowledgeable about available resources and can make an appropriate match between client and services. Without it, even the best developed vocational or independent living skills training program can fail. If a person's food, shelter, transportation and other supports aren't in place, work is not possible.

One group for whom case management services are both lacking and needed urgently are mentally ill young adults. Unlike persons with mental retardation, who are entitled to services from the Bureau of Mental Retardation, mentally ill persons have no similar entitlement.

In addition to the mentally ill young adult, another group who has no "home" once they leave special education are those young disabled people who don't meet the eligibility criteria of either the Bureau of Rehabilitation or the Bureau of Mental Retardation. A typical example would be a 20 year old woman with cerebral palsy and an above average I.Q. Because of her physical problems she is deemed to have no immediate vocational potential; her high I.Q. disqualifies her for BMR-funded programs. What she needs is an independent living skills program that may enable her to develop vocational potential. Independent living services are minimally available in Maine and mostly federally subsidized. Expanding these services to meet the need is a goal of the Bureau of Rehabilitation.

#### Public Employment and Training Programs

These include Adult Education, Vocational Technical Institutes, Job Training Partnership Act and higher education. They should not be overlooked as resources for handicapped young adults. Right now, these systems are stretched to their limits; JTPA estimates that its programs can serve 5% of the population in need of job training. Providing these existing systems with additional resources has policy and financial benefits that far outweigh the cost of a new and separate system of services for the handicapped population in transition from school to community.

Recommendations: Post-High School Employment and Training

1. Establish and staff an inter-agency committee (DHS, DMH/MR, DOL, DECS) to coordinate post-high school services for students leaving special education programs. Tasks to include:
  - integrate existing cooperative agreements and add new agencies e.g. Adult Education, Bureau of Mental Health, Department of Labor;
  - needs assessment/planning;
  - monitoring transition planning process;
  - assigning lead agency in disputed cases;
  - centralized grievance process;
  - resource development;
  - coordinate inter-agency training; and
  - evaluation of transition planning/programming.
2. Establish a state-funded, supported employment program for handicapped adults.
3. Establish the case management services necessary to support the participation of mentally ill young adults in employment and training programs.
4. Assure an adequate and appropriate range of post-secondary training and employment options for all handicapped young adults, including:
  - Practical/Fundamental Life Activities
  - Independent Living Skills Training
  - Pre-vocational Training
  - Sheltered Employment
  - Post-Secondary Vocational Training
5. Promote the availability of adult education for handicapped adults through increased subsidy for these services.
6. Create 5 additional VR counselor positions to work with school referrals and to provide technical assistance in vocational programming.
7. Increase number of Bureau of Mental Retardation case managers to handle increased referrals.
8. Assure that Maine Job Training Council has a member who represents interests of handicapped workers.
9. Select Committee on Transitional Services should continue to meet periodically to advise Inter-Agency Committee.
10. Develop, in consultation with other agencies, a package of wage and tax incentives to encourage employers to hire handicapped young adults.
11. Educate SSI recipients, parents and service providers about the work incentive provisions of SSI program.

## V. NEXT STEPS AND UNRESOLVED ISSUES

In its first five months of work, the Select Committee had time to do little more than identify a range of issues that need additional study. The intention of recommending an interagency committee is to have this group assume responsibility for managing the transition planning process.

To be effective, a state initiative on transition must include the following:

- Employer involvement.
- Baseline data on the status of recent special education graduates.
- Funding to expand secondary and post-high school programs for handicapped young adults.

No vocational training program can be successful without employer involvement. Ultimately, it is the employer who "places" the person in the job; thus, the employer perspective must be accommodated in the program design. Also, we need more accurate information about what is happening to today's special education graduates. Without that, it will be difficult to accurately measure the effect of any new funding or programs. Finally, state funding agencies must assure that funding practices are aligned with the stated goal of expanding employment opportunities. Since the state contracts with community agencies for most services, these agencies will "produce" what the state wants to "buy". As long as the state continues to buy custodial services, that is what these agencies will sell.

The Select Committee is concerned about the number of special education students who leave school before their eligibility for special education services is over at age 20. As a reason school administrators cite the student's understandable desire to graduate with his/her peer group. Advocates contend that these students are "pushed out" because the school either has no appropriate program, or is simply tired of dealing with them. Of equal concern are those students who leave before graduation. The recent survey reported 21 special education students, aged 16, who will leave school this June.

Some issues that the Select Committee did not address, but which need attention are:

- The proposed transition planning system is keyed to in-school students; what do we do about reaching drop-outs?
- How do we foster a work ethic and create job opportunities in areas of high unemployment?
- How to assign "lead" agency responsibility in cases of severely handicapped youngsters who will need multiple and on-going services.

- What about those for whom employment is a very long-term goal? These young people have needs for residential treatment, transportation, family support, personal care assistance and recreation. There is no accurate estimate of the numbers of students in this category, nor have we looked at creative alternatives to institutionalization.

By the time a special education student leaves high school, for whatever reason, society has made a substantial investment in that young person. Society will not reap the benefits of that investment unless these young people are prepared to become vocationally productive, contributing adults.

## VI. WHY ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT IN TRAINING HANDICAPPED YOUTH

This section of the report addresses the question of whether it is in the state's economic interest to invest in new and expanded training and educational opportunities for handicapped young adults. Although limited time and inadequate information prevented the Committee from developing a thorough cost-benefit analysis study, some cost-benefit generalizations can be made based on current rehabilitation expenditures and outcomes in Maine; and based on the results of studies of successful programs in other states. A complete cost-benefit analysis will be possible only when a data system for tracking special education students is in place. Before examining the cost and benefit of increased program expenditures, a question ought to be addressed. Are we unrealistic in expecting people with mental or physical handicaps, particularly severe handicapping conditions, to work competitively and live independently?

In a recent "Psychology Today" article, Beverly McLeod describes the results of the pioneering training program developed by G. Thomas Bellamy of the University of Oregon, and other programs modeled after his in the last ten years, which have shown that severely handicapped individuals can acquire the skills needed and to do productive work in competitive jobs. These training programs are successful because they use a functional approach to training. The new approach includes placing individuals in job situations and then training them in the steps needed to complete a task or tasks. She cites the example of a man with moderate retardation who spent 20 years in an institution, but now earns \$6.00 an hour training dishwashers.

Further, the results of a University of Virginia training program indicate that 145 people with a median I.Q. of 48 were placed in competitive employment earning at least minimum wage. The 145 clients in the Virginia program cited earlier earned more than \$900,000 in a five-year period and paid \$126,634 in taxes. The average employee earned \$4,500 per year. The answer to the question posed earlier then is "no" -- it is not unrealistic to expect individuals with even the most severe handicapping conditions to work in competitive job situations.

A school-based transition program in Wisconsin which began in 1979 provides job development, placement and follow-up for students with mental retardation. Before the program began, only 1 out of 53 graduates with severe handicaps worked in a non-sheltered situation. Since the program was implemented, nearly 80 percent of its graduates found jobs in the community. Lou Brown, of the University of Wisconsin, states there is enough evidence to suggest that "significant savings can be realized where severely handicapped persons are prepared to function in non-sheltered environments." The cost of maintaining an individual in a sheltered environment is approximately \$5,251 per year in Madison, Wisconsin, compared to \$1,681 in a non-sheltered environment. The Madison program provides another illustration which contradicts the myth that only the higher functioning people with handicaps can work in the competitive, non-sheltered environment. Brown points out from

follow-up studies in Madison that "...there were more graduates in non-sheltered environments who were non-verbal, non-ambulatory, visually or auditorily impaired, deaf, blind, cerebral palsied, and who were referred to as within the severe as opposed to the moderate range of mental retardation..." than in sheltered environments. Brown also states that when comparing cost effectiveness of the two training programs, the programmatic outcomes must be considered. Programs preparing individuals for non-sheltered environments are most cost effective, mainly because "the cost of producing nonmeaningful work in sheltered environments is considerable and life-long." (McLeod).

In 1984 Maine spent nearly \$6 million dollars on work adjustment training and work activity programs serving 2,176 clients of the Bureau of Rehabilitation and the Bureau of Mental Retardation. The cost per person for work adjustment training (with all costs taken into account) is estimated to be from \$3,500 to \$5,000. Of the 270 cases closed by the Bureau of Rehabilitation in fiscal year 1984, one-third of the clients provided work adjustment training were closed successfully in competitive employment; the average case cost was \$3,124. At the time of closure, clients were earning an average weekly wage of \$126.00 compared to an average weekly wage of \$3.00 when they were referred for vocational rehabilitation -- a major improvement. The Bureau of Rehabilitation estimates that for every dollar spent to rehabilitate a client, \$10.00 is realized in increased earnings and reduced public support payments.

What might the future be for the 269 students in need of transitional services who were identified by the Select Committee survey? Lacking a more accurate data base, the Select Committee used the percentages applied by the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped to estimate possible outcomes for the students leaving school this year.

	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
● 21% will become fully employed or enrolled in college	57
● 40% will be under-employed and at the poverty level	108
● 8% will be in their home community and idle much of the time	22
● 26% will be unemployed and on welfare	70
● 3% will be totally dependent and institutionalized	<u>8</u>
TOTAL	265

For the 100 students who are predicted to be unemployed or institutionalized, the annual cost to the taxpayer would be approximately \$1 million. This includes the costs of sheltered placement, SSI benefits and institutionalization. Assuming that 70 of those students were in sheltered placement; 20 in no program and 10 institutionalized, the net costs would look like this:

Institutionalization (10) Clients	\$450,000
Sheltered Placements (70) Clients	\$350,000
No Program (20) Clients	\$ -0-
SSI Benefits (100) Clients	<u>\$360,000</u>

TOTAL SYSTEM COST	\$1,160,000
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If, however, we provided supported employment services to 50 of the sheltered placement clients we would free up program space for those now on waiting lists, and, save money:\*

Institutionalization (10) Clients	\$450,000
Sheltered Placements (40) Clients	\$200,000
Supported Employment (50) Clients	\$ 75,000
SSI Benefits (50) Clients	<u>\$180,000</u>

TOTAL SYSTEM COST	\$905,000
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More impressive than the \$255,000 savings in program costs are the greater annual earnings of clients in supported employment. Using an average wage of \$126 per week, the annual earnings for 50 clients would be \$327,600. This compares to \$26 per week or \$54,080 in annual earnings for the 40 clients in sheltered employment. Thus, the \$75,000 investment in supported employment would generate six times the client earnings as the \$200,000 spent on sheltered placements.

Because of the numbers of students leaving public schools and needing services, the state has no choice but to find more money for employment and training programs. It is more a question of investing those additional dollars wisely. Expanding the "existing" employment and training system and creating a supported employment initiative could mean serving many more people for much less money.

\*The Bureau of Mental Retardation estimates 50 persons statewide, aged 21-25 are on waiting lists for sheltered employment.



## VII. INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS: Maine and the Nation

There are several approaches to training students with mental or physical handicaps. Traditional approaches include separating the handicapped students from the non-handicapped students; work-study programs; sheltered workshops; or, more typically, no training at all. The focus of these traditional approaches was not, necessarily, on preparing the handicapped individual to live independently. In preparing this section of the report the term "innovative" is defined as an innovative training approach whose outcome is "gainful" employment -- whether that be supported, competitive or competitive with some support services -- which allows the person to live and function independently.

The necessary components of a training program include:

- an assessment of students' vocational strengths and weaknesses;
- an evaluation of jobs available in the community;
- training in skills needed to obtain these jobs;
- training in life skills; and
- job placement and follow-up.

The remainder of this section describes innovative training programs located in Maine and elsewhere which include the above components. These programs fall into two categories: 1) school-based training programs and 2) community-based training programs.

### Maine's Innovative Approaches

Several Maine school systems have developed new approaches for their special education students, adapted current ones or collaborated with other community-based agencies or school systems to provide joint programs.

Bridgton's Project Y.E.S. at the Lake Region Vocational Technical Center and the Diversified Occupations Program at the Boggy Brook Vocational School in Ellsworth are examples of vocational programs adapted for special education students. Project Y.E.S. is a diversified occupations program which offers vocational evaluations, basic skills training for known jobs in the community as well as social and personal skills training for 14-21 mentally or physically handicapped students. Boggy Brook is a similar vocational program in that it is designed to meet the unique needs of their special education students. The program provides training in work situations for twelve students in three vocational areas: 1) building maintenance, 2) housekeeping or custodian, and 3) grounds maintenance. These work situations are provided through cooperation with many area businesses. Graduates of this program are currently working in competitive jobs.

There are several school systems collaborating to provide training for special needs students. One example is a joint effort by S.A.D. 11 (Gardiner, Augusta and Winthrop school systems) on two regional projects which offer comprehensive vocational and life functioning planning and training in community, non-school sites. One unique feature of the Augusta project is the approach used to train students in domestic and leisure activities. The project has leased an apartment and a vehicle equipped for wheelchairs. Moderate to severely handicapped students spend time during regular school hours, as well as overnight, to learn the independent living skills needed to manage a home and to transport themselves.

Gardiner's Project LIVE offers job development and job placement services in community sites for mildly to moderately handicapped secondary students in collaboration with the Bureau of Mental Retardation and the Bureau of Rehabilitation.

Another cooperative effort between four school systems is exemplified by Project PROVE in Waterville which share vocational evaluation services and work sampling tools for seventy students between 15 and 20 years of age.

S.A.D. 48 in Newport is an example of a joint planning and delivery project between a high school and a rehabilitation facility, Seabasticook Farms in St. Albans. An individualized goal plan is prepared for each of the handicapped students in the program. Seabasticook Farms is a residential facility which provides the pre-vocational, vocational and job opportunities component for these 12 students using flex-scheduling. Students are trained in skills, such as logging, which are appropriate to the types of jobs available in this area of rural Maine.

The last example is a project developed by School Union 91 in Bucksport. The school department provides educational services for moderately to severely handicapped students through its Willowhouse Life Skills Training Project. It teaches five students with the vocational, domestic, leisure and social skills they need to function independently. They expanded the project to include a half-time community vocational trainer to work with these five students at vocational training sites and to work with employers.

#### Innovative Approaches In Other States

There are two innovative programs in New England, one in Boston and the other in Vermont. Transition I and II in Barre and Burlington, Vermont are competitive employment projects for the severely handicapped who are mentally retarded and have at least one other disability. They identify job opportunities, break the job down into its essential components, and then conduct on-the-job training, at a total cost of \$7,000 per placement. Over a three-year period, this \$7,000 compares favorably with the \$15,000 costs of a traditional day/work activity program. Approximately 65% of the placements from Transition Projects will still be on the job three years later, compared with 41.5% of severely disabled Vocational Rehabilitation clients. Bay State Skills Corp. (BSSC) in Boston is a quasi-public, state-funded corporation that awards grants to educational institutions which link up with one or more

private firms to jointly train people for jobs in high growth, private sector fields. With an initial grant of \$500,000 from the state, BSSC began "Supported Work for the Mentally Retarded" -- a program providing mentally retarded adults with work in a structured private-sector work environment to develop their skills and work habits to the point where they can work independently in unsubsidized jobs. At a cost of \$5,000 per client, the program trains and places clients into competitive employment.

A third program is in Utica, New York, Vocational Occupational Rehabilitation in Special Education (VORSE) project. A vocational rehabilitation counselor works in each special education district to develop a vocational plan for each child; provide summer work experience through CETA (now the Job Training Partnership Act); and continue to work with students after completion of school. VORSE, run and operated by the District Office of the State Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, is able to habilitate and place these clients at a cost of \$1,200 per job placement, while traditional VR placements are costing \$2,000 each. In 1981, VORSE's first summer of operation, 339 youths with disabilities were found jobs.

Finally, in Madison, Wisconsin, the school district employs a transition teacher and several vocational teachers to facilitate the transition of moderately and severely handicapped students directly from school into non-sheltered work. The schools work closely with Vocational Educational Alternative (VEA), a habilitation/rehabilitation agency which arranges or provides training, placement, job supervision and other support services at integrated community work sites. Between 1971 and 1978 only one of the school's 53 severely handicapped graduates went on to a non-sheltered workday environment. As a result of the transition and VEA programs, 35 of the 50 leaving school between 1979 and 1983 have been placed in non-sheltered situations. This turnaround has important cost implications. As of January 1983, it cost \$5,251 a year to maintain a Madison School District graduate in a sheltered environment, but only \$1,681 (\$2,203 if one corrects for the somewhat shorter work-day) under the non-sheltered alternative.

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## **APPENDIX A**

## Appendix A

APPROVED

CHAPTER

SEP 19'84

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STATE OF MAINE

BY GOVERNOR

RESOLVES

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD  
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FOUR

H.P. 1882 - L.D. 2484

RESOLVE, to Address Training and  
Employment Opportunities for Handicapped  
Persons Beyond School Age.

Emergency preamble. Whereas, Acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, the State provides Maine's handicapped children with a free and appropriate education through age 20; and

Whereas, the State has, through enactments of this and previous Legislatures, enumerated and supported the rights of all handicapped citizens to training, habilitation and employment in the least restrictive environment consistent with their needs and potential; and

Whereas, several hundreds of handicapped citizens are now exiting school systems across this State each year; and

Whereas, these individuals have the potential for more productive and independent adult lives, if afforded reasonable training opportunities; and

Whereas, the lack of training, employment and independent living opportunities for handicapped persons leaving the education system will result in unnecessary and expensive institutionalization, welfare-dependence, wasted human potential, lost ca-

capacity for gainful employment and additional stress to existing family and community support systems; and

Whereas, existing public and private resources are not adequate to meet the needs and potential of this population; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore, be it

Select Committee; appointment. Resolved: That the Members of the 111th Legislature find that a coordinated effort utilizing the resources and expertise of both the public and private sectors is necessary in addressing this problem to the benefit of all citizens of Maine; and be it further

Select Committee formed. Resolved: That there shall be formed a Select Committee comprised of the following members:

1. The following members appointed by the Governor:

One representative of the Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped; one representative of the Maine Committee on Problems of the Mentally Retarded, who shall be the parent of a handicapped person; one representative of the Governor's Mental Health Advisory Council, who shall not be a provider of mental health services; one representative of the State Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities; one representative of Sheltered Employment Association; one representative of the Maine Association for Directors of Services to Exceptional Children; one representative of Community Adult Education Program; one representative of the Maine Advisory Council on Vocational Education; one representative from the Advocates for the Developmentally Disabled, one representative from the Maine Job Training Council as established under the Federal Job Training Partnership Act; the Commissioner of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, or his designee; the Commissioner of Edu-

cational and Cultural Services, or his designee; the Commissioner of Human Services, or his designee; one representative from the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf; one member from the Maine Center for the Blind; and one member who shall serve as chairman and shall have a demonstrated interest in employment and training for handicapped citizens; and

2. The following additional members:

One member of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives; and one member of the Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate; and be it further

Report. Resolved: That this Select Committee shall prepare and present a report, including any necessary legislation, to the Governor and to the Joint Standing Committees on Appropriations and Financial Affairs; Education; and Health and Institutional Services, no later than December 1, 1984. This report shall:

1. Document availability of training and education for handicapped young adults no longer eligible for public school programs due to having reached their 20th birthday;

2. Evaluate the ability of existing post-secondary education; employment and training programs; and other community-based resources to meet the needs of this population;

3. Identify innovative approaches, in Maine and elsewhere, which address the training needs of this population; and

4. Develop a 5-year plan which identifies:

A. Elements of a coordinated system of support services for handicapped young adults making the transition from school to community living;

B. Changes, should they be required, in legislative and regulatory policy that will promote optimal independence for this group; and



C. Recommendations for financing needed for new and expanded programming, including a cost-benefit analysis for additional investment of state funds; and be it further.

Consultation. Resolved: That, in preparing its report, the select committee shall consult with other agencies and individuals who may have an interest in the needs of handicapped citizens; and be it further

Staff support. Resolved: That the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation shall provide staff support to this committee, as necessary, in order that it complete its charge.

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this resolve shall take effect when approved.

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In House of Representatives, ..... 1984

Read twice and passed to be enacted.

..... Speaker

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In Senate, ..... 1984

Read twice and passed to be enacted.

..... President

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Approved ..... 1984

..... Governor

## **APPENDIX B**

## Appendix B.1



STATE OF MAINE

Department of

Educational and Cultural Services  
Division of Special Education

Exceptional young people span the entire range of intellectual abilities and talents and span the range of physical and emotional capabilities and impairments. The ultimate goal of the educational process for these individuals is to assist them to assume a productive and contributing role within the social structure when they leave the confines of the traditional educational environs.

It is estimated that 10-12% of the graduates of schools in Maine each year are exceptional. It is further estimated that of the dropouts, there are a significant portion who are exceptional individuals. When these two groups are put together, it can be estimated that upwards to 2,500 exceptional students exit the educational system each year and according to national statistics, approximately 80-85% of these are not prepared to assume a productive and contributing role in society. These individuals swell the ranks of the unemployed, under-employed, welfare, as well as the penal institutions of the State of Maine.

Transition into the post-school world presents problems for all young people. The period of transition, however, is often more difficult for young people with exceptionalities. Their problems may require a unique set of intervention strategies within a continuum of support services. To adequately affect transition, there may be required a set of pre-graduate and exit interventions. The pre-interventions will range from philosophical changes within the schools, teacher preparation and certification changes, and curriculum and program changes.

Transition is a broad and all-encompassing term. Transition is the totality of the experiences which are provided to assist the exceptional student to move from a segregated-protective society to an integrated society that requires individual responsibility. It is a developmental process that begins in the early years, on an informal basis, and shows more intensity as the student approaches the high school years. The transition process continues well after the student exits the formal educational system.

Effective transition requires that relevant educational structures, curriculum, and technical assistance be provided. To maximize available resources and provide the continuum of educational and support services necessary, it will require that the Division of Special Education participate in networking and team building with other facits



of the educational process before and after the student exits. It will require that relevant community opportunities and service combinations be developed as support systems for the exceptional individual during and after the school year.

Local school systems must develop comprehensive programs which reflect a continuum of educational opportunities for the exceptional student extending from primary school through senior high school. It is imperative that school systems direct their attention toward development of appropriate programming for the secondary aged exceptional student that will produce individuals who have attained self-realization, adult independence, and can be assimilated into society as productive adults. It is the Division of Special Education's responsibility to assist local schools with technical assistance, information and resources to achieve this goal.

Special education at the secondary level should be a systematic program of social, educational, and vocational experiences which are designed to assist handicapped students to (a) understand their personal interests, abilities, values, and needs; (b) understand the broad range of options available in the world of work and education; and (c) make career decisions which interrelate self-information with career information for the maximum satisfaction of the individual. Every secondary program should contain a balance of (1) intellectual/academic skill development, (2) social development, (3) mobility (application of knowledge), and (4) vocational skill development.

To quote Birget Dyssegaard in The Role of Special Education in an Overall Rehabilitation Program, "The long-term goal set for Special Education often does not extend beyond a single school year, with little discussion of pre- or post-school experience. At best, there is some concern voiced for the child's future as they become older. Special Education should not be considered a goal in itself, separated from the overall goal of rehabilitation. There is, in fact, a strong need to coordinate Special Education and Rehabilitation services."

It is the Division of Special Education's position that secondary programming focus should go beyond academics and include career and independent living skills. Supplemental resources particularly for more severely impaired students will usually include services offered by various community organizations and agencies. To ensure that such resources are part of the student's program, the PET's role needs to extend beyond the school building to include community resources and expertise. Schools are responsible for assuring that related services and programs are provided to exceptional students. This responsibility can be fulfilled in two ways; either by providing all services directly or using available community resources...

To use community resources as effective components of the student's program, schools will need to identify existing services, provide access to those services and evaluate their success in meeting the student's needs. These linking activities will necessitate a reorienta-

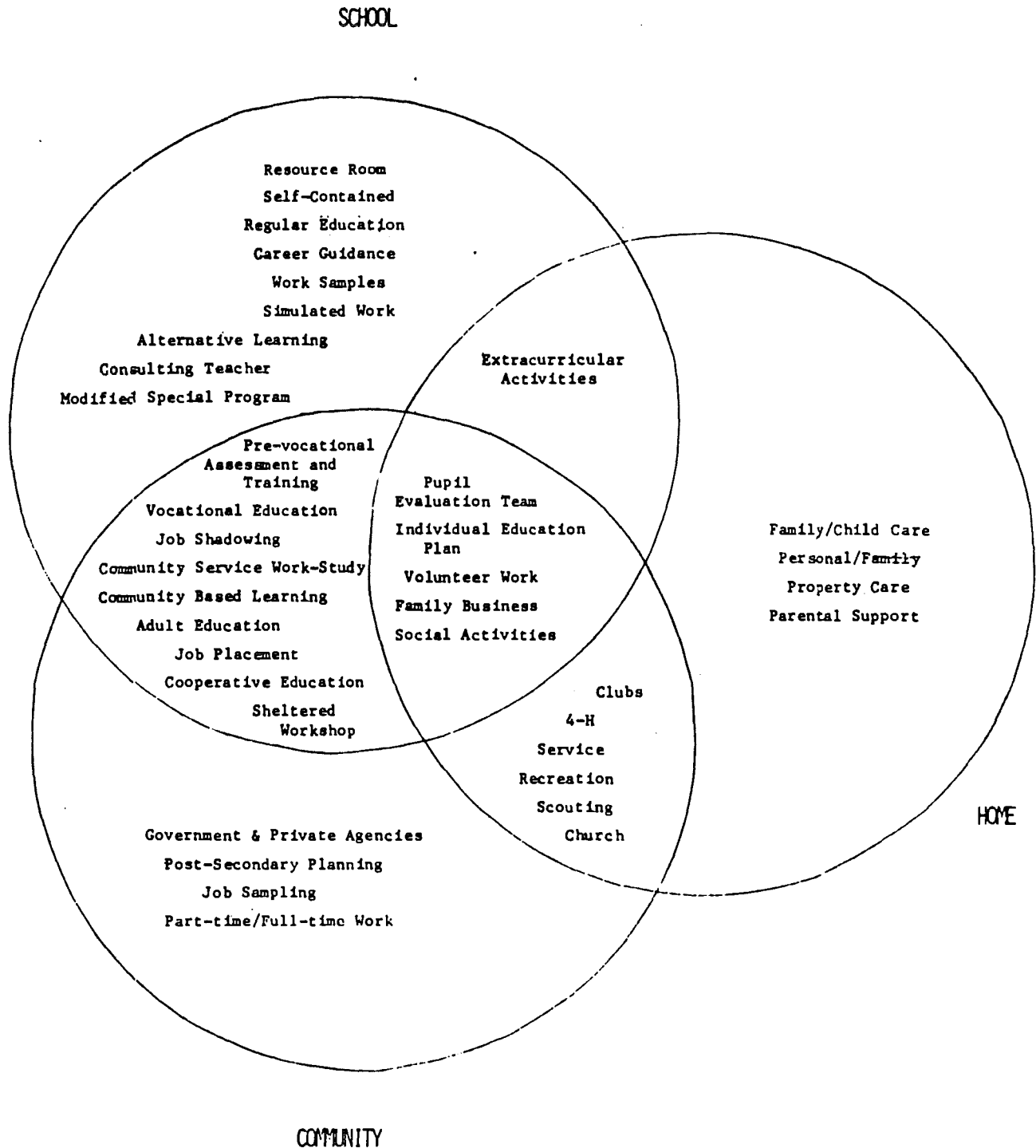
tion in the concepts of secondary programs, require additional or differently trained school personnel and a resource system of community contacts and program options.

School personnel will need to have knowledge of how to utilize existing resources including: community health programs, transportation, training programs, information and referral systems, counseling programs shelter, funding and recreation resources. Schools should be able to link the student to community programs and resources just as it coordinates or links the student's in-school components.

Special Education personnel will need to possess a broad range of attitudes, knowledge and skills. It is recognized that these attitudes, knowledges, and skills are germane to all professionals, but they are particularly critical when selecting Special Education personnel who must prepare exceptional students, whether gifted and talented or handicapped, for transition from school to community. Such skills include:

- \*understanding of own value system and relationship of that value system to that of other staff, students, school and community.
- \*understanding the principals of human growth and development.
- \*ability to personalize instruction based upon levels of function of individual students.
- \*ability to conduct evaluations through using formal and informal techniques.
- \*ability to evaluate programs as to appropriateness for students involved and the process being utilized in educating exceptional adolescents.
- \*ability to analyze programming in order to develop appropriate work and job related information and provide appropriate vocational and academic experiences.
- \*understanding of various management systems and methods of employment of these systems within the total program.
- \*ability to communicate in an effective manner in order to facilitate program development and foster understanding.
- \*ability to effectively work with the community for the development of resources, program options and understanding with support.
- \*Assist students in fostering positive attitudes toward self, school, world of work and others.

The school, the home and the community all possess resources and expertise on which to build creative and individualized programs. The Division of Special Education will continue to take a leadership role in assisting schools, working with parents and collaborating with other agencies to assure successful transition of these students.



Graphic Illustration of the interrelatedness of the school, community and home.

The Division's five year plan to accomplish this goal can be divided into five areas. They are: pre-service education, the changing role of secondary and special education personnel and certification, regulation changes and technical assistance, data collection and follow-up, and interagency collaboration.

#### PRE-SERVICE EDUCATION:

The Division will continue to provide technical assistance and support to the entire University of Maine System's Special Education teacher preparation programs. The Division will also expand its technical assistance efforts to all University System's teacher preparation, education administrative, and counseling programs for the purpose of assisting those programs to develop and include courses on the exceptional individual(both gifted and talented and handicapped) in their program requirements.

The Division endorses the following personnel competencies as necessary for individuals who teach secondary aged exceptional individuals. The competencies are based on two assumptions: 1) Every teacher has a responsibility to infuse transition concepts into the instructional program. 2) The prospective teacher should develop the following general teaching competencies:

- a) determines the needs of the learner
- b) plans activities for the learner
- c) selects appropriate materials for instruction
- d) employs a variety of teaching strategies appropriate to the situation
- e) employs a variety of evaluative procedures appropriate to the situation
- f) utilizes feedback to improve their professional competence.

Competency I - Assist students to discover their characteristics (what am I like?), to understand reasons for these characteristics(why am I that way?), to see ways in which these characteristics can be changed (how can I change?), and to see ways in which these characteristics are related to the participation of the student to his/her place in society.

Competency II- Assist students to utilize problem-solving skills in making everyday decisions.



Competency III - Assist students to see and develop clear relationships between what they are being asked to learn in school and potential future careers.

Competency IV - Assist students to develop career-related personal and interpersonal skills.

#### CHANGING PERSONNEL ROLES AND CERTIFICATION:

As the role of special education at the secondary level evolves, the Division believes that traditionally approved programs for the preparation and the certification requirements of special education personnel need to be reviewed. The Division will focus on assessing statewide needs of local schools for non-certified individuals, such as, job developers and vocational evaluators to determine if changes in certification requirements are needed.

#### REGULATIONS:

The Division of Special Education believes that the utilization of vocational assessment is an integral part of curriculum development which assists students in the transition process. They believe that assessment is an ongoing process through which information can be gathered about the student's strengths and weaknesses, interests and skills over a period of time. This process has always been a part of special education and should be used for programming planning purposes.

Assessment of basic academic skills assumes primary emphasis at the elementary level. This emphasis should switch to assessment of life skills at the junior high school level and continue until completion of the student's public education. At the secondary level grades (7-12), the utilization of prevocational and vocational assessment is important in order that appropriate vocational programming, academic programming, and transition services can be identified, developed and provided for exceptional students.

The Division of Special Education will continue to provide technical assistance to local schools relative to the utilization of prevocational and vocational assessment. It will, also, provide direction in the development of processes to be employed.

The Division will work with local education agencies to develop a pre-vocational assessment that is multi-dimensional in nature. This is a three dimensional assessment process beginning with a fairly global assessment of all students, and continuing with increasingly detailed analysis of the problems and abilities of individual students as the need for such information becomes apparent.

By the secondary level of their education, all students deserve to have their progress in attaining LIFE SKILLS evaluated. The Division, in working with LEA's, will work toward the utilization of vocational

assessment as a part of every exceptional student's program. The Division of Special Education will examine and review the regulations as necessary to assure that all exceptional students will be given both pre-vocational and vocational assessments at the appropriate times between the grades of 7 and 12.

The Division of Special Education feels that the area of curriculum is highly dependent upon the services delivery model employed. The Division will examine alternative program service models with emphasis on the content of curriculum. Technical assistance will be provided to local education agencies relative to functional curriculum development and the integrating of the curriculum needed for the process of transition within the regular curriculum as well as the special curriculum. The Division will work with regular and vocational educators to infuse these philosophies into the total education program at the secondary level(grades 7-12).

With the great emphasis on academic excellence as reflected through parts of the Education Reform Act of 1984, the Division will work closely with local education agencies to implement appropriate programs leading to graduation and transition for the exceptional student. The Division believes that students who complete the requirements of the IEP should be considered as having met the requirements of graduation.

Through a carefully developed Individual Education Program, the exceptional student is following a program of studies established by the Pupil Evaluation Team and approved by the Superintendent as an agent of the local Board of Education. Graduation credit should be given for the student's individualized program. This curriculum may be taught through the standard or special program, but at all times it should reflect the student's need to develop skills to their highest potential as preparation for meaningful adulthood. Having successfully completed an approved program of studies, the exceptional student is entitled to equal standing and privileges accorded other graduating classmates. This includes receiving a diploma at graduation ceremonies, attending other class activities, purchasing a class ring, etc.

An essential aspect of the transition process is the involvement of the parents/guardians. The Division will continue to work to foster closer relationships between schools and parents. This will be done through the development of workshops and conferences. It will be recommended to the local education agencies that parent, professional advisory groups be established to assist in the development of transition programs.

#### DATA COLLECTION AND FOLLOW UP:

The Division of Special Education believes that more emphasis needs to be placed on evaluating special education programs and their

effectiveness in preparing exceptional individuals to live and work in their communities. In order to obtain such information, the Division will expand its initial efforts to develop a statewide data collection and follow up system to: track exceptional students who have left the public school system, to determine the impact of special education programming on successful services, programs, and personnel preparation. The Division believes that collaboration with other agencies such as local school systems, the Bureau of Rehabilitation, the Bureau of Mental Retardation and the Bureau of Vocational Education in developing such a tracking system is essential and plans to work with appropriate organizations in developing a comprehensive system.

#### INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION:

Preparation of handicapped students for life beyond the educational system is a great concern today in American society. With the passage and implementation of legislation affecting the field of special education, vocational education, vocational rehabilitation, and career education, increased emphasis has been placed on preparing exceptional students for independent living and work in adult life. In each case, the focus is on assisting exceptional individuals to maximize their potential for inclusion in, rather than exclusion from, our society.

There is little question that the common goal of special education, vocational education, and rehabilitative services is the successful integration of persons with disabilities in this society. Ability to live as independently as possible and secure employment must be the primary objectives of these service delivery systems. To achieve effective transition to these goals, an innovative systematic inter-agency service delivery network is required.

In order to achieve this goal, the Division will continue to focus collaborative activities in the areas of: in-service training, jointly planned and funded projects, jointly planned program assessment, data collection, and development of follow-up tracking systems, information dissemination and review and revision of existing cooperative agreements.

## ROLE OF THE BUREAU OF MENTAL RETARDATION IN THE TRANSITION OF HANDICAPPED YOUTH

### TRANSITION

Transition is a word commonly heard and read these days, particularly in relationship to developmentally disabled persons entering and leaving public schools.

Transition, in this case, means the smooth, well-planned, thoughtful move of handicapped individuals from the educational system to the adult world of services and/or employment.

In order to assist in assuring a smooth transition, the Bureau of Mental Retardation provides services to mentally retarded school age children that are aimed at maximizing each individual's potential for independent living, as well as planning for needed services and resources for young adults who are leaving the public school system.

### BUREAU SERVICES

Case management is the primary service provided to mentally retarded school-aged children. Case managers maintain contact with home and school in order to assure the needs of an individual child are being met. Case managers often participate in the individual educational planning process. Case managers also act as advocates and referral sources for needed services which are not provided by the school. For example, a case manager may arrange for respite care in order that the parents of a mentally retarded child may spend a day or a weekend together.

Case managers also act as information links, providing the parents and service providers with information regarding other available services and community resources. An important aspect of this role is providing parents with information about available adult services and planning with the family and the mentally retarded youth for meeting the individual's needs and getting services after the school years have been completed.

### RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

The Bureau of Mental Retardation receives information regarding future needs of school age children who will be graduating from school. This information is gathered from case workers through a management information system process.

In addition, in an inter-agency agreement with the Division of Special Education, DECS and MADSEC, local education agencies are required to report projected needs to the Division and the Bureau for future resource planning.

A major resource development effort came about last year due to the Maine Committee on the Problems of the Mentally Retarded. This Committee, concerned about young adults who had "aged-out" of school (turned 20 years old), held a series of public hearings across the state to hear from parents, teachers, and professionals about what happens and what is available to young adults when they finish school.

The response and identified need was over-whelming, hundreds of young adults leave school and have no appropriate program, services, job or living situation.

To begin to address these needs and also to continue to explore these concerns, the Legislature enacted a Resolve which established a Select Committee and appropriated money (\$650,000) to the Bureau to begin to address these concerns.

The Bureau of Mental Retardation has a major commitment to assuring that needed services are available to young handicapped adults and will continue to plan and advocate for services to meet these needs.

#### INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

The Bureau of Mental Retardation is not the sole agency involved in the transition of handicapped youths. Other agencies which have a major role are the Division of Special Education and the Division of Vocational Education (DECS), and the Bureau of Rehabilitation (DHS). The Bureau of Mental Retardation is committed to coordination of efforts to address the needs of handicapped youth - not only after they have graduated, but during the last few years where vocationally oriented education, as well as special education, will help these youths be better prepared for independent, productive adult lives.

1/17/85

**THE TRANSITION OF HANDICAPPED YOUTH  
FROM SCHOOL TO EMPLOYMENT**

The Maine Bureau of Rehabilitation has an essential role to play in assisting handicapped youth to achieve employment which is fitting of their individual interests and capabilities. This is the goal of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program for all VR clients regardless of their age.

The Cooperative Agreement with the Department of Educational and Cultural Services documents a recognition of the need to coordinate our efforts with those of the schools - along with those of other public and private agencies - if that goal is to be achieved. Since the implementation of the Agreement, more and more handicapped youth are benefiting from the planning and delivery of an array of services provided by a variety of agencies working in concert.

It is clear, however, that this is not happening often enough to satisfy the consumers of these services, their parents, their advocates - nor many of the providers of those services.

The membership of the Select Committee investigating this issue is indicative of the broad scope of interests which must subscribe to a common purpose and a coordinated effort in serving the handicapped youth in Maine. The Bureau of Rehabilitation is committed to such a cooperative effort, and we are optimistic that the work of this Committee will provide greater impetus and means to achieve such effort.

**Bureau of Rehabilitation  
Maine Department of Human Services**

**1985**

## IMPACT OF THE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

Since the initiation of the statewide and local Cooperative Agreements, Bureau staff - especially our VR Counselors - have increased their interactions with both handicapped students and school personnel. This increased contact with the schools has resulted in positive changes in two major areas - there has been a sharing of knowledge and expertise between school and VR staffs, and there has been a measurable increase in the number of students who have received VR services.

While the actual number of student referrals has remained relatively constant during the last three years (about 200 referrals each of the last three Federal Fiscal Years), the number of those persons accepted as VR clients has risen each year. Student referrals now constitute about 10% of our caseload statewide.

It is disappointing to note that only 31 handicapped persons referred to VR by schools were successfully rehabilitated during Fiscal Year 1984. Yet the number of successful rehabilitations of student referrals has increased over prior years, and we expect to see this trend continue.

Even if the number of rehabilitated handicapped students is small, the quality of those rehabilitations is encouraging. While about 60% of all VR cases closed as rehabilitated enter competitive employment, 80% of the student referrals who are rehabilitated enter competitive employment. This means that the student population is more likely to enter the world of work in a job setting which will be both financially rewarding and normalizing. In fact, the average weekly earnings of rehabilitated students exceed that of other rehabilitants by about 20%.

In terms of the interaction between Bureau and school staffs, many excellent working relationships have developed. While this is not yet true statewide, such relationships have had a positive impact on students with handicaps. Our VR staff have become increasingly familiar with the personnel and resources of the local school systems; we understand much better now the capabilities and concerns of school personnel, their various responsibilities, abilities and limits, and how we can complement these to the benefit of handicapped students.

We believe that school personnel have benefited as well from these relationships. VR Counselors and other Bureau staff possess a wealth of knowledge and expertise in such areas as the vocational implications of various disabling conditions, personal aids and other equipment which can alleviate or reduce the vocational handicap of those conditions, local resources and services which exist outside the school, and an intimate knowledge of the local job market. Teachers and other school personnel with whom we have shared our expertise have, in turn, been able to develop more vocationally - relevant programs from which handicapped students have benefited.

VR counselors in schools have made their vocational counseling and guidance skills available to many handicapped students - sometimes before referral to VR. For many of the students referred, we have provided vocational and other evaluation services which have been utilized by school personnel to focus their own efforts on realistic vocational preparation for their handicapped students. For those students found eligible for VR services, we have provided a variety of equipment and services which have allowed them to benefit more fully from their educational programs and to achieve their vocational goals.

### PROBLEMS THAT STILL EXIST

Despite the Bureau's cooperative efforts with the state and local educational agencies, however, problems obviously still exist. We are aware of a number of situations in which cooperative working relationships between VR and school personnel have broken down or have yet to be established. During each of the last three years, in fact, the majority of persons 20 years or younger referred to VR have not been referred to us by school personnel. We are aware, also, of a variety of complaints about our actions - or lack of action - particularly in regards to lengthy periods of time in determining eligibility for VR services.

While much of the criticism of the Bureau is valid - and steps will be taken to improve and expand upon our efforts to meet the needs of handicapped students - some of the criticism is the result of misperceptions about the VR Program. Some of our critics still do not understand that:

- VR is not an "entitlement" or "basic rights" program (an individual must meet VR eligibility criteria before most services can be provided);
- VR is, unlike most other social service programs, a goal-directed program (services can be provided only when there is a reasonable expectation that the handicapped person can achieve a suitable vocational goal, and only those services necessary to achieve the vocational goal can legally be provided);
- VR is obligated to utilize "similar benefits" in determining eligibility and achieving the individual's vocational goal (a "similar benefit" is any service provided by another agency to which the individual is already entitled); and
- VR is not obligated to provide a vocational evaluation to every person referred (we are obligated to provide a general medical examination, relevant specialty medical examinations, and any other information needed by the counselor to determine eligibility, but this will not always include a vocational evaluation).



This explanation of some basic constructs of the VR Program is not, however, an excuse for our short-comings in serving handicapped students. We can and will do a better job serving this population in the future. Rather, it is necessary for representatives of the different agencies with responsibility for handicapped youth to understand the capabilities and limits of their counterparts. It is equally necessary for consumers and their advocates to understand this. Working together we still have a difficult challenge to meet; working at cross-purposes, we face an impossible task.

#### **PLANS TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND VR'S ROLE IN TRANSITION**

Without the appropriation of additional funds, there are several steps which the Bureau can take to improve the delivery of VR services to handicapped students. These include:

1. We will make a greater effort to inform handicapped students, school personnel, and the public at large about the VR Program as a resource to handicapped students. To this end, the following activities are being planned or implemented:
  - a clear directive to VR staff that attendance at and participation in joint in-service training programs and conferences is a priority activity;
  - development of brochures explaining the VR Program directed to school-age handicapped persons, school personnel, and parents of handicapped persons;
  - development of a radio and television publicity campaign designed to promote awareness and utilization of VR services by handicapped students;
  - implementation of systematic procedures for informing school personnel about the conduct and eventual outcome of VR cases referred by the schools; and
  - development and implementation of policies and procedures which clarify and emphasize the VR counselor role in pre-referral conferences, Pupil Evaluation Team meetings, and other student related school contacts.
2. We will do whatever we can to ensure more systematic state-level agency coordination of planning and resource development. While the Cooperative Agreement identifies joint planning and sharing of information as on-going activities, this has not happened consistently in the past. Recently initiated meetings of the directors of the Bureaus of Rehabilitation, Mental Health, and Mental Retardation, Department of Educational and Cultural Services' Bureau of Vocational Education, and Divisions of Special Education and Adult Education offer a vehicle for expanding upon cooperative efforts to improve services to handicapped youth.

Several examples of cooperative efforts exist:

- the Bureau of Rehabilitation and the Division of Special Education are currently providing a series of two-day conferences on prevocational/vocational assessment services;
- the Bureau of Rehabilitation is providing funding and personnel resources in a number of projects throughout the state which were part of the Bureau of Mental Retardation's "Aging Out" grant initiative;
- the Bureau of Rehabilitation and local educational agencies in Penobscot County are jointly funding a vocational evaluation service.

There is much more that can be done in the way of joint planning and funding of service delivery, as well as joint in-service and pre-service training programs, which would allow us to more effectively utilize existing resources. To the extent that the various state agencies can step outside their parochial roles, handicapped youth can benefit from more and better services.

3. We will review our VR Casework Policies to identify and revise, to the extent possible, policies which may be inhibiting the referral, acceptance and successful rehabilitation of handicapped students. Where the state VR agency has the power to revise such policies, we will do so. In the case of Federally-mandated policies which inhibit the delivery of VR services to handicapped students, we intend to bring these to the attention of the Federal Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, and to work for appropriate revisions.

The Bureau recently revised its policy which limited expenditures for services to only the most severely disabled. This should have the effect of increasing the number of less severely disabled youths - as well as adults - who will benefit from VR services.

4. We are seriously examining the possibility of establishing specialty caseloads for school-age handicapped persons. The Bureau has recently attempted this on an experimental basis, and the results appear to be very rewarding. Such specialty caseloads have resulted in increased coordination between school personnel and our VR counselors. As well, the application of our policies with handicapped students has been more consistent in these cases. Mindful of the fact that the development of such caseloads is likely to increase the burden on our remaining counseling staff, however, we need additional time to assess the impact which specialty caseloads are liable to have on the VR program's performance with all age groups. This assessment has already begun, and we expect to be making a final decision on the issue in the near future.

The commitment of additional resources - either from Washington or Augusta - would certainly make specialty caseloads more feasible. Additional resources could also be used for the following activities:

- the development of additional vocational evaluation and pre-vocational assessment services in those areas of the state where this resource is non-existent;
- increased financial and staff participation in joint projects to train special education students for employment (e.g. community-based vocational training and job development services for severely disabled high school students, increased support services to disabled students seeking access to post-secondary vocational education programs);
- new grant initiatives for the establishment of supported employment programs in which assessment, training and other transitional services would be provided by VR, while on-going long-term support services might be appropriately funded by other agencies;
- utilization of computer and other technological advances as personal aids, tools for individualized training, accessing information services, etc.; and
- increased VR case service funds to allow for the anticipated increase in the number of school-age handicapped persons and other, non-severely disabled persons seeking VR services.

While the Bureau attempts to expand the number of handicapped persons it can serve, we are mindful that additional funds will be needed to work with these people. We also know that our colleagues in other state agencies working with handicapped persons will be looking to the Bureau for better services to more of Maine's handicapped population. Significant expansion of services - regardless of which agency or agencies provide those services - undoubtedly will require additional resources. We are optimistic that the work of the Select Committee will provide both an impetus for expanded efforts with handicapped youth and the resources to achieve the goal of meaningful employment for these and all the handicapped citizens of Maine.



STATE OF MAINE

Department of  
Educational and Cultural Services

AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

April 16, 1985

Richard M. Balser, Chairperson  
Select Committee on Transitional Services  
Dept. of Rehabilitation Medicine  
Maine Medical Center  
Bramhall Street  
Portland, ME 04102

Dear Mr. Balser:

The Bureau of Vocational Education believes that we can play an important role in the transition of special education students leaving the public school programs.

We believe that we can provide education and training in many areas with the assistance of supporting agencies. The Bureau has supported handicapped and disadvantaged projects in the past and will continue to do so to the extent that funds are available.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert F. Bourque".

Robert F. Bourque  
Associate Commissioner  
Bureau of Vocational Education



# UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE

A UNIT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE

Human Services Development  
Institute

246 Deering Avenue  
Portland, Maine 04102  
207/780-4430

January 18, 1985

## Education/Rehabilitation Cooperative Agreement

The following recommendations are made by the Education/Rehabilitation Cooperative Agreement Team to improve implementation of that agreement. Team members are: Dr. Richard Bartlett, Consultant, Division of Special Education; Paul Rourke, Director, Division of Eye Care, Bureau of Rehabilitation; Joe Lessard, Consultant, Bureau of Vocational Education; Bud Lewis, Coordinator of Services for Blind Children, Division of Special Education/Division of Eye Care and Jon Steuerwalt, Consultant, Bureau of Rehabilitation.

### All Members of the Agreement

1. Provide more public relations to interagency and outside groups (such as guidance counselors, principals) about the Agreement and it's purpose.
2. Support state funding for Vocational Education support (excess costs) services for handicapped students.
3. Provide additional information to local groups to explain how the Agreement should be used as a working tool.
4. Develop a systematic method to plan together and share information re: discretionary projects; training activities; state plans.
5. Provide information to clarify Agreement misconceptions (example: that Rehabilitation is responsible for all vocational assessments).
6. Define the role of rehabilitation facilities -- definitions/fee schedules.
7. Develop guidelines on the role of guidance in referral to Vocational Rehabilitation/Vocational Education.
8. Review the current Agreement in light of new federal Special Education, Vocational Education and Vocational Rehabilitation laws and regulations.
9. Develop a follow-up and integrated tracking system on what happens to students after they leave school or Vocational Rehabilitation.
10. Include Bureau of Mental Retardation as a formal member of the Cooperative Agreement.

Education/Rehabilitation Cooperative Agreement  
January 18, 1985

Vocational Rehabilitation

1. Provide training or information to counselors and Central Office staff on schools' organizational structures, including Vocational Education.
2. Provide information or guidelines on: Reasons for Vocational Rehabilitation involvement in the Agreement; expectations on outreach, technical assistance role: role in PET; role in working with Vocational Education, on planning before student leaves school; communication with schools re: client's status/progress etc.
3. Provide suggestions to field staff on how to train schools re: Vocational Rehabilitation purpose, process.

Special Education

1. Develop guidelines or information to Special Education Directors and teachers on reason and need for Vocational Education and Vocational Rehabilitation involvement in PET/IEP development. Why the IEP should include a vocational component.
2. Provide information or training to encourage Special Education Directors and teachers to visit vocational schools while classes are in progress and why this is important.
3. Provide information or training outlining types of students for potential Vocational Rehabilitation/Vocational Education referral.

Vocational Education

1. Assign a Central Office consultant at least 50% time to work on handicapped/disadvantaged activities.
2. Develop a policy statement from Central Office to Vocational School Directors re: mission, intent, guidance for serving handicapped; role of instructors in PET.
3. Develop policy and guidelines, information on various types of vocational programs (regular, adapted, individual, general trades) that can accommodate handicapped students.
4. Develop an in-service training system at region/center level that includes training all instructors on working with the handicapped.
5. Develop an information dissemination system re: handicapped curriculum/materials (example: Project LINC) for vocational instructors.

Education/Rehabilitation Cooperative Agreement  
January 18, 1985

The following recommendations are taken from a Cooperative Agreement Interim Report dated January, 1984.

1. More schools need to develop functional curriculum at the elementary and secondary level if students are to develop sufficient skills prior to referral to Vocational Rehabilitation and Vocational Education.
2. The agencies need to look at the use of rehabilitation facilities, sheltered workshops and other alternatives for placement of students once they leave school.
3. All Vocational Centers and Regions should employ Vocational Counselors.
4. All Occupational and Vocational instructors at the secondary level should take a minimum of 6 hours instruction in teaching special needs students. The Bureau currently is reviewing new standard criteria for certification.
5. The State Interagency Team supports the Washington County local Cooperative Agreement group's written statement on the area's need for approved vocational education.
6. Ongoing review of federal Vocational Education, Maine's Vocational Education laws and regulations and P.L. 94-142 to identify impediments to this cooperative effort.
7. Establish a series of permanent, mobile vocational evaluation centers to be used by the Bureau of Rehabilitation and Local Education Agencies.
8. Vocational Rehabilitation needs to plan training for counselors on working with school age students.
9. The Legislature and Departments should study Special Education regulations and the school finance act to allow reimbursement of aides in General Home Economics, Industrial Arts, General Agriculture and General Business Education.
10. The Legislature and Departments should study the procedure for providing auxillary staff at the vocational schools. At present most auxillary staff, who are the keys that allow special education students to participate in Vocational Education, are paid with federal money.

## **APPENDIX C**



MAINE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL SERVICES  
1984-85 ENROLLMENT OF HANDICAPPED PUPILS IN-DISTRICT AND OUT-OF-DISTRICT

Major Handicapping Function	Age of Handicapped Pupil																				Total
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21		
Cerebral or Perceptual	6	13	72	274	552	760	927	946	980	989	933	888	815	704	518	302	73	11	1	9,764	
Speech & Language Impaired	192	424	936	1052	1083	838	691	458	300	213	134	108	63	55	50	14	2	3	1	6,617	
Mental Development or Maturation	62	89	142	242	235	250	264	272	315	341	350	378	406	380	354	274	159	155	3	4,671	
Behavior (Emotionally Handicapped)	26	57	64	119	174	220	307	316	310	342	400	434	439	418	315	140	44	27	1	4,153	
Multihandicapped	32	46	51	46	55	46	44	41	56	21	53	45	27	28	26	29	26	49	---	721	
Other Health Impaired	13	23	23	17	21	22	26	32	29	20	29	41	37	46	39	20	7	---	---	445	
Physical Mobility (Orthopedic)	16	25	30	32	31	34	42	43	39	30	10	16	18	26	19	9	6	3	---	429	
Audition (Hearing Impaired)	12	30	24	21	28	26	24	23	22	9	19	5	11	16	12	9	3	1	---	305	
Vision (Visually Impaired)	10	19	34	8	11	9	8	8	3	8	8	4	11	12	13	6	5	2	---	179	
Audition (Deaf)	5	3	11	12	8	11	8	5	5	6	12	16	13	24	11	8	6	12	---	176	
Blind-Deaf	---	---	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	---	---	---	1	---	---	3	---	---	---	5	
Total	374	729	1387	1823	2198	2216	2342	2144	2059	1979	1948	1945	1841	1709	1357	814	331	263	6	27,465	

Major Handicapping Function	Age Groups			Total	Percent
	3-5	6-17	18-21		
Cerebral or Perceptual	91	9286	387	9764	35.55
Speech & Language Impaired	1552	5045	20	6617	24.09
Mental Development or Maturation	293	3787	591	4671	17.01
Behavior (Emotionally Handicapped)	147	3794	212	4153	15.12
Multihandicapped	129	488	104	721	2.63
Other Health Impaired	59	359	27	445	1.62
Physical Mobility (Orthopedic)	71	340	18	429	1.56
Audition (Hearing Impaired)	66	226	13	305	1.11
Vision (Visually Impaired)	63	103	13	179	.65
Audition (Deaf)	19	131	26	176	.64
Deaf-Blind	---	2	3	5	.02
Total	2490	23,561	1414	27,465	100.00