



BESTBUDDIES®

Friendship, Jobs, Leadership Development & Living

Unlocking Potential:
A Guide to Best Buddies Programs for Individuals
with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

WELCOME!



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BESTBUDDIES®

Mission

Best Buddies International is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development and inclusive living for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

Who We Serve

The IDD community that Best Buddies serves includes, but is not limited to, people with Down syndrome, autism, fragile X syndrome, Williams syndrome, cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury and other undiagnosed disabilities.

Our Pillars

One-To-One Friendships



Builds friendships between people with and without IDD, offering social mentoring while improving the quality of life and level of inclusion.

Integrated Employment



Secures jobs for people with IDD, allowing them to earn an income, pay taxes, and support themselves.

Leadership Development



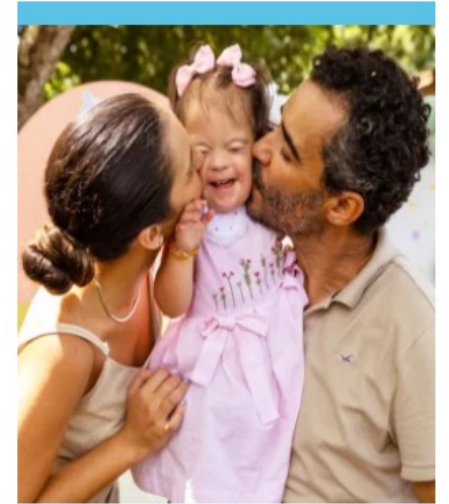
Educates and empowers people with and without IDD, to be leaders, public speakers and advocates.

Inclusive Living



Providing a vibrant, integrated living opportunity for people with and without IDD.

Family Support



Family support and resources to raise a child with IDD.



Fundación
MAPFRE

Best Buddies Pre-Employment Training Program



The Best Buddies Pre-Employment Training/Transitions Program combines classroom-based employment training workshops, experiential learning opportunities, and corporate mentorship to help students identify and develop their career ambitions as they prepare to enter the workforce. Designed for students aged 14-22, workshops and activities focus on self-advocacy and leadership skill development for the workplace, exploration of work interests and relevant employment opportunities, and engagement in critical job readiness skills. Together, these experiences will increase the likelihood of long-term successful employment for people with disabilities.

Designed to meet the expectations outlined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for Pre-ETS programming, the Best Buddies Pre-Employment Training/Transitions Program utilizes a person-centered approach, integrating training and learning opportunities that will meet each students' individual career interests and goals. Best Buddies will engage community and corporate volunteers in sessions, as able, recognizing the importance of peer/ corporate mentorship throughout students' learning process. This program will be implemented in classrooms, Best Buddies office locations, community-based locations (college/universities, public libraries, public conference spaces) as well as on site with corporate employment partners.

Pre-ETS Components

As outlined by WIOA



Self Advocating/Mentoring

A focus on enhancing confidence in public speaking across a variety of settings to improve performance in job interviews, workplace communication, and amongst peers. Students will also develop an awareness of their rights and accommodations afforded them in the workplace.



Job Exploration Counseling

Students will start to identify career interests and aptitudes; explore a variety of job settings through site tours; conduct informational interviews and establish career goals.



Workplace Readiness Training

A focus on developing essential skills to be successful in the workplace including training in interviewing, transportation, and on-the-job soft skills training.



Work-based Learning/Internship

Where possible, students will visit workplaces and engage in work activities to experience first-hand the types of job responsibilities associated within their vocational areas of interest.

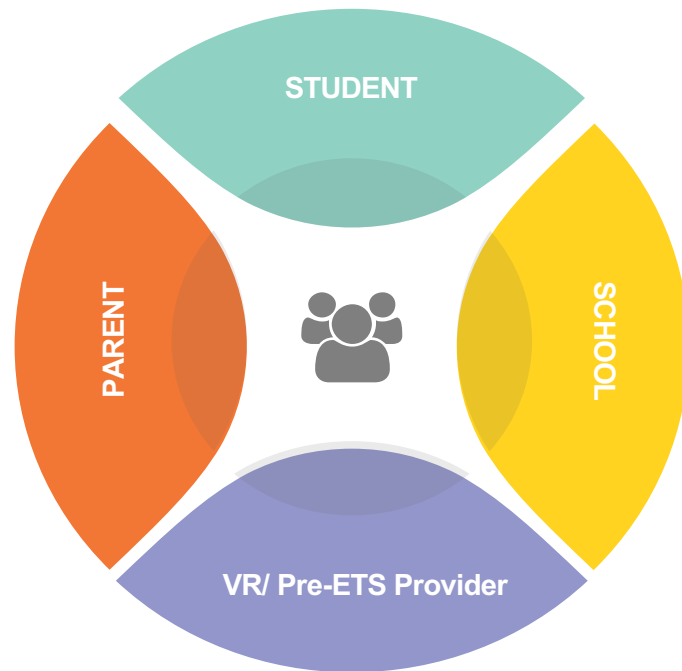


Post Secondary Counseling

Students will explore various opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary educational programs at institutions of higher education or vocational training programs based on their goals, needs, and preferences. This also includes assistance with identifying educational opportunities and applying for programs and services.

Benefits of Collaboration

According to WIOA Pre-ETS Guidelines



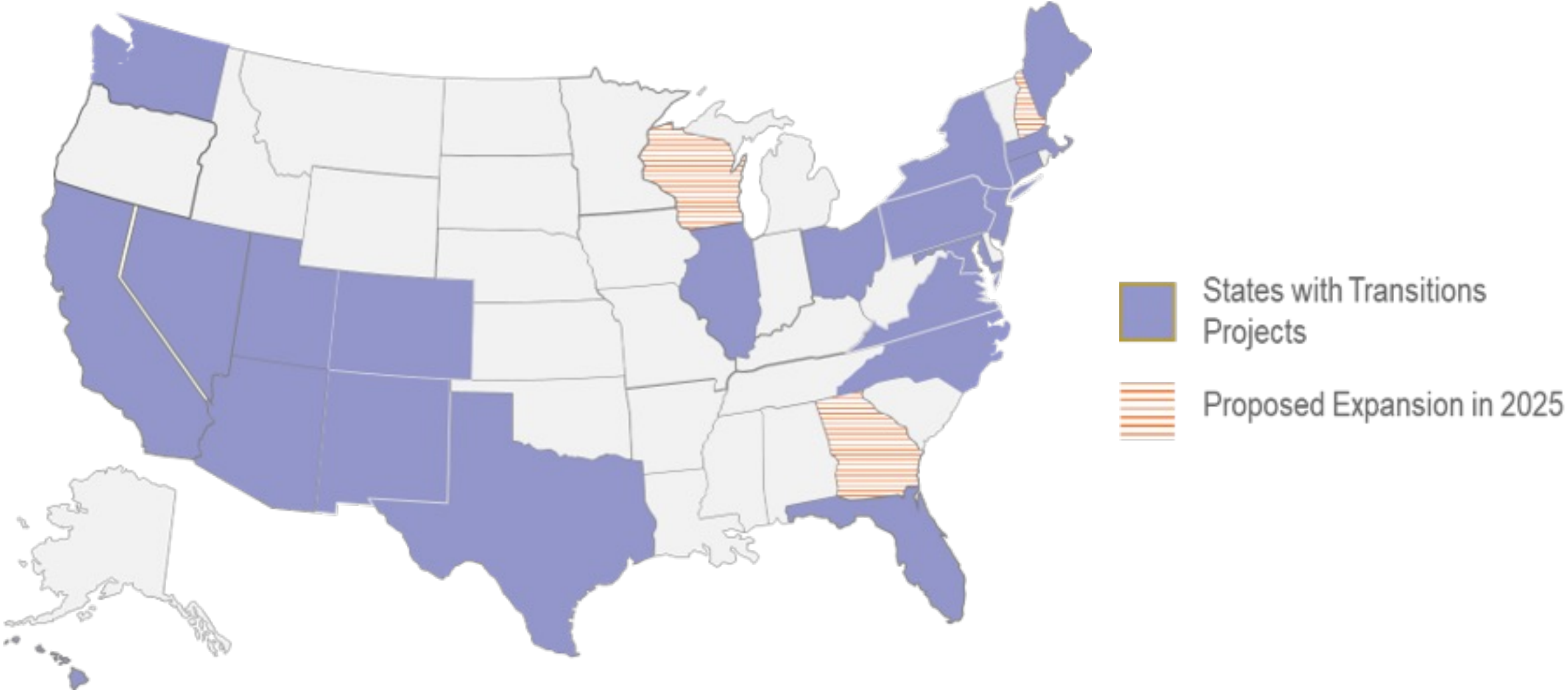
Provides support for students at an earlier age (14 instead of 16)

Person-Centered Planning – what are the students interests not just needs

Incorporates increased family engagement in the transition planning

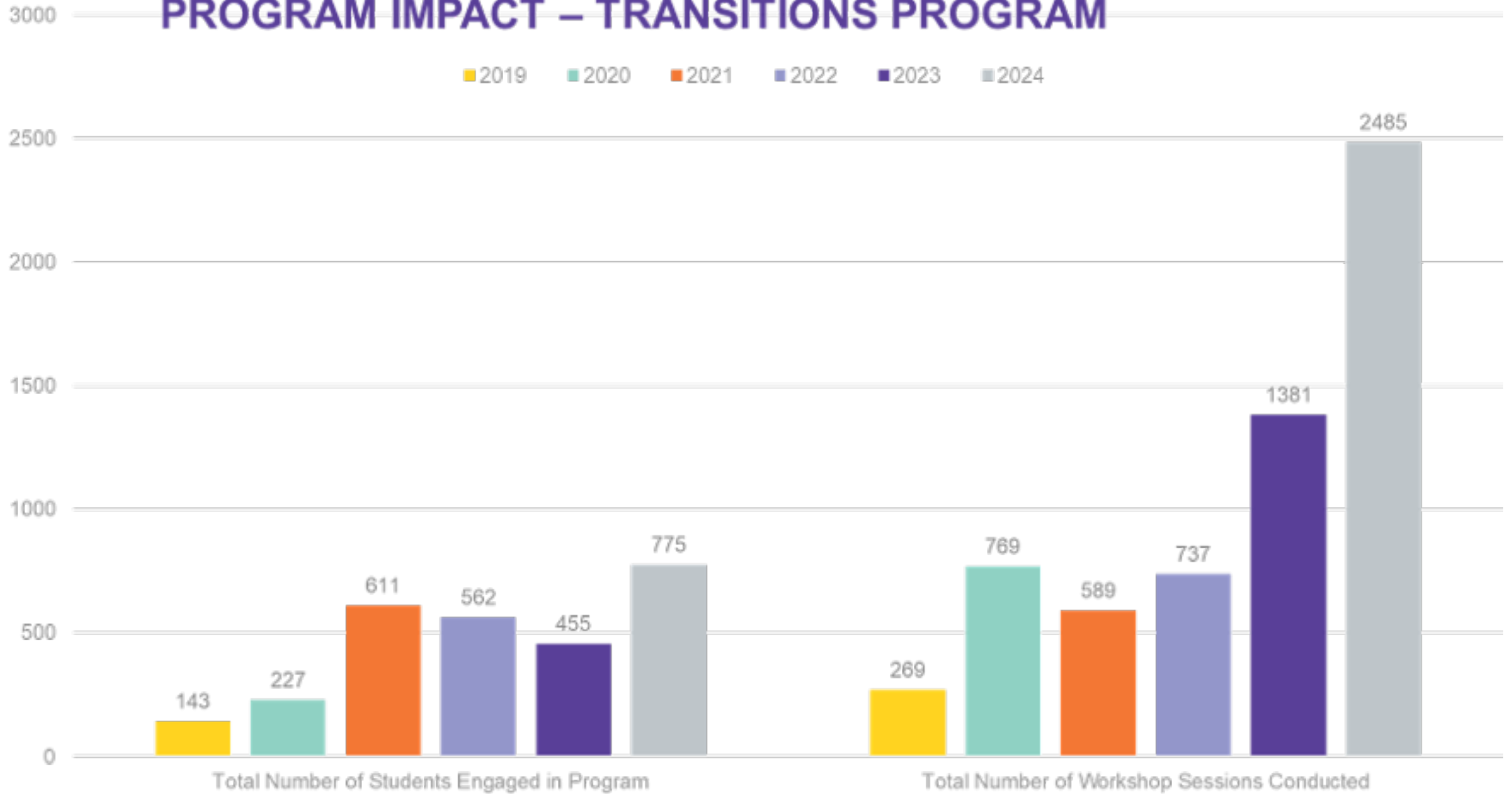
Pre-ETS Workshops compliment existing academic & vocational supports offered by schools

BEST BUDDIES TRANSITIONS PROGRAM



PROGRAM IMPACT – TRANSITIONS PROGRAM

2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024



About Our NY Program

- **Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD)**
- **Individuals who are 14-22 years old**
- **We meet students where they are – all levels of support needs are welcome**
- **As of now, in New York, we are serving students who live in or attend school in all 5 boroughs and Rochester**

- **ACCES-VR**
 - **Students with and without can participate**
 - **Part of membership app**
 - **We can help connect when the time comes**
- **Classes generally last for 5-6 sessions (can be adjusted on a case-by-case basis)**
 - **1-2 hours per session**
- **All students will fill out a membership application prior to our first meeting**
 - **Parental consent**
 - **Proof of disability (ex. IEP)**

About Our Florida Program

- **Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD)**
- **Individuals who are 14-21 years old**
- **We meet students where they are – all levels of support needs are welcome**
- **Serving students in Broward, Palm Beach, SWFL, and Orlando**

- **Vocational Rehabilitation Funded Services**
 - **Youth Workplace Readiness (20 hour course)**
 - **Self-Advocacy (three 10 hour courses)**
 - **Campus Tours (1 hour experience)**
 - **Job Site Tour/Shadowing (1-3 hours experience)**
 - **VR referral required**
- **Grant Funded Services**
 - **6-10 hours of training in the classroom or community-based location**
 - **Training focused in the areas of job exploration, self-advocacy, workplace readiness, and post-secondary counseling**
 - **Consent form must be completed to participant. No referral required**

Curriculum Overview

Development of a
“Curriculum Menu” currently
featuring 20-24 independent
workshops & experiential
learning opportunities per
Component

Work-based Learning Opportunities

This component will be conducted in small group or 1:1 sessions and will be highly individualized. Activities will consist of school-based or simulated work experiences, workplace job shadowing and/or mentorship. Program participants will maintain reflection journals for each work environment toured, assessing relevance to their career goals. Program participants will be expected to demonstrate appropriate workplace etiquette and meet pre-determined expectations of each employment partner.

1. **Job Shadowing** – Program participants will be provided valuable opportunities to “test drive” careers so that they can formulate their future career plans and their pathways to success. Program participants will directly observe the day-to-day requirements of the job and engage in hands-on activities as allowed. An opportunity for reflection with site supervisors will assist Program participants as they determine how each job site fits into his/ her career goals.
2. **Corporate Mentoring Day Engagement** – Program participants will be matched with corporate partner sites to engage in Mentoring Day activities. Typical events will include site tours, opportunities to observe multiple departments/ staff engage in typical work responsibilities, networking engagement, and time to address questions and/or reflect on observations made during the event.
3. **Pre-ETS Virtual Networking Opportunities** - Pre-ETS Networking will give students, parents and teachers the ability to log onto a video call and “Network” with one another. Hosts will prepare icebreakers and a “Question of the Week” which will be asked to all participants. After these two structured activities we will move into discussion about what we learned this week and give students the ability to connect with one another.
4. **Pre-ETS Office Hours** - Office Hours will give students the ability to log on and ask us questions either via video chat, email or Google Classroom. Additional personalized sessions can be scheduled outside these office hours, as needed. Students should advocate for this level of support, when needed.
5. **Internships** - Program participants may participate in internships, either paid or unpaid in workplace settings. Job coaching will be provided as necessary throughout all work-based learning activities; there will also be a weekly reflection/assessment.

Post-Secondary Counseling

Work is just one of many options available to Program participants as they transition out of public education. During these sessions, Program participants will learn more about educational opportunities in post-secondary institutions, career-based learning centers and/or apprenticeship/mentoring opportunities to help guide their path to a successful adulthood. School guidance counselors and college admissions advisors will be invited to take part in the following sessions:

1. **So Many Options!** Program participants will research educational opportunities post-secondary institutions, career-based learning centers and/or apprenticeship/mentoring opportunities including certification workshops (i.e. [Sex Ed](#), First Aid & CPR, etc.), and mini classes through community centers, etc. (photography, culinary, etc) in their area.
2. **Tackling the Common App Essay Prompts** – Program participants will draft responses to many common college application essay prompts, reflecting on the importance of applying appropriate voice, following proper spelling and grammar rules, and using concise language in responses.
3. **Exploring Financial Aid Options for Post-Secondary Programs** Explore the resources available through College Board and other sources to find scholarships and financial aid options to support post-secondary program goals.
4. **When We Grow Up** - Program participants will engage in guided, mutually-beneficial conversations with peers regarding post-secondary education and employment opportunities.
5. **Site Tours** – Giving priority to locations already in partnership with Best Buddies Friendship Programs at the college level, Program participants will tour post-secondary education facilities and/or occupational training centers within their local area.

Curriculum Overview

Every workshop includes:

Optional modifications to meet student needs

Optional Tiered Levels of Engagement

PowerPoint presentation

Supplemental worksheets

Additional resources



Name: _____ Date: _____

Who Do You WANT to Know?

Qualities of a person you'd like to meet:	Qualities of a person you'd like to be friends with:	Qualities of a person you would like to live with:
Famous Athlete or Coach:	Famous Celebrity:	Famous Person from History (if you had a time machine):
Religious Figure:	Community Member:	Government Figure:
Professional who could help you with your career:	Other:	

PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES TIERS

Based on Pre-ETS Expectations of Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

Tier 1: Awareness

- **Student is just beginning to think about Post-Secondary Plans**
- **Might not have goals in mind**
- **May have little to no volunteer or work experience**

Tier 2: Exploration

- **Student may have some experience volunteering/ work experience**
- **Student has some ideas or options about Post-Secondary plans**
- **Student is still assessing options**

Tier 3: Preparation

- **Student has Post-Secondary Plans in mind**
- **Student is nearly “job ready”**
- **Student benefits from additional coaching as they initiate next steps**

BEST BUDDIES PRIORITIES – NATIONAL TRANSITIONS MODEL



- Person-Centered Program
- Offer a Spiral Curriculum to Support Skill Development & Enrichment
- Community-Based Learning Opportunities**
- Active Engagement of Community Volunteers & Corporate Partners**

Self-Advocacy

Popular Lesson Examples

- **How to Be My Best Self**
- **Importance of Positive Self-Talk**
- **SMART Goals**
- **Defining Disability**
- **Advocating for Accommodations**
- **Stress Management**

Job Exploration

Popular Lesson Examples

- **Why Work?**
- **What are Your Work Values?**
- **What are My Options?
Exploring Vocational Themes**
- **Informational Interviews**
- **Site Tours**
- **Career Panel Discussion**

Workplace Readiness Popular Lesson Examples

- **Resume Building 101**
- **Apply Yourself!**
- **Mock Interviews**
- **It's All About Teamwork**
- **Who's In Charge Around Here Anyway?**
- **Yes, May I Help You? Customer Service Strategies and Etiquette**

Post-Secondary Counseling Popular Lesson Examples

- **So Many Options! An Introduction to Your Post-Secondary Options**
- **Post-Secondary Site Tours**
- **Knowing Your Options**
 - **Higher Education**
 - **Community-Based Learning**
 - **Vocational Schooling and Apprenticeships**

More on Work-Based Learning and Internships to come soon!

ACTIVITY: CAREER ALPHABET CHALLENGE

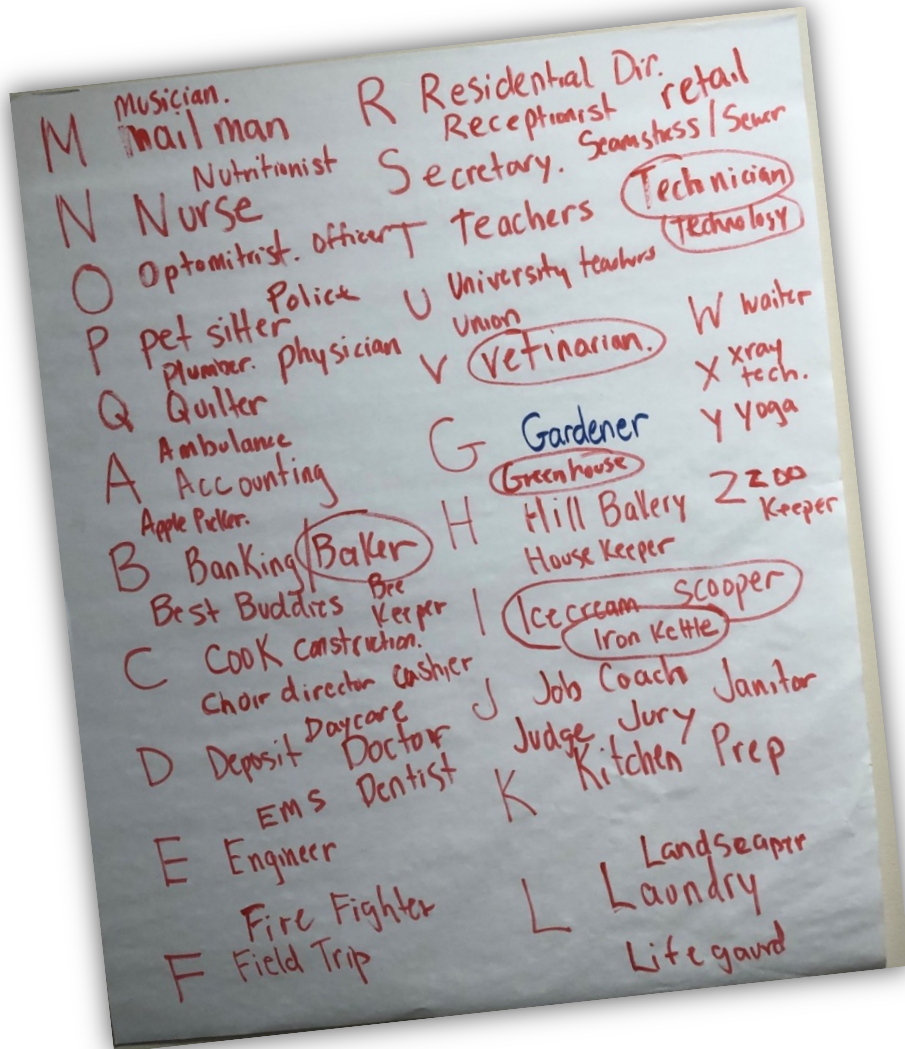


Career Alphabet Challenge

Directions: Name a job or career beginning with each letter of the alphabet

A	B	C
D	E	F
G	H	I
J	K	L
M	N	O
P	Q	R
S	T	U
V	W	X
Y	Z	

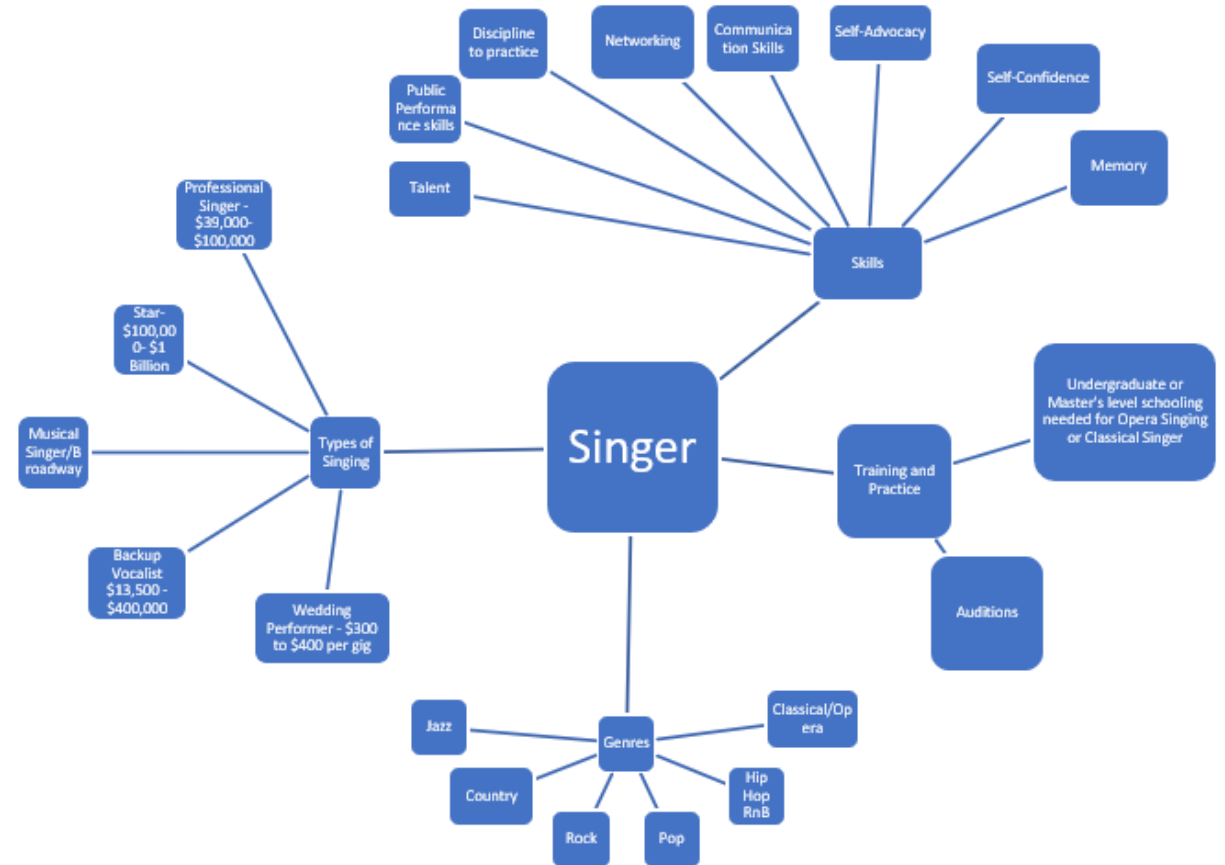
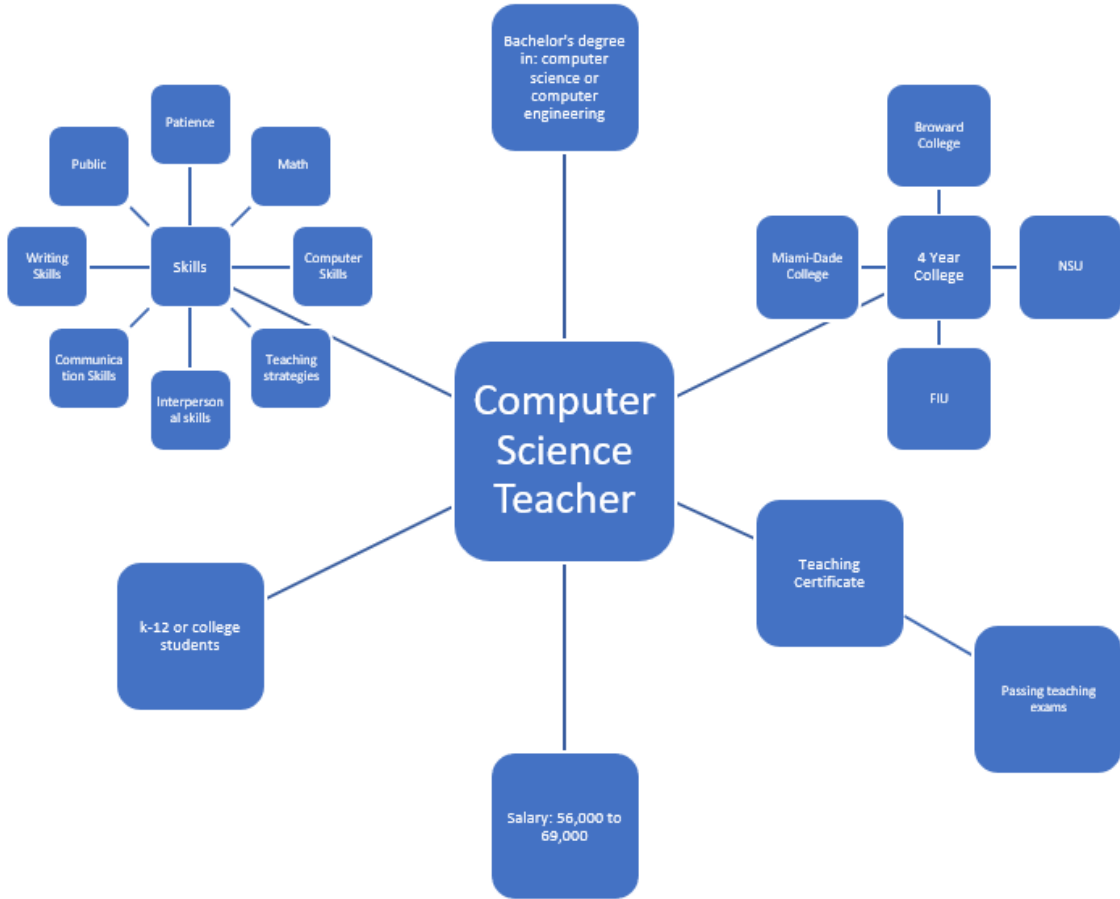
ACTIVITY: CAREER ALPHABET CHALLENGE



- Student-led brainstorm over a semester of programming
- Prompted to add new occupations each session
- Students tracked options they wanted to more information about and/or roles of interest



ACTIVITY: CAREER ALPHABET CHALLENGE



ACTIVITY: CAREER ALPHABET CHALLENGE

Job Exploration Counseling Activities

Tier 1 Awareness	Tier 2 Exploration	Tier 3 Preparation
Keep it simple! Use visual cues as needed	Push students to the next level; encourage them to incorporate specialize roles into the chart	For students with clear career goals: prompt them to use the chart to track specific skills, education, and/or responsibilities of the profession
Use activity as an icebreaker – make it a competition in groups	Prompt students to identify additional positions based on skills	Add questions into blank field for further research
Display a master ABC Chart in the classroom space; add to it throughout your workshop sessions	Prompt students to use chart as part of ongoing reflection of potential career goals	Create a rating system for reflection

ACTIVITY: CAREER PANEL DISCUSSIONS

To provide students an opportunity to learn more about the types of work present in a variety of industries, training & levels of experience needed for personal and professional advancement, and awareness of the role “work” plays in an adult’s life



ACTIVITY: CAREER PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Options for Implementation

One Corporate Partner

- Guest speakers from a 3-5 different departments
- Guest speakers from 1 department who have a variety of roles (leadership included)

Multiple Corporate Partners

- Guest speakers who specialize in a field or skill
 - Customer Service: bank teller, call center agent, waitress, college admissions counselor
 - Data Management: mortgage broker, operations coordinator, tax accountant, local hardware store owner
 - Sports: team owner, equipment manager, communications coordinator, team trainer, player
- Professions which require minimal formal training/ high levels of education

Young Adults with Disabilities (ALUMNI) currently employed – AND their Supervisors!

ACTIVITY: CAREER PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Panel Discussion Questions - Samples

Your Role as a Panelist: You will be answering questions about your employment experience. The following are examples of possible questions:

- Describe your job/place of employment.
- What is your role? What are some of your day-to-day responsibilities?
- What were the steps taken to enter the workforce?
- Describe your accomplishments/ successes in the workplace.
- Have you experienced challenges in the workplace; if so, how did you advocate for accommodations to overcome them?
- Share a time you had an uncomfortable conversation with another colleague. How did you address the situation? How/ Was it resolved?
- **What was your 1st job? What is a skill you learned in your 1st job you still use today?**
- What are some of your personal career goals?
- Describe an ideal leader – what characteristics does this person have?



Other Opportunities



virtualjobshadow®
interactive career exploration



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES/CURRICULUM

Questions?





Fundación **MAPFRE**

Pre-Employment Training Program

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact

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