

# TREC

## (Transition Related Employment Curriculum)

### Introduction

This curriculum is designed to cover one school year. However, based upon the activities chosen and the depth to which they are pursued, it could extend to two or more years of course work. It is designed to *provide direct instruction* for the skills and knowledge required to prepare students for the world of employment. It covers the required content for the Work Based Learning seminar but was developed for use with all students with disabilities.

This curriculum was not “created.” It was organized. We gathered existing high quality material and organized it into a scope and sequence for direct instruction of transition skills related primarily to employment. Many of the skills are applicable, however, across all transition areas. It is our intent that the direct instruction provided in the classroom be directly tied to the annual IEP instructional goals. Ideally, the knowledge and skills related to employment taught through this curriculum would culminate in experience learning activity.

TREC is an activity-based curriculum, not a book and worksheet curriculum. It is our belief that students learn best and remember most by engaging in activities that relate to the content to be learned. The cognitive content will come from conversations between you and your students as related to the activities.

**Why?** Each of the content topics contained in Units I through IV begin with a paragraph or two entitled “**Why**”. To fully engage in an activity, it is important that students have a basic understanding of how it is relevant. These paragraphs identify why proficiency in each topic will help them achieve successful employment in a career of their choice.

The activities contained within this curriculum are directly related to obtaining meaningful employment. Activities such as money management, completing job applications, understanding insurance, etc. have been deliberately excluded. While those lessons are important, this curriculum focuses on the skills of self-understanding, career exploration, employability skill knowledge and practice, and work experience.

Though labeled Unit I through Unit IV, the order of presentation is not overly significant. The material was broken into four parts simply to comply with the traditional four quarters of a school year.

The following section entitled Yearlong Activities is a fifth unit and is essential to this curriculum. It contains five activities which are the foundation for all other units. It is listed separately because **it is essential** that these activities be ongoing throughout the entire year and across all content areas. They are the culminating activities; the products; the results of a year’s worth of exploration and learning.

**Note:** All documents that are ***bold in blue, italicized and underlined*** can be directly clicked on or downloaded from our website at [www.nlsec.org](http://www.nlsec.org) Click on “Secondary Transition” then on “TREC.”

## Yearlong Activities

*The following activities are key to this curriculum. They are the core components into which all other activities play and add meaning and depth to the process. Not including them will lessen the effectiveness of the units that follow.*

### Activity One: Expanding Circle

This is a career exploration project that requires students to conduct a series of personal interviews with a variety of individuals about their careers. Most people have only a general idea about what duties a given job entails. By conducting personal interviews, the students learn the in-depth details about a variety of careers as well as sound techniques for engaging individuals in professional conversation.

Download [Expanding Circle](#) and [Expanding Circle Questionnaire](#) for teacher instructions to implement this activity.

### Activity Two: Profiling Your Potential and Identifying Vocational Themes

*This activity is an adaptation of a customized employment strategy developed by Griffin-Hammi Associates, LLC. It is presented here with their permission.*

This is a multi-step process that requires a great deal of reflection, observation, and discussion. It is a yearlong activity with steps to be completed over multiple weeks. It should not be viewed as a single assignment to be completed in a continuous setting. It is designed to help students discover their unrecognized strengths and skills and unique interests (Personal Potential). Traditional career exploration activities use this information to place students in one or two “appropriate” jobs. This process helps students identify three umbrella career fields (Vocational Themes) in which their distinctive skills can be matched to a wider variety of potential careers. The goal is to broaden the way we view a person’s capabilities and potential. It seeks to raise expectations, to widen the scope of what students can accomplish, and to eliminate past narrow perceptions of “jobs for the disabled.”

The steps in this process are outlined in the downloadable document [Vocational Themes](#) and [Task Analysis](#). Specific instructions for each step are clarified in the [Profiling Your Potential](#) as are all related worksheets.

### Activity Three: Practicing Employment

Though instigated by the teacher, this is a parent-directed activity. Research has shown that one of the best methods parents can employ for developing sound work skills and interests in their children is to engage them in household chores or other responsibilities.

A sample letter explaining the process ([Practicing Employment – parent letter](#)) has been provided as well as a sample grading report ([Practicing Employment Evaluation Form](#)).

The letter asks parents to assign their son/daughter a small but routine task. At a frequency determined by the teacher, the parents will evaluate their student’s performance and the results will be calculated into the student’s grade.

Explain to students that if their parents do not wish to participate, they will be given a small but routine within the classroom and that the teacher will provide the evaluation. The task should be one that is conducted during non-instructional time.

#### **Activity Four: Portfolio**

This activity begins a student filing system at the beginning of the year where students are to keep all important information related to their future goals. Using a filing system not only provides students with quick access important information, it teaches them organizational and communication skills.

The downloadable document, [\*Filing System\*](#), provides start-up information related to the development of a hard copy portfolio. Dependent upon student interest and available technology, an electronic portfolio could also be developed and maintained. The State of Minnesota provides a free and secure site for students to build their electronic portfolio. <http://www.efoliomn.com/>

The site contains detailed instructions but should be reviewed and experimented with by the teacher prior to introducing to students.

#### **Activity Five: Journaling**

Journaling is an excellent tool for self-discovery, reflection, and idea formation. It is also a very good tool to increase the quality of written communication; to assist in goal development; and to motivate students to develop the habit of lifelong learning.

An explanation of the journaling activity as well as directions for beginning can be found in the document [\*Journaling Start Up\*](#). Two additional documents, [\*Why Journal and Starters\*](#) and [\*100 Benefits of Journaling\*](#) may assist you in explain to students what journaling is and why it is a worthwhile activity.

## Unit I - Knowing Yourself and Your Rights

Most of this section will involve activities that will help students articulate who they are. The goal is for students to have a clearer understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, their hopes and fears, their likes and dislikes. The more complete understanding they have of themselves, the easier it will be for them to realistically and successfully plan for their future.

### • Self-Discovery

- **Why?** Self-discovery is the process of achieving understanding of oneself. “Who am I?” is a question that everyone asks themselves at one time or another. It is also a question that can take a lifetime to answer. The more we understand ourselves; however, the easier it is to deal with all the good and bad we encounter. We are able to shape ourselves into who we want to be. Self-discovery leads to lifelong learning.  
The world we live in changes so quickly that the job you may someday have may well not even yet exist. In an ever-changing world, successful people are those who are lifelong learners. That process starts by knowing yourself.

### Activities:

- Print, review, and discuss the article [10 Steps to Life Long Learning](#). Help students become aware of the opportunities to learn new things by having them daily record or identify one thing they learned outside of the classroom on the previous day. Continue for a minimum of five days. Alternately, have student choose to engage in one of the suggestions from the list and report to the group at a later date, the results of their attempt.
- Discuss the purpose of the [Self-Discovery Questions](#) and have the students complete the questions. Students may share parts with which they are comfortable. Have students store the document in their portfolio for review at the end of the course.
- Have students complete the [Self-Discovery-reaction Sheet](#). Discuss the results as a way to focus on the benefits of setting short or long terms goals and to improve self-awareness.
- Additional self-discover activities can be found in the document [Activities for Self-Discovery](#) and [Finger Print Patterns](#).
- Self-Discovery Essay: Students choose one of the quotes below and write a persuasive essay either for or against the idea in the quote.
  - "A man travels the world over in search of what he needs and returns home to find it."—George Moore
  - "Not until we are lost do we begin to understand ourselves."—Henry David Thoreau
  - "One's own self is well hidden from one's own self; of all mines of treasure, one's own is the last to be dug up."—Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche

## • **Knowing Your Disability**

- **Why?** Almost one out of five people in the United States has a disability that is severe enough to affect their learning, employment, independence, and/or recreation. Disabilities are common and natural. While a disability rarely goes away, its impact can be reduced if you learn what it is and how it affects life and employment.  
Many very famous and successful people have serious disabilities. Some have turned them into strengths; others have found ways around them. When looking at future careers, understanding your disability will help prepare for any hurdles you may encounter. It will also allow you to access the accommodations that are your right.

### **Activities:**

- Have students research and report on their (or any) disability. Discuss the idea that disabilities are natural and not preventable and that most people will have a disability (hard of hearing, in a wheel chair, wear glasses) at some point in their lives.
- Have students research and identify one or two famous people with a disability and talk about how those individuals compensated.
- As a group activity have students complete the “*Famous People Matching*” activity on page 3-7 of [411 on Disability Disclosure](#). This activity will require internet access. There are also several other sites which students can research that identify famous people with disabilities.
- Have them take a [Learning Style Inventory](#) and discuss how they learn best. Brainstorm ideas for using their strengths to compensate for the weaknesses.
- Have each student review the Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance as well as the adaptations section of their IEP. Do they agree or disagree, understand or not; and would they change anything and why?
- Have each student list their TOP 10 BEST QUALITIES, and then have other students rearrange the list if necessary.
- Have each student review the section on their disability in the [Tools for College](#) booklet.

### **Resources:**

- <http://www.youthhood.org> An interactive life planning, decision making website
- <http://askjan.org/> (A-Z of disabilities and how to make your workplace or college setting meet your needs.)
- [www.nlsec.org](http://www.nlsec.org): [Tools for College](#) are available free under “Secondary Transition”.
- <http://www.ldpride.net/> Student friendly information about Learning Disabilities
- <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure> *A Workbook for Youth with Disabilities* is designed for youth and adults working with them to learn about disability disclosure.

## • Identify Your Strengths

- **Why?** Everyone has things that they are good at doing or know a lot about. Because everyone is different, those strengths are also very different. Sometimes we are not even aware that we have them. It is important to understand your strengths because you can use them to build the kind of life you want. Your strengths, your hobbies, those things you enjoy, may someday lead you to a career that is more play than work!

### Activities:

- Have students visit [www.iseek.org](http://www.iseek.org) and take the ISEEK Skills Assessment, the CareerOneStop Skills Profiler and the MnCareers Interest Assessment.
- Have students complete the O\*NET Interest Profiler at [www.mynextmove.org](http://www.mynextmove.org). Click “Start” on the “Tell us what you like to do” box.
- If you did not do so in the previous unit, have students take a [Learning Style Inventory](#) and discuss how they learn best. Brainstorm ideas for using their strengths to compensate for their weaknesses.
- Have students take the thirty-minute Life Skills Assessment on the Casey Life Skills Website. You must create an account, but it is free. The assessment helps students build a personal checklist of skills and strengths.

### Resources:

- <http://www.iseek.org/careers/assessyourself.html> Contains several good assessments related to skills and careers
- <http://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip> Contains the Department of Labor’s O\*NET Interest Profiler
- [www.caseylifeskills.org](http://www.caseylifeskills.org) Free online assessment helps students to identify strengths and skills

## • Self-Advocacy

- **Why?** To advocate means “to speak or write in support of” so a self-advocate is one who can speak or write in support of himself. Self-Advocacy is the ability to communicate your wants, needs and rights. To do this well requires that you know and believe in yourself and that you advocate in a manner that is appropriate to the situation.  
Everyone needs to be a good self-advocate. It is a way to let people know who you are and a way to insure that you receive what you are due. It is not an easy skill to master, but it is an important skill to have. People cannot take advantage of a good self-advocate.

## Activities:

- Review website from the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability at <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/tip-sheet/becoming-a-self-advocate> and discuss what self-advocacy means.
- Have students complete the “Am I Learning to Lead Self Assessment Tool” from the National Consortium on Leadership and Disability for Youth at [http://www.nclcd-youth.info/Downloads/Am\\_I\\_Learning\\_to\\_Lead\\_Self\\_Assmt\\_Youth.pdf](http://www.nclcd-youth.info/Downloads/Am_I_Learning_to_Lead_Self_Assmt_Youth.pdf).
- Show the Power Point presentation titled Empowerment and Leadership at [http://www.berkstransition.org/?page\\_id=1005](http://www.berkstransition.org/?page_id=1005) under the Empowerment Power Point section.
- After reviewing the site, consider having your students join *Kids As Self-Advocates* (KASA). It is a national, grassroots project created by youth with disabilities for youth. KASA seeks to aid young people with disabilities to have control over their own lives and futures. Membership for students is free and includes monthly newsletters and interactive features. KASA is located at: <http://www.fvkasa.org/index.php>
- There are local organizations that will come into your classroom to provide training to students in several areas related to self-advocacy. The sessions are organized to be approximately an hour in length. They are of exceptionally good quality. They are free but *do need to be contacted two or three weeks in advance*.
  - **Arc Northland:** *SAM: Self-Advocacy Minnesota*. A description of the trainings can be viewed in [SAM NE Training Inventory](#). Contact Laura Birnbaum [lbirnbaum@arcnorthland.org](mailto:lbirnbaum@arcnorthland.org) (218-726-4841)
    1. Label Jars, Not People and What We Believe
    2. Qualities of a Leader and Showing Confidence
    3. Showing Confidence and More Power to You
    4. Self-Advocacy BINGO!
    5. I Am A Person First: Understanding the Value of Values (2 hours required)
  - **Access North Center for Independent Living:** CIL provides a wide variety of trainings in multiple areas other than those identified here. Contact Sheri Cooke for a complete listing. CIL will come into the classroom for a one time training or through-out the whole school year on a monthly basis. Topics related to this curriculum are listed below. Contact Sheri Cooke, [sheri@accessnorth.net](mailto:sheri@accessnorth.net), for details and scheduling.
    1. Personal Safety,
    2. Self-Advocacy,
    3. Socialization Skills,
    4. Employment
    5. Community Resources
    6. Disability Awareness
- After discussion what self-advocacy is and its importance, have students create a “recipe” of the essential ingredients (characteristics and skills) of a self-advocate and share with the class.



- As a part of the SAM project, Arc Northland offers a workshop for the general education population which they will conduct but which requires organization and participation by some of your students. This is an excellent “empowerment” activity for your class. Called, “Offense Taken: Eliminating the R-Word” the workshop enlightens students to the very negative impact of name calling and would be a very appropriate supplement to an anti-bullying campaign. Contact Laura Birnbaum, [lbirnbaum@arcnorthland.org](mailto:lbirnbaum@arcnorthland.org) 218-726-4841, for details.

### Resources:

- <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/tip-sheet/becoming-a-self-advocate> National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability tip-sheet on self-advocacy.
- [http://www.berkstransition.org/?page\\_id=1005](http://www.berkstransition.org/?page_id=1005) Berks County Transition Coordinating Council Power Point on Self-Advocacy, download available.

### • IEP Meetings

- **Why?** An Individual Education Plan is YOURS and you need to be a part of it. It is about you and for you, and you are the person who should have the most say in what your IEP looks like and what it says. You must, therefore, be involved in the meetings where the plan is developed. In high school, your IEP is referred to as a “transition IEP.” Transition means “change.” The transition IEP is about what you need to learn and do so that you can be successful after your graduation. It is important that you learn about your IEP: how to effectively participate in the meetings where it is planned, and how to have a say in what it contains.

### Activities:

- Use the [IEP Survey](#) as a pre- and post-test for this unit.
- Print out the [Blank IEP](#) for students. Walk through it with them explaining purpose of each section, not in legalistic terms but in student-friendly language absent of jargon and acronyms.
- Review and implement the Nichcy technical assistance guide entitled [Nichcy: Helping Students Develop their IEPs](#).
- Have the students prepare a presentation for their next IEP meeting in which they tell the team about their Post Secondary Measureable Goals. Have them describe the changes they would like to see to their IEP.
- Have student completes the [IEP Meeting Script](#) worksheet.
- Have each student meet privately with one of their teachers to explain their disability and to talk about necessary accommodations.



- Have students complete the [Nichcy: Student led IEP](#) work booklet and facilitate, to the degree possible, their next IEP meeting.
- Provide the students with a copy of their IEP and have them complete the [IEP Scavenger Hunt](#).
- Using a video recorder or an iPad or iPhone, have students create a YouTube-type video on “How to run your own IEP meeting.” Create a brochure to accompany the video and have them present to to underclassmen or to your local CTIC. See [Sample Brochure](#).

### Resources:

- <http://www.youthhood.org>
- Google: “Bill Gates Eleven”
- [www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/softskills.htm](http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/softskills.htm) Soft Skills, The Competitive Edge

### • IDEA/ADA

- **Why?** The IEP is your educational plan during high school; however, all the rights it provides you go away when you graduate. During school, your rights are protected by one set of laws called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. This law guarantees your right to receive a free and appropriate education. After you graduate, the Americans with Disabilities Act insures your rights as a person with a disability. There is a big difference between the two sets of laws. Most of your life will be spent under ADA. You need to know what it offers and promises you.

### Activities:

- Review with students the [Comparison of ADA & IDEA](#) document. Discuss similarities and differences.
- Show YouTube videos (see Resources).

### Resources:

<http://youtu.be/DUn6luZQaXE> Celebrating 35 Years of IDEA. A YouTube video featuring LeDerick Horne

<http://youtu.be/hQkHCBhbBGs> A YouTube video, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

[http://youtu.be/\\_ods6uOh198](http://youtu.be/_ods6uOh198) A YouTube video, Employment Law: The Americans with Disabilities Act

## Unit II - Which Career Direction is Most Ideal for You?

This section provides activities and resources that may be used for career exploration, career inventories, aptitude assessment, career investigation, and future goal setting. The purpose is for the student to acquire a view of future career possibilities along with knowledge of what is necessary to attain that potential career and to develop a strategy for achieving it.

### Career Exploration

- **Why?** It is very true that many people change their careers frequently. Others find their dream jobs early and stay with it most of their work lives. Though the career you have in twenty years may be very different than what you are interested in today, it is important that you learn what jobs are available; what people actually do in those jobs; what skills you have relate to what kinds of work; and how you locate the job you want. These skills will serve you well, not only when looking for your first job but also in making career changes in the future.

### Activities:

- The following websites are free and have excellent career exploration and skill/interest assessments. They also contain a wealth of additional information related to careers. **Entire curricula can be built around the content of these sites.** We urge you to spend some time “playing” on the sites. Become familiar with one or two of them and use them to their fullest extent. Have students complete one or more assessments and discuss the results.  
Assessment:
  - [www.iseek.org](http://www.iseek.org) ISeek Skills Assessment: Click on “Assess Yourself;” then “ISseek Skills Assessment.”
  - [www.mynextmove.org](http://www.mynextmove.org) “Tell us what you like to do” section of the Career Exploration and Interest Inventory website.
  - [www.youthhood.org](http://www.youthhood.org) Click on “Job Center;” then “Learning About Work;” then “Taking Career Inventories.”
  - [www.mncis.intocareers.com/](http://www.mncis.intocareers.com/) Minnesota Career Information System. The site is paid for by most districts and can be used by your class for free. It requires a login and password which can be obtained from the school counselor. The site contains a variety of career assessment tools.
- Those same sites have sections related to career investigation where students can locate information about required education; job duties; job availability; salary, etc. Have students choose one or two careers to investigate.
- Review the information gathered from the students’ work in their [Expanding Circle](#) activity. Have them identify with whom they could speak that would give them information related to a career in which they are interested.
- Entrepreneurship. Many people have very successfully turned their hobbies, their unique talents, or their passions into successful careers.
  - Search the internet or YouTube for “small business ideas.” Choose some of the stranger, more unique ones to share with students. Talk about why they worked. Have students brainstorm novel business ideas or services they could market to local businesses.
  - There are individuals and organizations that will come to your classroom to talk about how to start a small business. For contact information, email Jess Knutsen at [jknutsen@nlsec.k12.mn.us](mailto:jknutsen@nlsec.k12.mn.us)

- Brainstorming activity: As a class, have students compile a list of services they could sell to a small business
- Have students take a free online interest inventory or career exploration survey (see resources) and compare and discuss results.
- Have students meet with the school guidance counselor to get information and suggestions.
- Have the counselor talk to the class about how a guidance counselor can assist them regarding careers and college.
- Take a field trip to your local WorkForce Center to view the available resources.
- Explain *MNCareers* booklet and have students work with the section on “Career Decisions.” These books are typically available through your school counselor.
- Assign each student a career or have them choose one in which they have an interest. Have them visit the counselor to find out what colleges might have a program in that field. Have them research the college website to find out as much as they can about the program (number of credits, criteria for entry, types of courses, etc.) and then discuss/present the results.
- Using the [Earnings Attainment](#) document, compare average salaries of drop-outs: high school diploma: two year college degree : Bachelors degree : Masters degree : Doctorate.
- Have students complete the “Questions You Should Ask Yourself” section of [Education Beyond High School](#) booklet.
- If offered at your school, require that students take the ASVAB. Explain that you are not suggesting that they enter the military but that the test will give them excellent career suggestions based upon their interest and skills.
- Insure that students participate in Mentoring Day: Rocketing into the Future or other career and job fairs in your area.
- SOAR Career Solutions is an employment agency that relies on strong community partnerships to support people at any point in their career paths to reach their goals. SOAR provides cognitive skills workshops, career planning workshops, person-centered case management, and grant-funded trainings at Lake Superior College for income qualified people. They also participate in planning of area workforce development. Professional staff from SOAR Career Solutions are available to speak to classes about career development, career exploration, resume writing, job search, and participating in practices that move people into economic independence. Call Sara Romagnoli, Employment Services Program Director, at 218-625-2413 to discuss a tailored presentation for your class. Please provide a two week notice. Visit SOAR online at [www.soarcareers.org](http://www.soarcareers.org).
- For 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who are seriously planning on attending a two- or four-year college: Have them participate in the *e-college* program. <http://www.nlsec.org> click on *Secondary Transition – eCollege*.
- Your high school counselor will have (or can get for you copies of) *MNCareers*. Under your guidance, have students work through the *Assessing Yourself* section of the book.

## Resources:

[www.iseek.org](http://www.iseek.org) Minnesota’s Career, Education, and Resource Center  
[www.mynextmove.org](http://www.mynextmove.org) Career Exploration and Interest Inventory  
[www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov) (Bureau of Labor & Statistics)  
[www.minnesotaworks.net](http://www.minnesotaworks.net) (State resource for available jobs/employment available in Minnesota)  
[www.mnscu.edu](http://www.mnscu.edu) Everything about Minnesota State Colleges and Universities  
[www.mnscu.edu/media/publications/pdf/2011-2012goplaces.pdf](http://www.mnscu.edu/media/publications/pdf/2011-2012goplaces.pdf) A guide to all Minnesota State Colleges and Universities

[www.whatcareerisrightforme.com](http://www.whatcareerisrightforme.com) Career Aptitude Assessment and Exploration  
<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/> National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability resources with a youth focus  
<http://www.mntat.org/main/> Information and Technical Assistance for the public about Customized Employment and disability employment  
[www.youthhood.org](http://www.youthhood.org) Youthhood – Where Teens Prepare for Life after High School  
[www.sba.gov/teens/](http://www.sba.gov/teens/) Young entrepreneurs: SBA has a wide range of resources and programs to help youth to start, manage and grow their own business. The site includes self-assessment and a free online course.

## Career Goal Setting

- **Why?** It is much easier to hit a target if you actually know where you are aiming! Goal setting is the process of setting targets, and just as hitting a target requires that you take into account many factors (distance, target size, wind speed & direction, etc.), achieving your future goal requires understanding many factors (education require, availability, job requirements, experience, etc.). The more focused you are on your future, and the better you understand the factors that impact achieving that future, the more likely it is to happen. Goals help you focus your energy and ability to achieve what you dream.

### Activities:

- Have students meet with their high school counselor to plan taking the EXPLORE, PLAN, ASVAB or Accuplacer exams and a follow-up meeting to review the assessments. Use the results to help students set personal goals for their remaining high school years.
- Review with students the [Prepare for a Career](#) document from Pathways to Employment. Discuss the decision-making “flow” and what is being asked. At each of the steps, have students answer the questions as best they can. At the conclusion of the unit, have students review their answers and make necessary changes.
- Review with students the [Minnesota Career Fields, Clusters & Pathways](#) document. The goal for this activity is for students to realize that within any given career interest area, there is great variety in types of jobs available. Have students do further research on a favorite career cluster to discover additional related jobs.
- Task analysis is a skill similar to goal setting. Both require an individual to break a complex activity into small manageable parts. Have students practice this skill by breaking down an activity into its component parts. See [TASK ANALYSIS](#).
- Your high school counselor will have or can get for you copies of *MNCareers*. Under your guidance, have students work through the *Making Career Decisions* section of the book.
- ISeek has an entire section devoted to setting career goals. Many activities are self directed.
- Have students journal about two areas in which they feel they need to improve now in order to realize their future goals. Have them describe the steps they will take to make those changes.

### Resources:

[http://mn.db101.org/partners\\_3.htm](http://mn.db101.org/partners_3.htm) Minnesota Disability Benefits Tool. Helps prepare youth for working and realizing that you can work and still maintain medical coverage and other needed supports  
[www.iseek.org](http://www.iseek.org) Minnesota’s Career, Education, and Resource Center

## Participation in career related training and/or degree programs

**Why?** Many of our schools have career-oriented classes and programs that allow students an early start on a potential career choice. From welding and PSEO, there are classes offered by businesses and colleges in the schools. There are robotics clubs, DECA (Distributive Education Clubs of America), HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America), SkillsUSA, Future Business Leaders of America, and many similar groups in which students can be active participants. Additionally, many community education classes offer career-orientated workshops from CPR and First Aid to woodworking and forestry. These organizations provide real-world information; are career orientated; engage in performance-based activities; and facilitate connections to people in the community. They are perfect for students with disabilities.

## Disability Benefits 101 (DB101)

**Why?** For many people with disabilities, a critical barrier to employment is often the fear of losing state or federal benefits when working. It is important for students to gain accurate information and understand the relationships between work and benefits they may receive. DB101 is an interactive website that will allow students and parents to make informed choices about work and reduces their fears.

While it is not education's responsibility to help students acquire benefits, it is education's responsibility to help students to navigate the tools that will provide them with information about their options and to learn about work incentives and to reach employment goals.

## E-College

**Why?** For 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who have an interest in attending college following graduation, participation in the *e-college* program is highly recommended. *E-college* is an eight week curriculum that prepares students with disabilities for success in college by direct instruction in requisite skills and knowledge. The curriculum is augmented through mentorship by college students with disabilities who have been successful in navigating the obstacles created by their disability.

### Resources:

The entire curriculum and teacher guide, as well as implementation directions, can be downloaded free for the Northern Lights Special Education Cooperative's website at [www.nlsec.org](http://www.nlsec.org). In the Quick Links, click on "*Secondary Transition - eCollege*" or [click here](#).

## Unit III - Skill Development

For students with disabilities, it is frequently not their ability that is the limiting factor, but the related social and soft skills that become the barrier. For these students with disabilities, directly teaching social and soft skills can literally make the difference between future success or failure.

### Employability Skills

- **Why?** To work behind the counter in a pawn shop certainly requires a different set of skills than preparing peoples' taxes or running a sheep ranch. But the skills that deal primarily with the way we interact with people and the way we perform our jobs are valuable regardless of the occupation. Having these skills not only makes a difference in whether or not a person is hired for a job but also has a significant impact on keeping the job.

### Activities:

- The following skill-building activities are taken from [Skills to Pay the Bills](#) published by the Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy. There are far more activities and lessons contained within this document than are included here. Teachers are urged to review the entire publication for additional lessons.
  - Communication-
    - What's Your Point (p. 19-22)
    - Flipping the Switch (p. 23-25)
    - Oh, Puh-leeeeeze! (p. 26-29)
    - Listen Hear! (p. 30-31)
    - Quit Talkin'! I Know What To Do! (p. 32-34)
  - Professionalism
    - Professionalism in Today's Workforce (p. 116-117)
    - The Cultural Divide (p. 118)
    - Professionalism- Professional Work Attitudes activity from *Skills to Pay the Bills* (p. 119-120)
    - Examining Work Attitudes (p. 121)
    - Teamwork-An Essential Element of Professionalism (p. 122-125)
    - Is it Considered "Professional" to Have Friends in the Workplace? (p. 126-128)
    - Self-Reflection: Professionalism Problem Solving at its Best (p. 129-133)
- Review the article [7 Things Not to Say](#) with students. Have them identify a negative comment they say on a regular basis and for a given time period, have them count and chart the number of times the expression is used. Following this, have them do the same with a positive word. Discuss strategies for increasing positive language.
- [Random Acts of Kindness](#): "Customer First" or "Customer Relations" skills are not easily developed but high on employers' list of skills valued in their employees. Committing random acts of kindness helps to develop those skills and turn them into habits.
- For each student, print copies of [The Foundation Job Skills](#) document. As a class, read through the list of 17 skills that employers find most valuable in their employees. Provide (or have students provide) scenarios for when or how those skills are useful. As you discuss the skills, have students privately identify those skills they feel they need to improve. Have them record those skills in their journal for later use in the development of a self-improvement plan.



- **Decision Making:** Review with students the simple five-step process for making a decision. 1) Admire the problem; that is, clearly state what decision needs to be made. 2) Make a list of possible options. 3) Pick one. 4) Do it. 5) Analyze: How did it work? Provide the students with an example problem such as receiving a test grade that seems unfair or a person you thought was a good friend is suddenly not talking to you. Walk through the steps. Require students to use this simple process whenever they talk to you about a problem.
- **Decision making:** Have the students build a meeting agenda. Deciding what should or should not be included and how much time they should be allotted is a decision-making skill. Students could compose an agenda for their IEP meeting; for a career meeting with the school counselor; for a school club meeting; or for their transition class.
- **Social Skills:** More jobs have been lost due to poor social skills than to poor performance. People with good social skills are perceived as being more capable than those without them. Whenever working on social skills, the most effective formula is to provide a brief introduction to the skill with examples; have students practice the skill in real world settings, regroup, and analyze afterward. Possible activities:
  - Small talk: Review the document [\*Tips for Small Talk\*](#) with students. Have them practice by engaging in a conversation with a classmate who is not a close friend. Review how it went the next day.
  - Role play introductions or have the student introduce a guest or a speaker to the class.
  - Use Skype to practice conversations with students from another school.
  - Increase vocabulary by having a word for the day that students must work into a conversation before the next class.
  - Visit a nursing home or senior citizens center and have students visit with clients.
  - Arrange for students to mentor younger students in school work or social skills.

## Resources:

Skills to Pay the Bills-Office of Disability Employment Policy

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/>

For a list of Random Acts of Kindness ideas as well as lesson plans for larger activities:

<http://www.randomactsofkindness.org/>

## Practicing Adulthood

- **Why?** These students will soon be legally adult. Adulthood means a great deal of freedom, but it also requires personal responsibility. Upon graduation from high school, the IEP ceases and with it go the supports, instruction, and case management that students and families have grown accustomed to having. Practicing adulthood is about accepting responsibility; acting independently; and being proactive.



## Activities:

- Review and discuss Bill Gates' article "Eleven things they never taught you in high school."
- Require students to carry, in plain sight, and use a planner for two weeks. They must accurately record all assignments and due dates and to turn in all assignments on time without being reminded.
- Have each student meet privately with one of their teachers to explain their disability and talk about necessary accommodations.
- Have students practice S.L.A.N.T. and other techniques from the Kansas Strategies.
- Along with rights come responsibilities. On pages 6-7, 7-9, and 8-6 of [411 on Disability Disclosure](#) are comparisons of individual rights and corresponding responsibilities. Share and discuss with students.
- Activities from [Skills to Pay the Bills](#)
  - Never Underestimate the Power of PMA (pp. 36-39)
  - Success or Failure activity (pp. 44-45)
  - A Super Ball and a Raw Egg (pp. 40-43)
  - Believe It or Not: Your Attitude and Enthusiasm Just Might Get You the Job (pp. 46-52)

## Resources:

- <http://www.youthhood.org> (see previous)
- Google: "Bill Gates eleven"
- [www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/softskills.htm](http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/softskills.htm) Soft Skills, The Competitive Edge
- <http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/> Skills to Pay the Bills-Office of Disability Employment Policy

## Work Based Learning Requirements.

For students involved in the school Work Based Learning Program, the following two topics must be a part of their curriculum. It is actually preferred that they be taught before the student begins actual on-site experience.

### Child Labor Laws

- **Why?** Unless you are 18 years old or older, you are not legally an adult. The law has strict regulations about what, when, where, and how much work non-adults are allowed to do. In any job, a youth or an adult must understand any regulations. Students in the Work Based Learning Program who work at jobs they are not legally permitted to hold means that the employer and school district become liable for any damage or injury caused.

### **Activities:**

- Review the power point [Child Labor Presentation](#). Slides 20-25 contain a test. Start with the test and have students guess at the answers, then review the presentation to discover the answers. Go through the entire power point. It contains many excellent concepts.
- Similarly, the MN Department of Labor and Industry's website (<http://www.doli.state.mn.us/>) contains excellent information on Child Labor Laws with a similar quiz in the FAQ section. On their home site, click on Wages and Hours: Child Labor : FAQs The quiz starts with "Minimum wage."

### **Resources:**

<http://www.doli.state.mn.us/> MN Department of Labor and Industry contains a wealth of information on child labor laws.

### **Safety Requirements**

- **Why?** Every year, thousands of people are injured and even killed on the job. Frequently this is because they or their employer did not make safety a first priority. Understanding basic safety procedures will help avoid injury on most every job. Following company safety guidelines and actively participating in company safety training will keep employees safe on even the most dangerous jobs.

### **Activities:**

- The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has provided a curriculum to cover the safety requirements of Work Based Learning Programs. See [Talking Safety](#).
- The MN Department of Labor and Industry provides two thorough curricula with accompanying instruction manuals that address work-place safety and work-place health issues. Though going through the entire curricula is prohibitive, the first two chapters of each would fulfill the safety requirement. [Youth Safety Training Program](#)

### **Resources:**

<http://www.doli.state.mn.us/Appr/SafetyTrain.asp> Contains two youth safety curriculum and instruction manuals.

## Disability Disclosure

- **Why?** In order to receive the accommodations that are required under the law, employers must be aware of your disability. Depending upon the severity of the disability and the amount of accommodation necessary, the employer may require an evaluation report to verify the disability. Whether or not to disclose a disability or when to do so can be difficult decisions.

### Activities

- Review the [Disclosure Process](#) document with students and have them complete the accompanying work sheet. Use roll playing activity to have the students' practice their prepared scripts.
- Read to students the [Youth Disclosure & the Workplace](#). Discuss with students section by section.
- [411 on Disability Disclosure](#) is a student workbook that includes a wide variety of activities on self-determination and self-advocacy as well as disability disclosure. Teachers are encouraged to implement more of the activities than are noted here. Unit 7 (pages 1-16) deal with the activities specific to disclosure on the job. Engage students in as many of the activities as you deem appropriate.

### Resources:

<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure> A comprehensive document on disability disclosure with student-friendly lessons on how to prepare to disclose and when to do so.

## Unit IV- Experience Learning

Just as immersion is the best way to learn a language, actually working is the best way to learn about employment. This section explores several options for providing students with direct contact to the world of work and allowing students to learn from people who actually work at the jobs in which students are interested.

### e-Connect Employment Related Mentoring

*E-Connect* is an employment curriculum developed by the Institute on Community Integration. It contains six individual curricula options called Projects (see [E-Connect Curricula](#)), each of which incorporates email mentoring with community business professionals. Students get first-hand answers about careers and employment in general from individuals successfully employed in their career interest area.

#### *E-Connect Curricula*

- [Project 1 Preparing for Employment](#)
- [Project 2 Securing and Maintaining Employment](#)
- [Project 3 Skills for the Future](#)
- [Project 4 Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens](#)
- [Project 5 Developing Professional Opportunities](#)
- [Project 6 SoP Portfolio](#)

For TREC, we have chosen to use Project 4, based upon the book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* because it utilizes reading as the basis of instruction.

The materials which follow are an abbreviated version of those utilized by Lauren Burton, a Two Harbors High School special education teacher. Lauren's class was 17 weeks in duration. This curriculum is for 10 weeks. It is an outline of her class and all major worksheets, but we leave it to you to supply day-to-day details. You may also pick and choose from the weekly lessons to fit the class into any reduced time limits you may have. Lauren used three books for this semester long class; *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*, *Shiloh*, and *A Day No Pigs Would Die*. This curriculum utilizes only *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*. The books are not included here and must be purchased separately. [See E-Connect Curriculum Narrative](#).

To obtain business mentors for E-Connect, contact Jess Knutsen (jknutsen@nlsec.k12.mn.us).

### Job Shadowing

Job shadowing is a career exploration activity that offers an opportunity to spend time with a professional currently working in a field of interest. Job shadowing offers a chance to see what it's actually like to work in a specific job. Not only do job shadowers get to observe the day-to-day activities of someone in the current workforce, they also get a chance to have their questions answered.

### Workplace Tours

A workplace tour brings a group of students to tour a business and meet a wide range of employees. The students learn about the business's day-to-day operations, the different types of jobs available, and the requirements for the different careers within that business.

## Work Based Learning Program

Work based learning is a high school program that seeks to provide students with disabilities with the knowledge, skills, attitude and work habits that will lead to successful employment. It provides the student with on site work experience within the community. The actual work opportunity is paired with related classroom instruction.

## Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a formal system of employee training that combines on-the-job experience with related technical instruction. An apprentice spends the majority of his/her time in paid, hands-on training at a work site. It is designed to produce craftsmen who are fully competent in all aspects of an occupation.

For more detailed information on Minnesota apprenticeship programs, see [Education Beyond High School](#) (pages 13 and 14). It contains basic contact information as well as a list of occupations for which apprenticeship is available.

## Volunteerism

Writing is in progress

# e-connect

## Part I: The 7 Habits of Highly Successful Teens.

### Additional Resources:

- For the description of the week's mentor communication focus and a list of activities, see: [Project 4 – The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens](#).
- Following each chapter is a section entitled *Baby Steps* which lists “practice” activities related to the chapter topic in which students should be encouraged to engage.
- For a wide variety of activities, most of which are not included here, but which accompany the book chapter by chapter, see [Supplemental Resources Guide](#).
- Also available for purchase is the author's workbook which accompanies *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teen*.
- To obtain business mentors for the E-Connect, contact Jess Knutsen, [jknutsen@nlsec.k12.mn.us](mailto:jknutsen@nlsec.k12.mn.us)

The activities below are those incorporated by Lauren to supplement the Project 4 core materials. Some are from the Supplemental Guide; some from the workbook; some are from other sources; some she created. Lauren's curriculum was 19 weeks in duration and she included two additional books, *Shiloh* and *A Day No Pigs Would Die* to supplement examples of the habits discussed. This curriculum is reduced to 11 weeks and does not include the additional text.

### Week 1: Introduction/Assessments

- First email to mentors: autobiography
  - This week students will compose their first email to their mentor. Talk with them about introductions and about sharing information about themselves without disclosing information that is too private. To assist students in determining what to say, have them complete the [e-mentee profile form](#).
- Review the class [syllabus](#) and expectations.
- Explain the mentoring process and email exchange Mentoring Process.
- Have students complete [e mentee writing lesson](#)
- Review with students [conversation starters](#) and [conversation tips sheet](#)
- Introduce [Vocabulary](#). (Assign habit, effective, defective)
- Introduce the [Sock Game](#). This game can be employed at any time during the semester to energize the group after a sedentary activity and as a challenge to perform a coordinated physical task.
- Read pp. 1-10 of *The 7 Habits*.....

### Week 2: Paradigms/Principles

- Second letter to your mentor: Speaking of Habits
  - see Week 2 in: [Project 4 – The Seven Habits.....](#) for activities, directions, and suggestions.
- Vocabulary: Paradigm and Principle (note spelling difference from principal)
- Read and discuss pp11-16 Top 10 Stupid Quotes
  - (Most stupid? Why stupid? What do they have in common?)
- Read and discuss pp16-18 Paradigms of Other
  - *Writing assignment:* Write a 5 sentence paragraph describing how your paradigm of someone has changed after you learned something new about them.
- Read and Discuss pp18-23 Paradigms of Life
  - As a group compose a list of Life's Paradigms

- Read and discuss: pp 24-27 Principle Centered
  - Principle poster – Create a poster of a principle you endorse. Write the principle (ex.: Honesty) on the bottom and through drawing, cut-out, or collage create a representation of this principle.
- [Words of Wisdom](#) (WoW)
  - Write one statement from your mentor that would consider good advice to remember for later. We will do this for each email you receive and periodically you will be asked to share one or more.

### Week 3: Habit 1: Be Proactive

- Third email to mentors: Be Proactive
  - see Week 3 in: [Project 4 – The Seven Habits.....](#) for activities, directions, and suggestions.
- Vocabulary: proactive, reactive, push-pull-pause, circle-of-control, self-awareness, conscience, imagination, willpower.
- Complete the worksheet: [What you see is what you get.....](#)
  - Pair and share or group activity.
- Read and discuss pp 28-35 Personal Bank Account
  - See page 6 of [Supplemental Resources Guide](#). for activities.
- Read pp 35-42 Honesty, Renewal, Tap into Your Talents
  - Take notes while you read. Copy the heading and write or draw one thing under each that helps you to remember what it means. Add one thing about what it means for you.
  - Use your Journal to answer questions 5 & 6 on page 45.
- Read pp 48-52 Habit 1: Proactive vs Reactive
  - Copy the definition of each habit in your journal.
  - Give personal examples of when you were proactive and when reactive.
  - Listen to your language. Are you more proactive or reactive?
  - Do some Baby Steps at the end of each Chapter, starting with page 28.
  - Evaluate yourself for one week:
    - \_Am I being proactive or reactive?
    - \_Did I make good choices today?
    - \_Did I blame others?
    - \_What language did I use?
- Read and discuss pp 53-71.
  - Choose one Baby Step to complete

### Week 4: Habit 2: Begin with the End in Mind

- Fourth email to mentors: Begin with the End in Mind
  - see Week 4 in: [Project 4 – The Seven Habits.....](#) for activities, directions, and suggestions.
- Vocabulary: destiny, personal mission statement,
- Have the students divide into two teams. Give each a jigsaw puzzle to assemble. Give one group the box picture, but the other group does not get the picture. The group that assembles the most pieces in an allotted time wins. Discuss the results.
- Read pp 74 – 84. Complete “The Great Discovery” on pp 85-87
- Read pp. 90-91. Write your Personal Mission Statement
- Do the first part of your [Personal Timeline](#) (birth until present). You’ll need to estimate how long your life might be and then divide the line accordingly.



**Week 5:** continue with Habit 2.....

- Fifth email to mentors: Road Blocks
  - see Week 5 in: [Project 4 – The Seven Habits.....](#) for activities, directions, and suggestions
- Read and discuss pp 92-93
  - Review your mission statements and write 2 or more personal goals
- Read and discuss pp 94-101, 102, 103
  - Complete your [Personal Timeline](#).

**Week 6:** Habit 3: Put First Things First

- Sixth email to mentors: Setting priorities
  - see Week 6 in: [Project 4 – The Seven Habits.....](#) for activities, directions, and suggestions
- Vocabulary: priorities, procrastinate, comfort zone, courage zone,
  - Introduce concept of Priorities
- Read pp. 106-113
  - Look at cartoons. What does each term mean to you?
- Read pp. 113-116 Jar of rocks
  - Fill in agendas with “big rocks” for today
- Read pp. 117-121 Comfort zone/Courage zone
  - Refer to diagram. Start by asking students to name something they’ve done that was out of their comfort zone...taking a risk to achieve something
- Read and discuss pp 121-127
  - Choose a Baby Steps activity to complete

**Week 7:** Habit 4: Think Win-Win (conflict resolution)

- Seventh email to mentors: Dealing with conflict at work
  - see Week 7 in: [Project 4 – The Seven Habits.....](#) for activities, directions, and suggestions
- Read and discuss pp 130-143 The Public Victory
  - From the “Baby Steps” on page 144, have students add two example activities under each heading and commit to attempting one from the full list. Discuss their success the following day.
  - Notes: Relationship Bank Account items. Place a star by the one you are best at doing. Circle the one that you’d like to be better at doing.
- Think win-win pp 145-161 Summarize the chapter for students
  - Review win-win, win-lose, lose-win, lose-lose
  - Have students write a paragraph describing someone they know who is a model of win-win thinking.

**Week 8:** Habit 5: Seek First to Understand (listening/communication skills)

Eighth email to mentors: The importance of listening skills in the workplace

- see Week 8 in: [Project 4 – The Seven Habits.....](#) for activities, directions, and suggestions
- Have students include a statement similar to this in their email: This week we have learned more about communication skills. We took a listening self evaluation. I have set a goal for \_\_\_\_\_. What are ways that you have improved communication in the workplace? What communication tools do you find to be most helpful?
- Read and discuss pp 163-179
- [Listening Skits](#) Assign actor roles and have students act out a listening scenario. Have other students guess which it is.
- Have students write and perform their own Listen First Skits
- Have students complete the [Listening Self-Evaluation](#) and write about the results in their Journal or have them identify a negative trait they would like to improve.

### **Week 9: Habit 6: Synergize – learning to get along with others**

Ninth email to mentors: working with others

- see Week 9 in: [Project 4 – The Seven Habits.....](#) for activities, directions, and suggestions
- Introduce and talk about Power Point presentation, [Final Project](#).
- Read pp 181-189 Take the “Fruit Quiz” on page 189.
  - What are the strengths in your fruit category? What kinds of things would you need to work on? Do you feel this accurately reflects your perception of yourself?
- Take notes. Discuss (and write down) examples of synergy in nature, in our culture, and at school. (IEP meetings) How might synergy be important in the workplace? Give examples from jobs you have had.
- How does Synergy apply to decorating our door? In what way can we work together to plan something that looks good and yet represents everyone’s input?
  - (work on door decoration)
- Continue reading from 195-on. In your notes, write down the steps to “getting to synergy Action Plan” on p. 195.
- Complete worksheet: [Habit 6](#)
- If time on Friday, make a real fruit salad, eat it, and celebrate synergy!

### **Week 10: Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw**

Tenth email to mentors: How do you deal with stress or fatigue

- see Week 10 in: [Project 4 – The Seven Habits.....](#) for activities, directions, and suggestions
- Look at headings in Sharpen the Saw (page 206). Predict which ones are going to be more relevant for you.
- In notes, take one whole page, and make four squares. In each one write: Body, Brain, Heart, Soul. In each square, write what you currently do to take care of each.
- Start reading (taking turns) pp.201-215
  - Complete worksheet [Habit 7](#).
- Read pp 216-241

### **Week 11: (Optional. Can combine with week 10) Summarizing, Saying thank you and good bye.**

Final email to mentors: Saying Thank You.

- Review [How to Write a Thank You Note](#)
- Read to students *Keep Hope Alive* chapter
- Vocabulary test
- Each student shows their power point presentation