

Partnerships in Employment Systems Change Project

Overview

In 2011, 2012, and 2016, a total of 14 states were awarded the federal Administration on Disabilities Partnerships in Employment Project grant—*Alaska, California, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Iowa, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Missouri, New York, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, and Wisconsin*. The state projects were asked to develop a consortium of state agencies and other stakeholders, and develop systems changes that support the transition from school to employment or post-secondary education for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

On a semi-annual basis, the state grantees report on barriers, strategies, and outcomes reflective of the four objectives of the Partnerships in Employment Project to The Lewin Group as part of the systems change evaluation. The objectives include (1) developing or changing policies to support integrated employment; (2) removing systemic barriers to integrated employment; (3) building cross-system and cross-agency collaboration; and, (4) implementing strategies and exploring and scaling up promising practices to improve employment outcomes. This document presents project outcomes or accomplishments reported by the six active 2016 state grantees funded under the Partnerships in Employment Project.

These summaries were collected by The Lewin Group under Contract HHSP23320095639WC Task Order HHSP23337017T.

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date: September 2019 – February 2020

The tables below highlight the outcomes or accomplishments to date reported by the six active Partnerships in Employment (PIE) state grantees in February 2020—*District of Columbia, Hawaii, Kentucky, Massachusetts, South Carolina, and Utah*. State grantees were asked to describe outcomes to date related to the impact the PIE grant has made in their state to increase competitive integrated employment (CIE) opportunities for youth and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). Specifically, state grantees were asked to highlight what outcomes or accomplishments the state can attribute to the PIE grant and the PIE consortium or coalition. Since policy and systems change activities are not entirely isolated and other projects or initiatives may have contributed to these outcomes, state grantees listed other initiatives that the PIE grant leveraged to accomplish an outcome.

The Lewin Group summarized the state specific responses provided in the tables below.

District of Columbia—DC Learners and Earners (DC L&E)

Outcomes or Accomplishments Table

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
<p>1. Expanded opportunities for people with I/DD to become Direct Support Professionals (DSPs).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a results of the positive outcomes among youth cohorts, DC L&E staff expanded the DSP Academy with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) funding to include adults. • Over 77 percent of youth and young adults with I/DD who have completed the program have moved on to employment or postsecondary education/vocational training programs. • DC L&E used Charting the LifeCourse materials with the youth and adults with I/DD who are part of the DSP Academy to guide their trajectory toward employment. • DC L&E’s support for the expansion of the DSP Academy has created a career pathway for individuals District-wide and allowed for relationships to grow between the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) counselors and service providers. • DC L&E staff increased media coverage of the DSP Academy, which has also allowed for the Department on Disability Services (DDS) and RCM of Washington to develop relationships with agencies and organizations outside of DC. Media coverage included a Washington Post article, a BBC News video, and a feature in <i>Disability Scoop</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSA (VR) • DDS • RCM of Washington • DC L&E staff • Service providers • DC Public Schools (DCPS)
<p>2. Strengthened supports and services to create sustainable impacts and build cross-agency partnerships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The structure of the DC L&E consortium is designed so that DC L&E staff, often with DDS leadership, attend meetings of partners and stakeholders to ensure broad input and buy-in as policies are being developed (rather than holding an additional meeting). As a result, staff formed trusting relationships that supported their ability to keep issues related to employment on the agenda for partner meetings. • DC L&E added four new partner agencies to its consortium, all of whom are supporting current initiatives with DC L&E and/or supporting other stakeholders. New partners include A Wider Circle-DC, the Special Education Collaborative, the DC Association for Special Education (DCASE), and the Department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think College TA Center • RSA Transition Unit • DCPS • River Terrace Education Campus • St. Coletta of Greater Washington • A Wider Circle-DC • Special Education Cooperative • DCASE • Department of Adult and Family Education for OSSE • University of the District of Columbia

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
	<p>of Adult and Family Education for the Office of the Superintendent of Special Education (OSSE).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the Think College Program, DC L&E staff are using guidance from the Think College Technical Assistance (TA) Center as well as other states' agencies and institutions on how they implemented the Think College model to inform best practices. • DC L&E staff continued to partner with the RSA Transition Unit and their Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) partners to ensure RSA is involved in all project pilots and demonstrations to support sustainability post PIE funding. • The partnership with RSA and DCPS to deliver People Planning Together for Employment (PPTE) and Pre-ETS trainings will allow more youth to access the PPTE curriculum. The curriculum helps students develop person-centered transition plans, Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), and Individual Plans for Employment. Training is underway at River Terrace Education Campus and St. Coletta of Greater Washington with plans to expand into DCPS middle schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary Transition Community of Practice
<p>3. Developed inclusive technology-related employment opportunities for students with I/DD.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DC L&E staff pursued several initiatives and engagements, outlined below, specific to technology to support employment opportunities for high demand careers. Staff want to standardize technology to better support people living independently by giving them the tools to create their own employment opportunities. • DC L&E staff worked to designate DC as a Technology First state, meaning that technology is considered every time there is a planning meeting and leadership always considers ways in which technology can support employment. • The DDS-led Technology First Work Group, which DC L&E has participated in since March 2019, includes partners from various organizations and self-advocacy groups. The group meets monthly and discusses a variety of topics; for example, identifying any barriers to technology in waiver definitions. • DC L&E staff worked to develop and review a new technology-based curriculum with Palo Alto Networks, a cybersecurity company, for integration into DCPS. The training will be adapted so it is accessible for all students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology First Work Group • DDS State Office of Policy, Planning and Innovation • Palo Alto Networks • Project ACTION!

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<p>4. Supported development and implementation of Customized and Supported Employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DC L&E staff participate in an Employment Innovations Work Group, which focuses on employer engagement and Customized Employment. The work group considers policy changes, employer incentives, and skill development for DDS staff and providers. • DC L&E staff continued to develop the DC-specific Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) curriculum with a focus on Customized Employment. Staff met with subject matter experts, coordinated standard operation protocols, and identified ways to make the curriculum unique to DC while also making it useful for people providing Supported Employment services. For someone to become an ACRE trainer, they must have at least one successful Customized Employment placement. This new requirement comes as part of efforts to increase the skill level of trainers. • DC L&E also held a consultation meeting with Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC), funded by federal RSA, to ensure DC aligns its curriculum with the Essential Elements of Customized Employment, which highlight standards for Customized Employment best practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DDS • Employment Innovations Work Group • WINTAC • RSA

Challenges or Barriers Table

Challenges or Barriers
<p>1. Time is a consistent barrier when collaborating with and engaging consortium members and stakeholders. DC L&E staff faced challenges related to maximizing time in this reporting period specifically due to stakeholders’ prioritization of public hearings, the completion of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plan, and development of Home and Community Based Services (HCBS)-related policies, which limited time for other meetings and initiatives. DC L&E staff engaged members and other stakeholders by working with stakeholders on the WIOA State Plan and recording recommendations from public hearings to focus on in the future.</p>
<p>2. Coordination across agencies sometimes presents challenges for the DC L&E team. For example, the Think College Initiative Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)/Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) process is a challenge due to the number of agencies and organizations involved. Teams at DDS and OSSE are working to apply and understand best practices from past MOU/MOA agreements to mitigate this issue.</p>
<p>3. The DC L&E team faced challenges promoting sustainability and growth concurrently. DC L&E staff have had the opportunity to create and influence many projects and policies across the District, but want the work to continue to develop and improve over time. For example, staff worked to ensure that the models for PPTe and the DSP Academy were strong and replicable by partners to support both innovation and growth, which can be sustained after the PIE project is no longer funded.</p>

Hawaii—Jobs Now Partnership (JNP)

Outcomes or Accomplishments Table

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
<p>1. Established the Hawaii Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Account Work Group and educated agencies on Hawaii ABLE accounts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hawaii JNP established the Hawaii ABLE Account Work Group, which conducted presentations and provided educational material to the State Department of Budget and Finance and local banks on how to set up ABLE accounts. • The Hawaii ABLE Account Work Group worked with the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Council to research best practices implemented by consortia developing ABLE accounts in various states. • The Hawaii ABLE Account Work Group’s education and outreach led the Department of Budget and Finance to release a Request for Proposals to solicit proposals on implementing ABLE accounts in Hawaii. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Department of Budget and Finance • Local banks
<p>2. Expanded statewide trainings for families through Hawaii JNP’s State Family Engagement Center contract with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hawaii JNP, in collaboration with DVR, conducted ten Pre-ETS presentations, with an average of ten families in attendance at each event. Hawaii JNP presented at Department of Education (DOE) school campuses on Oahu and neighboring islands. The presentations also included a component on benefits education, the importance of self-advocacy, what self-advocacy entails, and self-advocacy role plays. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DVR • DOE schools
<p>3. Engaged pilot families through four workshops and one-on-one benefit consultations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hawaii JNP held two benefit planning workshops, one in September 2019 and another in October 2019. The two-part workshop was held to educate parents and students on various agencies and their provided benefits. Topics included Medicaid, Social Security, ABLE accounts, and Section 8 housing. The workshop was attended by about 75 people across two sessions. • Following the second benefits planning workshop, Hawaii JNP held one-on-one benefit consultations with six students and their families. The consultations were held between September 2019 and January 2020. • In December 2019, Hawaii JNP held a workshop on social skills led by a professor at the College of Education at the University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College of Education at the University of Hawaii at Manoa • Families • Pilot families and parents

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	<p>of Hawaii at Manoa. The professor is an expert on social skills and relationships for students with I/DD and presented on universal applicability of social skills from the workplace to peer and friend groups. The workshop was attended by about 40 people, of which ten were students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hawaii JNP held a workshop on IEPs titled “The Art of the Child-Centered IEP” in February 2020. One of the parents involved in the pilot program, who has a wealth of experience working with a variety of administrators and agencies across various states, presented the workshop on strategies parents can use to be collaborative advocates for their child’s education and how to utilize members of an IEP team to ensure goals are adhered to and met. One of the strategies suggested was to have the child be present in some capacity with a tool for parents to share their child’s photo and other information with the IEP team. About 15 people attended this workshop. 	
<p>4. Increased employer engagement by holding a Reverse Job Fair at the State Capitol.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In October 2019, Hawaii JNP held a Reverse Job Fair, an event where job seekers set up a booth and employers approach them to learn more about their skills, at the Hawaii State Capitol with 77 high school students with disabilities and 95 employers in attendance. It is estimated that three students gained employment as a result of the event. • Hawaii JNP promoted the Reverse Job Fair at the Oahu Quarterly Transition meeting in September 2019 and prioritized registration to high school students recommended by transition coordinators. • In addition to planning the Reverse Job Fair, Hawaii JNP helped deliver supplies to local high schools for students to assemble job boards, conducted outreach to employers, and increased employer awareness. • The Reverse Job Fair was featured on major news channels. • After the Reverse Job Fair, Hawaii JNP held debriefs and discussions on how to evaluate the impact of the Reverse Job Fair and are working on gathering data on the effectiveness of the Reverse Job Fair in helping students obtain jobs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local high schools • Employers • Students with I/DD • Transition coordinators

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
<p>5. Developed the Hawaii Transition Success Network Legislative Proposal, State Bill (SB) 3156.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hawaii JNP, pilot families, DOE educators and administrators, DVR, and DD Council agency professionals, and community partners collaborated to develop the Hawaii Transition Success Network Legislative Proposal, SB 3156. SB 3156 would provide funding for and establish statewide transition centers. Through the statewide transition centers, a statewide transition coordinator would be appointed to lead statewide advisory councils consisting of representatives from the complex area transition centers' advisory councils, community organizations, employers, families, and school personnel. District-level transition centers would also be established in each of the seven districts with one district-level coordinator overseeing the district transition centers. • In February 2020, Hawaii JNP held a hearing with the Human Services Committee. The Hawaii JNP team asked families to support the legislation by sharing it with their networks, providing online or in-person testimonies, and support letters. In addition, the Hawaii DOE's Assistant Superintendent overseeing the state's Student Support Services delivered testimony to voice support. • At the end of February 2020, the Ways and Means Committee held a hearing and the bill crossed to the Senate. The bill is currently on hold because of the legislature's indefinite recess due to COVID-19. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot families • DOE educators and administrators • DVR and DD Council agency professionals • Community partners • House Human Services Committee • DOE Assistant Superintendent • House Ways and Means Committee

Challenges or Barriers Table

Challenges or Barriers

1. Hawaii JNP experienced a lack of access to decision-makers, such as elected leaders and policy makers, while promoting employment for people with I/DD. This led to decision-makers receiving mixed messages or wrong messages and believing all agencies are still working in silos, or that employment for people with disabilities has not improved or cannot be improved. Hawaii JNP needs more access to decision-makers so they can communicate their message directly and offer tangible solutions. In the future, Hawaii JNP will show themselves as subject matter experts, which will give them speaking opportunities in front of decision-makers.
2. Hawaii JNP worked to promote legislation in the past, but found themselves learning about the legislative process very quickly while promoting the legislation. Hawaii JNP continued to communicate with parents regarding legislation, but could have spent more time educating parents rather than learning about the

Challenges or Barriers

legislative process. Hawaii JNP benefitted from having a close working relationship with the DD Council, which has historically been very involved in Hawaii's legislative process.

3. Hawaii JNP has not developed a training series or workshops for agency professionals or employers. Hawaii JNP has a training series and workshops available for students, families, and teachers, but has not conducted research on best practices for agencies and employers.
4. High turnover and staff changes at DOE caused one of Hawaii JNP's Executive Council members to be moved to a different division and another member to retire in February 2020. DVR has also experienced high turnover and staff changes. Additionally, there are staff shortages at other agencies. These challenges make it difficult for Hawaii JNP to pursue long-term strategies, but do have several core partners that they continue to work with.
5. Hawaii JNP has a lack of infrastructure for family engagement and does not have a systematic way to engage with families. To scale up family engagement, Hawaii JNP needs designated positions and funds to coordinate and carry out the family education component. Currently, Hawaii JNP tries many different approaches and determines what works in the moment. Sometimes, Hawaii JNP is unable to establish a contact with family members. The Hawaii Transition Success Network Legislative Proposal would create the infrastructure needed for family engagement. The Hawaii Transition Success Network Legislative Proposal also described the sustainability activities Hawaii JNP would like to continue after the grant, including transition centers statewide. The network addresses the infrastructure needs, which would have an impact after the PIE grant ends.
6. Hawaii JNP has not engaged in enhancing data systems because of institutional silos and concerns regarding privacy protection. For the Reverse Job Fair, Hawaii JNP could coordinate with employers and student participants to determine how many students have received call backs, interview requests, job offers from employers, and reasons why a job was or was not offered. Hawaii JNP could conduct a debrief session with select employers, students, and parents. Hawaii JNP could track this data by having a feedback form after the Reverse Job Fair, sending surveys to participants and employers, and sending another form three months after the Reverse Job Fair. Hawaii JNP will also ask other PIE grantees to share their processes and strategies for tracking data.

Kentucky—KentuckyWorks

Outcomes or Accomplishments Table

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
<p>1. Implemented the Transition Pilot to enhance transition supports and services for youth and young adults with I/DD.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KentuckyWorks, with support from the YES! Center, developed a Transition Pilot involving two Kentucky School Districts to shift focus from Pre-ETS provided through the Community Work Transition Project (CWTP) to structured transitions. • School staff, families, and employers have communicated the importance of beginning the transition process earlier in the students’ educational experience, which supported pilot site implementation. • The project has strong buy-in from the two counties participating thus far, Simpson and Montgomery Counties. KentuckyWorks staff conducted interviews with employers, families, and school staff in the two counties, which revealed observable changes in perspective (for employment outcomes). The transition model was embraced by school staff and stakeholders have reported positive feedback. • The KentuckyWorks team is working to expand the pilot project into the 105 school districts across the state where the CWTP is already being implemented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YES! Center • Montgomery County School District • Simpson County School District • CWTP • Local employers • Local VR counselors • Local families
<p>2. Conducted individual and focus group interviews and created resources to engage families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through pilot site engagement, KentuckyWorks staff held multiple conversations with families. Staff worked on-site at various schools within the Montgomery and Simpson Counties to engage families in conversations about their child’s employment interests, needs or gaps, and overall opportunities. Staff identified problem areas, understood students’ needs and goals, and challenged any negative perceptions that families had about competitive employment as a realistic outcome for their child. • KentuckyWorks staff also held calls with two focus groups comprised of families and self-advocates; one group focused on development skills for children ages 3-5 years old, and one group focused on youth and young adults ages 16-18 years old. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KentuckyWorks staff • Pilot site families • YES! Center

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the focus group calls, staff and participants brainstormed the most important actions parents and youth with disabilities can do at different stages to prepare for and achieve their employment goals, including tips for developing talents and skills at different ages. • KentuckyWorks staff also developed an online family engagement module to support better understanding of how to prepare young people for employment through the school years, create a vision statement, overcome challenges to employment, and develop relevant work skills. 	
<p>3. Addressed the issue of transportation as a mechanism for employment opportunities among youth and young adults with I/DD.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Transportation Subcommittee includes self-advocates, public transit staff, and school system staff, and aims to encourage a paradigm shift ensuring that families and school systems embrace transportation as a developmental milestone. • The subcommittee held four trainings with self-advocates for several audiences, including families, DSPs, Division of Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (DDID) providers, rehabilitation counselors, and Supported Employment specialists. Topics included the history of accessible transportation, stories of self-advocates, eligibility guidelines, transit options, educational tools, and advocacy resources. • The subcommittee created a website to serve as a space for comprehensive resource sharing on relevant transportation issues. The website has been universally designed for accessibility, including screen reading technology. Currently, 30 video module segments are available around the first three transportation topics—Medicaid non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Paratransit, and Ride Share options—with other topics currently under development, including driver training programs, vehicle modifications, Medicaid waiver transportation options, and public transit training. Training materials include video, text, and audio formats. • Subcommittee members provided technical assistance to individuals seeking transportation solutions, as well as to agency partners working with clients. The assistance included 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kentucky legislators • Employment First Council • Self-advocates • Public transit and paratransit staff • School system staff

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
	<p>support addressing transportation gaps/needs, initiating communications with public transit and paratransit services, making referrals for public transit training, and alleviating issues with local transportation providers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The subcommittee also met with several Kentucky senators and representatives to discuss transportation regulations and funding. Members of the team participated in statewide advocacy efforts. 	
<p>4. Strengthened cross-agency partnerships and collaboration to promote sustainability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The KentuckyWorks team has developed strong relationships with consortium agencies and staff have facilitated relationship-building among agencies. These collaborations supported sustainability for post-PIE funding. KentuckyWorks staff maintained relationships with DVR, DOE, the Protection and Advocacy (P&A) System, and the DD Council. Staff have also facilitated new relationships, including with the community college system, the Governor’s Office on Early Childhood, and the state’s Department for Medicaid Services (DMS). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VR DOE P&A System DD Council Community college system Governor’s Office on Early Childhood DMS Consortium work groups

Challenges or Barriers Table

Challenges or Barriers
<p>1. There was some difficulty finding a second district willing to serve as a pilot location for the Transition Pilot project. KentuckyWorks staff relied upon relationships built over the years to receive commitment from the second district.</p>
<p>2. A major challenge was related to attitudes towards employability. Families have been told that their child would not be able to work, and KentuckyWorks staff work to change that narrative so families can realistically envision employment for their child. This perspective change can be very challenging, but through conversations with parents at pilot meetings, staff can visibly see families’ change in viewpoint about their child’s future with employment.</p>
<p>3. Staff reported maintaining excitement and momentum of the Transition Pilot as a potential barrier, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. KentuckyWorks staff want to build a support structure among collaborators to promote continued implementation of the pilot with other school districts.</p>

Massachusetts—Massachusetts Partnership for Transition to Employment (MPTE)

Outcomes or Accomplishments Table

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
<p>1. Updated and disseminated the data dashboard.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPTE staff developed, updated, and shared the data dashboard. The dashboard is a user-friendly graphic display of data that shows the state’s progress on employment for youth with I/DD. • The dashboard includes various data points collected from a variety of disability-focused organizations across the state. • The MPTE team published the data dashboard on their website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPTE staff
<p>2. Continued development of the Workplace Skills Certificate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPTE continued development of the Workplace Skills Certificate, which serves as an alternative certificate for students who are unable to earn a high school diploma. The certificate was developed to serve as a catalyst for students with disabilities to create new pathways to employment, and integrate sustainable changes. The certificate is based on hours earned from work-based learning experiences. • Staff have worked on building momentum and support around the certificate, which they believe represents a well-stated case for improving employment outcomes, including providing similar examples from other states. • The state will be conducting an examination of graduation requirements in the near future, so the certificate is being developed at an opportune time to present to state leadership. The Massachusetts DOE already stated their support of this certificate, and MPTE staff are coordinating with the Associate Commissioner to garner more support. • MPTE staff met with the Department of Secondary and Secondary Education (DESE) to present the idea and provide information about the benefits the certificate may bring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Massachusetts DOE and Associate Commissioner • DESE • MPTE staff

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
<p>3. Strengthened partnerships with consortium agencies and development of interagency collaboration to promote sustainability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPTE staff received feedback from a variety of stakeholders that the consortium is a valuable way to disseminate information. Staff are getting more and more people who feel the consortium would be beneficial to them, so additional agencies and partners are continuously added. • The Steering Committee, the consortium’s leadership entity, plans to continue hosting meetings across agencies post-PIE funding. Staff believe that through these meetings, MPTE may continue existing in some form with a more specialized focus, especially given some consortium members work in similarly-aligned organizations. • By providing a forum for individuals to come together to learn, discuss, and develop solutions to common issues, MPTE improved interagency relationship building. Discussions and planning for continuation of an interagency task force post-PIE funding are ongoing. • MPTE staff also strengthened interagency efforts through creation of an online database of interagency transition teams in the state, an effort to create greater awareness of these teams. The database also encourages the development of additional teams in areas where they do not currently exist. • MPTE staff posted webinars on interagency models and approaches on their consortium webpage. • MPTE staff are considering a conference for fall 2021 on interagency work. Staff and partners discussed the training opportunity during the most recent consortium meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPTE leadership • MPTE consortium members
<p>4. Identified employment best practices through facilitation of a statewide survey of educators.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPTE conducted an online survey that went out to educators in Massachusetts on how they are currently using Supported Employment initiatives and their experiences in supporting work-based learning. There were about 150 responses that included valuable feedback and comments for the MPTE team. • The survey demonstrated a clear need for consistency of implementation of work experiences while individuals are in school. Many of the educators don’t have the resources they need; some are still doing school-based enterprises, and many cannot find employment opportunities for their students. The 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Massachusetts educators • MPTE staff

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
	<p>survey also identified and reinforced various promising practices to support students, such as dedicated transition personnel, development of individualized employment experiences, and employer partnerships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPTE staff compiled research that shows individuals with paid work experiences while in school are more likely to seek employment once they leave school. The survey findings show that students are not getting the initial paid work experience they need to succeed post-school. • Staff are hoping to initiate technical assistance and guidance based on their results, and then provide comprehensive findings to the state DOE. 	
<p>5. Engaged with families of youth and young adults with I/DD to support information sharing and employment planning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPTE staff are continuing to look at implementation of Charting the LifeCourse training materials to help students and families develop different visions for employment. • MPTE staff, with the Arc of Massachusetts (The Arc), presented at the Transition Conference in November 2019. The conference involved 300+ families and was based on the Charting the LifeCourse framework, especially on ways to encourage the framework’s use among families. • Staff continued to implement Charting the LifeCourse trainings and materials with families. Staff are developing programming called Ambassadors for the Charting the LifeCourse Framework. • MPTE collaborated with The Arc to support an ongoing webinar series that serves as a forum for parent and family engagement. • The consortium’s Family Work Group is developing a comprehensive training series for families with support from the YES! Center. • The MPTE Facebook group for families has reached over 1,300 members. MPTE staff share a variety of resources and other informative materials or announcements through the page. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPTE consortium agency members • The Arc

Challenges or Barriers Table

Challenges or Barriers

1. One challenge has been adjusting to changes in leadership with key partner agencies. There have been different leadership changes, including staff turnover at The Arc, but MPTE staff have worked to maintain strong relationships with a wide range of organizations and agencies.
2. There have been challenges related to coordination across consortium agencies as it relates to sustainability planning. MPTE staff are working to connect goals across key partners, link together ideas for sustainability, and create a more organized higher level structure to bring partners together post-PIE funding.

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South Carolina—South Carolina Employment First Initiative (SCEFI)

Outcomes or Accomplishments Table

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
<p>1. Improved SCEFI’s relationship with the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVRD).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCEFI engaged SCVRD as an active participant in the Advancing Capacity and Collaboration for Employment Support Services (ACCESS) grant. The ACCESS grant is a three-year partnership with two local DD providers to explore the barriers in the current waiver employment service delivery system and build provider capacity through the creation of a comprehensive, sustainable training structure for employment service providers. Griffin-Hammis will provide SCEFI with technical assistance to develop a pilot program focused on implementing Customized Employment principles with 20 to 30 adults with I/DD who have not been previously successful in Supported Employment. The initiative is building supports at the local level and is supported by state partners who will examine the data collected from the pilot and determine necessary changes. • Also through the ACCESS grant, SCEFI began to plan a 40-hour Customized Employment training for two DD providers and VR staff. The training is ACRE-approved and will be provided by Griffin-Hammis, WINTAC, and Smart Policy Works. SCEFI is looking into mentorship opportunities through Griffin-Hammis to ensure that, following the training, participants can apply the essential elements of Customized Employment. • By leveraging funding from SCVRD to fund the aforementioned training and technical assistance, SCEFI was able to show SCVRD the benefit of their involvement in the ACCESS grant. SCEFI also showed SCVRD clear ways they can be involved, such as attending quarterly meetings, connecting with the local provider to engage in pilot program activities, and participating in training and technical assistance from Griffin-Hammis. • SCEFI held calls with SCVRD, Department of Disabilities and Special Needs (DDSN), SC Department of Health and Human 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCVRD • Griffin-Hammis • WINTAC • Smart Policy Works • DD providers • DDSN • SC DHHS • CMS • CILs

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
	<p>Services (DHHS), WINTAC, and the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to discuss blending funding between SCVRD and DDSN. Since SCVRD has not been previously open to contracting with DDSN in South Carolina, this is progress towards strengthening relationships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By expanding the Center for Independent Living (CIL) partnership with SCVRD through the ACCESS grant, SCEFI has expanded its reach and services for people with disabilities. This will assist SCEFI with pursuing sustainability for PIE activities after funding ends. Since the relationship with SCVRD has improved, SCEFI’s ability to involve SCVRD in additional projects and leverage funding has improved as well. SCVRD’s increased involvement improves the sustainability of PIE grant activities and other employment initiatives. 	
<p>2. Increased availability and awareness of Career and Technical Education/Special Education (CTE/SPED) resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a result of a survey that SCEFI distributed during the March to April 2019 reporting period, SCEFI partnered with Spartanburg District One and Two to create a three-part video series on how the school districts integrated non-diploma track students with I/DD into their CTE programs. SCEFI released the video series on the Hire Me SC website and shared the video series on the Hire Me SC social media outlets, with members of the South Carolina Disability Employment Coalition (SCDEC), and with the SCEFI consortium agencies. SCEFI presented on the CTE/SPED collaboration with the transition coordinator at Spartanburg Two at an annual, statewide transition conference in November 2019 and at Able SC’s transition conference in February 2020. SCEFI submitted a proposal to present at the annual, statewide CTE conference in South Carolina in June 2020. SCEFI partnered with Spartanburg School District One and Two to create a guide for educators on how to include students with disabilities in CTE programs. The guide features information on beginning steps, training for CTE and SPED teachers, overcoming barriers, sampling of accommodations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spartanburg School District One and Two

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
	<p>students used, navigating safety concerns, and sharing student success stories. The guide is available publicly and staff have shared the resource at various conferences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a result of sharing these resources, SCEFI learned that many educators and other professionals were unaware of non-diploma track students with I/DD being included in CTE courses. SCEFI has been diligent in connecting with school districts that are implementing CTE programs and working with them to create guides to help other school districts create similar programs. SCEFI has also seen barriers start to break down and expectations starting to change. SCEFI's strategy for achieving this outcome has been to show how a CTE/SPED collaboration is possible through partnering with local school districts who are pursuing this work. 	
<p>3. Improved rapport with consortium partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCEFI partnered with WINTAC, Youth-Technical Assistance Center (Y-TAC), and a subject matter expert from MBM Advantage to conduct systems process mapping and improve the state's current employment services system. SCEFI conducted systems process mapping with SCVRD, SC Department of Employment and Workforce Services (DEW), Commission for the Blind, DDSN, DOE, and Department of Mental Health. Each of these agencies worked in groups with other committee members to create a map on how individuals move through their process of employment services, while identifying barriers that individuals may face and collaboration with other agencies. The information was presented to and reviewed by the larger Infrastructure Committee at the September 2019 meeting. Several partners had to openly address their barriers during the systems mapping, which led to more open and honest communication in meetings. The systems mapping process has had overall positive effect on SCEFI's relationships with partners. SCEFI has seen an increase in participation and engagement among key agencies, such as the SCVRD and the SC DDSN, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WINTAC Y-TAC MBM Advantage SCVRD DEW Commission for the Blind DDSN DOE DMH

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
	<p>since SCEFI began the process of systems mapping and receiving technical assistance from WINTAC and Y-TAC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCEFI has created credibility among partners and brought technical assistance from WINTAC and YTAC. These initiatives have improved relationships with partners. SCEFI is able to have more open, honest communication in meetings. 	
<p>4. Improved data collection from pilot sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCEFI utilized some of the changes created for the SCEFI pilot sites, which included color-coding students by grade level and using those colors to identify each student’s flow of services for each pilot. This format has allowed for an additional measure to track student progress and objectively identify where they may have discrepancies. Since the local partners developed the flow of services for their individual site, they have more input in what is feasible and provides a dialogue for action steps. • SCEFI continued to work with pilot sites, local school districts, and local partners to collect monthly data related to students’ work experiences, involvement in SCVRD/DDSN services, participation in Pre-ETS, and involvement in CTE programs. • SCEFI presented pilot site data for the 2019 to 2020 school year to the Transition to Careers Committee and will be presenting it to the pilot sites during the March 2020 meetings. SCEFI previously gave pilot sites aggregate data from all sites but will be presenting individual data for each site to help sites identify their strengths and weaknesses in comparison to other sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCVRD • DDSN • Transition to Careers Committee • Pilot participants • School districts
<p>5. 13 students participated in paid, community-based work experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCEFI created two new pilot sites for the 2019 to 2020 school year. SCEFI experienced delays while working to confirm a pilot site in Greenville School District, one of the largest school districts in the country. The first pilot meeting for Greenville was held in January 2020. SCEFI is actively engaging them to catch them up to the other pilot sites. SCEFI was unable to secure a pilot site in another school district because they backed out in September 2019, but SCEFI reached out to the SC DOE who suggested Florence Three School District. SCEFI held the first pilot meeting with Florence Three School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School districts • Pilot participants

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
	<p>District in November 2019. As of February 2020, there are six pilot sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In four of the five school districts, 13 students participated in paid, community-based work experiences. Cumulatively, 62 students have gained community-based work experiences. There are 136 students involved at all pilot sites, including Greenville. During the 2018 to 2019 school year, 24 students exited high school, of which four students were competitively employed at high school exit and eleven students were enrolled in post-secondary education or training. This represents successful outcomes for approximately 63 percent of exiting students. 	

Challenges or Barriers Table

Challenges or Barriers

1. SCVRD and DDSN began conversations about blending and braiding funding, there is still a lot of work to be accomplished to create large systematic changes. It is likely that even if an agreement to blend and braid funding is made, it could be a few years before the funding change is implemented or has an impact on employment systems. Although systems do not change as quickly as SCEFI would like, SCEFI continually reflects on the progress that has been made through the PIE grant and continues to advocate for systems change.
2. SCEFI faced several delays this year creating two additional pilot sites. SCEFI initially planned to work with Greenville County School District and Oconee County School District. Although SCEFI approached Greenville County School District in March 2019, they are one of the largest school districts in South Carolina so there was a lot of bureaucracy to navigate before receiving a confirmation to hold the pilot site. The first pilot meeting for Greenville was held in January 2020. SCEFI is actively engaging Greenville as much as possible. SCEFI was unable to secure Oconee County School District as a pilot site because they backed out in September 2019, but SCEFI reached out to SC DOE who suggested Florence Three School District. SCEFI held the first pilot meeting with Florence Three in November 2019 and they have since been very invested in the pilot program.
3. SCEFI experienced difficulties implementing the employer email campaign as the email platform was not able to send out consecutive monthly emails. SCEFI reached out to the platform to troubleshoot the issue and developed a resolution plan. However, SCEFI has to manually create the e-blast monthly. The consecutive emails were supposed to be sent monthly in a particular order regardless of when someone signed up for the email list. This way, employers who signed up halfway through still had access to the content of the email series. Unfortunately, SCEFI still has to manually create the emails monthly so they are sent out in a timely manner.

Challenges or Barriers

4. SCEFI recently saw a decrease in engagement from Advisory Committee members. SCEFI previously had great participation for this group of eight self-advocates interested in employment rights for people with disabilities. Several members gained employment, which is a reason for their unavailability. SCEFI is looking at ways to engage other members by reaching out to them specifically and changing meeting dates and times accordingly. Self-advocates are still active in SCDEC.
5. As SCEFI developed the CTE/SPED guide for educators, SCEFI wanted to include resources and advice from different school districts implementing inclusive services, not just Spartanburg One and Two. SCEFI did not want to release the guide with the CTE/SPED videos that were created, so SCEFI was unable to include other districts at the time. However, SCEFI is seeking input from other districts so this guide can evolve and SCEFI can feature different ideas and strategies from a variety of districts.
6. Some of the disability benefits and employment workshops were not as well attended as they have previously been. Several workshops took additional time to schedule and plan the venue, date, and confirm with all partners. SCEFI has found that they need to continue to account for additional time to organize logistics when planning these workshops. SCEFI has created a checklist of steps when organizing the workshops and have increased time frames to plan details. SCEFI hopes that more structure will allow them to stay on track and devote sufficient time to outreach.
7. South Carolina's P&A organization was facing decreases in some of their funding streams that allow presentations at the disability benefits and employment workshops. Since P&A is a major partner in those workshops, SCEFI worried about what those workshops would look like moving forward. Since SCEFI knew there was an overlap in P&A's presentation and the CWIC's presentation, SCEFI's resolution was to pare down P&A's presentation so they had less responsibility during the workshops and could have an entry level staff member attend. This allowed P&A to still be a major partner with SCEFI during these workshops while also providing more concise information to participants.
8. SCEFI's contact at DEW regarding the Capacity Building expansion proposal left SC DEW. In addition, DEW is experiencing high priority needs due to COVID-19. SCEFI is unsure if the expansion initiative will be approved. Current funding and activities end June 30, 2020. SCEFI continues to make plans for the expansion in the hopes that it is approved, and Able SC's Executive Director has been diligent about following up with SC DEW. SCEFI hopes to receive an update from DEW soon as it will allow SCEFI to establish relationships with local American Job Centers statewide and form deeper relationships with the centers with whom SCEFI already has connections.

Utah—Utah School to Work Interagency Transition Initiative

Outcomes or Accomplishments Table

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
<p>1. Supported legislative change to support employment for individuals with I/DD.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department of Workforce Services (DWS) changed the policy to waive the requirement that all individuals seeking services take a Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) assessment on the computer. Results of the assessment had no impact on a person’s eligibility to receive services and was a significant barrier for many students with significant disabilities who wished to be enrolled in WIOA services. School to Work teams were struggling to assist students through this unnecessary process. Because of advocacy from local and state level WIOA Youth Service Coordinators, a waiver was developed for students in the School to Work project and others with significant disabilities to not take the TABE assessment. • USWITI leadership worked with provider agencies and agency staff to support new and updated employment services within the HCBS waiver. Additionally, legislation to fund a limited supports waiver that includes employment services received input and recommendations from USWITI leadership. • USWITI and the TA Center supported the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation (USOR) to implement policy changes to allow for a separate one-day training for job coaches only. This enhances the capacity within the provider system, which enables students to access long-term coaching and allow Customized Employment specialists to prioritize providing Discovery and customized job development. It may take some time for the policy changes to impact the provider system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DWS • School to Work teams • WIOA Youth Service Coordinators • Provider agencies • Utah State Office of Rehabilitation • Utah State University Technical Assistance Center • DD Council • USOR

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
<p>2. Seven students gained employment through the School to Work pilot sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USWITI continued to provide technical assistance and training to all School to Work pilot sites through both virtual assistance and on-site visits through subject matter experts. There were 11 on-site visits and 203 people were trained through on-site visits. Cumulatively, 21 students have gained employment and eight participated in paid work experiences. • USWITI project leadership met with directors and leadership of several adult service provider agencies to discuss the benefits and value of coordinated services for transition age youth through the School to Work pilot. There are now three additional provider agencies providing Customized Employment services to students participating in School to Work pilot sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult service provider agencies • School to Work pilot sites
<p>3. Increased engagement of self-advocates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USWITI partnered with the Utah DD Council and other community partners to attend Take Your Legislator to Work Day at the Utah State Capitol during the legislative session. Self-advocates and family members were able to participate in a legislative training, take a tour of the Capitol, hear legislative priorities from agencies and self-advocates, and participate in a reception with legislators. Self-advocates were able to talk one-on-one or in groups with legislators about priorities and disability-related issues. • As part of the November 2019 Community of Practice, USWITI featured two presenters from the Advocates as Leaders Self-Advocacy Speakers Network, which is a group of trained speakers with I/DD that focus on providing information and experiences related to disability issues. The two self-advocates presented information on raising expectations. This presentation also let pilot sites know how to schedule self-advocate speakers to give trainings at their pilot sites. • USWITI presented at the TASH Conference in December 2020 on supporting students with significant disabilities to be successfully employed before leaving school. A self-advocate and family member presented with USWITI, which has been a goal of USWITI to include self-advocates in more presentations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DD Council • Self-advocates • Advocates as Leaders Self-Advocacy Speakers Network

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
<p>4. Promoted collaboration between School to Work pilot sites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USWITI held a Community of Practice in November 2019 for team members at all School to Work pilot sites. The Community of Practice included a presentation from a subject matter expert on assistive technology, digital self-determination, employment, and resumes, as well as a presentation from Advocates as Leaders Speakers Network on raising expectations. A team of evaluators conducted a survey and convened focus groups to gather data. A representative from the Utah Parent Center and the Utah Department of Health shared information on HCBS. Participants gathered in groups of shared roles to discuss topics of interest, including “Assistive Technology: Asking the Right Questions”, “Life After School”, “Strengthening Self Advocacy in Post High Services”, and “Customized Job Development: How do we use it best?” There were 36 people in attendance at the Community of Practice. • At the Community of Practice held in November 2019, USWITI distributed post-event surveys and held three focus groups for gathering more in-depth information. The results of this survey have served as a guide to project leadership as they plan trainings and assess technical assistance needs as well as make adjustments to improve the overall value and effectiveness of the School to Work project. Ninety-one percent of respondents indicated that they are using the Student Tracker and 93 percent considered the Student Tracker to be useful or very useful. Focus group participants mentioned that clarifying the types of training and technical assistance through table-talks was the most helpful. According to participants, the best aspects of the Utah School to Work initiative include receiving assistance from the technical assistance center and participating in team activities. The providers valued the collaboration and partnerships created by the School to Work initiative between and among DWS, VR, school personnel, private providers, school administrators, and support coordinators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School to Work pilot sites • Utah Parent Center • Utah Department of Health

Outcomes or Accomplishments to Date	Key Strategies or Elements that Made this Successful	Leveraged PIE with Other Initiative(s) or Relationship(s)
<p>5. Supported the sustainability of School to Work promising practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USWITI leadership worked on the development of a toolkit that will act as a how-to guide for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to implement best practices and key principles of the School to Work project. The toolkit will include tools that are currently used in project demonstration sites, such as the Student Tracking Form, Continuous Quality Improvement Review Tool, and an overview of agencies to partner with on a local level to coordinate employment services for transition age students. This toolkit will ensure that School to Work best practices can continue to be implemented after PIE funding ends. • USWITI worked with stakeholders to identify a legislative champion to continue the recommendations from the legislative interim study completed in August 2018. Another request took priority over the transition efforts. USWITI has strengthened its relationship with the provider association and as soon as the legislative session is completed, USWITI will have an outline of what is needed to sustain and expand the necessary coordinated services that the School to Work project has put into place. • USWITI applied for the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) Field Initiated Projects Program to develop and pilot test Customized Employment transition model program to promote CIE outcomes for 18 to 21 year-old students with significant disabilities. If awarded, this funding will continue School to Work objectives after the PIE grant ends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consortium agencies • Legislative stakeholders • Pilot sites

Challenges or Barriers Table

Challenges or Barriers

1. The challenge of the Customized Employment reimbursement rate continues to be a barrier to the expansion of the School to Work project. Some Supported Employment policy changes have been positive, but the Customized Employment policies are not yet modified. The prioritization of these services continues to be a challenge. Parents and job seekers are contacting the P&A organization and the Utah Parent Center about the inability to access Customized Employment services. The School to Work project manager has met with several provider agencies to recruit new providers and employment specialists to work with students. This has been successful in several of the sites, but USWITI still faces the challenge of turnover and staff dedicated to providing Customized Employment services. PIE leadership has been informed that updated Customized Employment policies and rates will be in place in 2020. Additionally, the United States Department of Justice visited Utah at the end of February 2020 and targeted several provider agencies offering sheltered work and facility-based day services. This visit heightened the importance of employment and inclusion within the provider community.
2. The Utah State University TA Center lost funding due to a budget deficit and dissolved as of February 2020. The loss of funding for the Utah State University Technical Assistance Center presents new challenges for funding opportunities. The TA Center's HCBS project has ultimately closed, although the TA Center HCBS project staff are still facilitating Community of Practices with the providers involved in the project and the HCBS subject matter experts (SMEs). Providers will still be meeting with the HCBS SMEs to update goals and objectives and assist with reporting and data collection. The TA Center also housed other projects and the staff are still involved in other projects that support the providers in the HCBS project that mainly deal with employment supports, such as the School to Work project, ACRE training for employment specialists, and workplace supports training for job coaches. The TA Center has now been renamed as "The Center for Employment and Inclusion".
3. The Jordan School District pilot site is currently not active. School personnel have chosen to not enroll new students and do not want to participate in PIE activities or receive technical assistance from USWITI or subject matter experts. The pilot site has a new principal who did not feel she could require staff to participate. Pilot leadership is staying in contact with the new principal and the district transition coordinator who will pursue reactivating the site after the 2019 to 2020 school year.