This newsletter issue focuses on educating the handicapped to enter the world of work. Topics addressed include legislation, assessment of vocational education programs, transitional services, employment programs, and job separation. The feature article describes provisions of the 1984 Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act (Public Law 98-524), which seeks to assure equal access to quality vocational education programs and to provide the necessary special services to enhance the participation of special needs students. Fiscal provisions, required information dissemination to students, equal access assurances, and service delivery provisions of the Act are described. Additional sections discuss a published research study examining the reasons for 107 job separations by mildly mentally retarded persons and summarize three current citations addressing school-to-work transition for severely disabled persons, competitive employment programs, and the role of social competence in the community adjustment of developmentally disabled persons. Videocassette programs, courseware, and instructional materials are also reviewed. Descriptions in the area of assessment include a cooperative vocational-technical program entitled Assessment Remediation and Mainstreaming, as well as a transitional vocational assessment model. (JW)
[Educating the Handicapped to Enter the World of Work]

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THE CARL D. PERKINS VOCATIONAL EDUCATION ACT

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Public Law 98-524, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act, was passed in October, 1984, and represents the third major set of amendments to the original Vocational Education Act of 1963. A dominant theme appearing throughout the Perkins Act is the emphasis upon educating traditionally underrepresented groups in regular vocational education programs. More specifically, this Act seeks to ensure equal access to quality vocational education programs and to provide the necessary special services to enhance the participation of special needs youth and adults. Numerous provisions for special needs groups appear in each of the Act's five titles, from representation on the State Council [Section 112 (a)] to the establishment of a research priority (Title IV, Part A).

This paper will discuss several of the major themes that appear in the Perkins Act (hereafter referred to as "the Act") which affect the nature and quality of services to students with handicaps at the secondary level. It should be remembered that most of these provisions affect other targeted groups such as academically and economically disadvantaged students, youth who are incarcerated, and students who are in programs which are non-traditional in terms of sex-role stereotyping. However, the discussion in this paper will be limited to the potential impact of four major provisions on students with handicaps only: fiscal provisions, information dissemination, equal access assurances, and service delivery provisions.

Fiscal Provisions

Similar to the previous amendments, the Act contains several fiscal provisions which are designed to guarantee that dollars are available to support programming for students with handicaps in regular vocational education classes, and to shape the manner in which that programming is delivered. These provisions are the 10% set-aside, the matching requirement, and the excess cost requirement.

10% Set-Aside

Each state is required under Section 202 of the Act to spend 10% of its federal vocational education dollars on programs and services for students with handicaps in vocational education. None of these dollars may be spent for state administrative costs; they must all be spent on local programs. Similarly, a federally prescribed funding formula must be used by the state to determine how much each approved local vocational program may receive of these 10% set-aside dollars.

Thus, for example, if the state of Pennsylvania receives $10 million in federal vocational education basic grant dollars, $1 million must be distributed through a federally prescribed formula to every approved local program. This assures that no local vocational education program will be without some measure of assistance in its effort to provide supportive services for handicapped students in vocational education programs.

Matching Requirement

Each state must guarantee, under Section 502 (a)(3)(A) and (b) of the Act that the 10% set-aside dollars discussed above are matched dollar for dollar from local and state sources. The intent of this requirement is that these matching dollars should come from local resources, but the state may come up with the match if a local school district is unable to do so. This provision, in effect, doubles the monetary impact of the federal legislation. Hence, in our Pennsylvania example above, the $1 million in federal set-aside dollars would be matched with at least $1 million in state/local dollars, assuring $2 million to be spent at the local level on programs and services for students with handicaps in vocational education programs.

The Excess Cost Requirement

In addition to the matching requirement, the 10% federal set-aside dollars may only be spent on the costs of specialized programs and services which are necessary to support handicapped students in vocational programs. Specifically, Section 201(c)(1) of the Act states:

Each state shall use the portion of its allotment for handicapped individuals only for expenditures limited to supplemental or additional staff, equipment, materials, and services provided to other individuals in vocational education that are essential for handicapped individuals to...
participate in vocational education. If the conditions of handicapped students require a separate program, each state may use such funds for costs which exceed the average per pupil expenditures for regular services and activities.

Thus, lawmakers are clearly signalling state and local administrators that these set-aside dollars should only be used to fund the necessary supportive services which students with handicaps need to succeed in regular vocational education. Similarly, segregated vocational programs may not be funded entirely with set-aside dollars.

Information Dissemination

Another important provision of the Act is contained in Section 204(b) and requires that each local vocational education program which receives federal set-aside dollars must provide handicapped students and their parents with information about opportunities available in vocational education at least one year prior to the grade level when such vocational education is typically available, or no later than the beginning of the ninth grade. In addition, this information must include any eligibility requirements for enrollment in vocational education programs.

The impact of this requirement means that students with handicaps and their parents will not be uninformed about what the vocational education options are in their district, and they will have a clear idea about any minimum eligibility competencies associated with those options. A variety of strategies have been implemented around the country to comply with this mandate, but the one used most frequently is to communicate such information at annual review IEP meetings in the eighth or ninth grades.

Equal Access Assurances

Along with dollars for programs and services, and a mandate for providing information about vocational education options, the Act contains many assurances that equal access will be available for students with handicaps. For example, the second of nine statements of purpose for the Act assures "access to quality vocational education programs, especially for individuals who are handicapped" [Section 2(2)]. More specifically, Section 204(a) assures equal access in recruitment, enrollment, and placement activities, along with equal access to the full range of regular vocational education programs, including occupationally specific courses of study, cooperative education, and apprenticeship programs.

Service Delivery Provisions

Perhaps the most important provisions in the Act for students with handicaps are the four service delivery provisions contained in Section 204(c). These services must be provided to each handicapped student who enrolls in a vocational education program, and include assessment activities, the provision of specialized services, guidance and career development activities, and counseling for transition.

Assessment Activities

Each handicapped student must receive an assessment of his/her interests, abilities, and special needs with respect to completing successfully his/her vocational education program. The implication here is to provide for an assessment that is directly related to the curricular expectations of the vocational education program, and one that will determine the nature and intensity of instructional delivery.

Special Services

Once an assessment has been completed, special services (i.e., adaptation of curriculum, instruction, equipment, and facilities) must be provided to assure success in the vocational education program. These services must be provided in accordance with the IEP requirements of special education law, and must be planned and coordinated between appropriate representatives of vocational and special education [Section 204(a)(3)(B)].

Guidance and Career Development Activities

This third provision requires that handicapped students enrolled in vocational programs receive guidance, counseling, and career development activities, which must be conducted by professionally trained counselors. These types of activities might include career exploration and career counseling, focused occupational assessment activities, and perhaps some generalized social/vocational survival skills training.

Counseling for Transition

The last provision requires that students receive counseling services to facilitate the transition from school to work. Services appropriate for this mandate would include job seeking skills training, connection with generic and specialized adult services such as job services or vocational rehabilitation, and job placement, training, and follow-along services.

Summary

The Perkins Vocational Education Act is a dynamic and forward-thinking piece of legislation reflecting the promise that vocational education holds for handicapped students at the secondary level. It contains fiscal, equal access, and, for the first time, information and service delivery mandates which can help to assure access to and success in regular vocational programs for students with widely varying handicapping conditions. The manner in which its initiatives are prescribed clearly suggests concern by the vocational education community, not only for increased access to vocational opportunities, but for increased quality as well. The fulfillment of its vision is in the hands of state and local administrators, and professionals in the field.

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Study Examines Reasons for Job Separation

The rehabilitation community is currently exhibiting increased interest in competitive employment of persons who are mentally retarded, including an examination of our own rates of job placement, retention time, and causes of eventual job loss. Among previously employed persons with mental retardation, four basic categories of job separation have been identified: resignations, terminations (firings), layoffs, and official leaves of absence. If job placement professionals are able to determine the cause of a job separation, replacement of the employee may be greatly enhanced.

This 6-year study examined 107 job separations for which clear reasons for the job loss could be identified from client or job trainer records. Primary reasons were separated into three "internal" causes attributable to the employee (skill deficits, attitudinal problems, interfering behavior) and four "external" factors not
under the employee's control (economic lay-offs, parental interference, negative social reactions and "other" external causes). The greatest number of separations (26%) was attributed to employee attitude problems. This group had the highest mean IQ. The second major cause (17.7%) was external negative social employer/co-worker attitudes. Employee work skill deficits was the third major cause (14%) and the four major cause (13%) was legitimate economic layoffs due to down-turns in the business cycle. The fifth most common cause (10%) was employee interfering behavior while 10% of the separations were attributable to "other" external forces. The least frequent cause (4%) was parental interference. Half of the separations (individuals with IQs higher than 50) were a result of internal employee actions and half (persons with IQs in the mid 40s) to external environmental actions.

These data indicate that mildly retarded persons may cause their own job separations due to skill or behavioral attitudinal deficits. They may be helped the most by being provided with systematic job skill training and assistance in developing appropriate work attitudes. Persons with more severe mental retardation are more at the mercy of external. Economic downturns and parental interference. They may be more effectively helped by onsite advocacy and behavior training as well as more effective support services outside the job site.


McCarthy, P., et al. (Eds.) School to Work Transition for Youth with Severe Disabilities. Project Transition Into Employment Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, School of Educa- tion Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA 23284-0001. 1985 218 p. $11 00. In keeping with the recent surge of interest regarding the transition of persons with disabilities into integrated adult life, the focus of this monograph is on the process which assures a smooth transition without a gap in services after school. This process involves developing, selecting and implementing meaningful work; addressing residential and recreational options; and requiring professionals and parents to redefine responsibilities of school and adult service providers to promote interagency collaboration in order to avoid gaps in and duplication of services.

This total process is discussed in four sections which deal with the issues involved in the process: the transition from school to employment, employment training in schools, and supported employment. In a chapter on "Strategies for Vocational Preparation of Students with Severe Disabilities" administrative concerns such as staffing, transportation, liability, and costs related to the provision of community-based training are addressed and solutions are offered. In "Supported Competitive Employment for Persons with Severe Disabilities," Paul Wehman presents an overview of several issues related to supported competitive employment. Topics covered offer direction to employment services designed for persons who are severely disabled.

Rusch, Frank R. (Ed.) Competitive Employment Programs. Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., P.O. Box 10624, Baltimore, MD 21285. 1986. 363 p. This volume has been developed to provide a forum for research review in the human services fields which is related to employment services for individuals with handicaps and disabilities. This body of research data offers a variety of effective solutions to employment-related problems. The primary emphasis of this text is on issues and strategies in competitive employment. Section I covers the concept of competitive employment programs including the existing obstacles to the adoption of this approach, models that reduce these obstacles and supported employment. Section II describes methods of service delivery, coordination, analysis of work behavior, identification of potential jobs, curriculum development and a long term follow-up program. Finally, in Section III, contemporary issues related to competitive employment are addressed. These topics include developing support networks for individuals who fail to achieve competitive employment, benefits and policy alternatives to mental retardation services in sheltered workshops, and teaching valued social behaviors.

Walker, H. M. and Carl F. Calkins. The Role of Social Competence in the Community Adjustment of Persons with Developmental Disabilities: Processes and Outcomes. Remedial and Special Education. 1986. 7:6. pp 48-53. Thousands of handicapped and disabled persons have been exposed to physically less restrictive environments through the parallel movements of deinstitutionalization and mainstreaming. However, this exposure has highlighted the adjustment problems that are inherent to such major transitions and changes in lifestyles. Walker and Calkins review literature and professional practices which affect the community adjustment of the developmentally disabled citizen and explore the role of social competence in determining satisfactory adjustments to community-based vocational and residential settings.

Calkins identifies three interrelated forms of adjustment that are of utmost importance to the community adaptation of developmentally disabled persons. Behavioral adjustment refers to conforming to the social and behavioral norms and expectations of the environment. Social adjustment means the ability to initiate and maintain positive relationships and affiliations. Personal adjustment refers to the ability to manage life effectively and independently through the acquisition of daily living and community living skills. Further defining and operationalizing these three types of adjustments should be a leading priority in the transition planning of developmentally disabled individuals.

The authors advocate a behavioral-ecological approach to transition in which the emphasis is placed on the fit between the person and the environment and is followed through in the assessment, programming, and habilitation strategies that are directed toward improving the adjustment capability of developmentally disabled citizens within community settings. This approach can be used as a framework for identifying and assessing skills and competencies that are required in target community settings, determining the client's proficiency in these skills, and eliminating discrepancies between the two.

The exposure of developmentally disabled individuals to normalized environments does not automatically lead to increased social-behavioral competence or to a socially less restrictive placement. Clients must be directly taught the important skills and competencies necessary for a successful adjustment. Environments must be structured so the developmentally disabled individual has a chance to use and master new skills and competencies and support ecological strategies must be provided for continuing success and growth.
Exemplary Vocational-Technical Program Initiated

A cooperative program for meeting the vocational education needs of handicapped learners, entitled Assessment Remediation and Mainstreaming (A.R.M.), is being piloted at the Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School. The program is under the direction of William Moore, A.R.M. Program Specialist at the School and is funded through the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act. It is administered through the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Bureau of Vocational and Adult Education Exemplary Vocational Education Program.

A.R.M. was initiated in the 1984-85 school year, which was a planning year for the program. Implementation occurred during the following year, and the 1986-87 school year provided for continued development and refinement of services.

During the first year of the program the focus was on identifying exceptional learners gathering information on their needs within the Vocational-Technical School setting, and formulating approaches that would best meet these needs. It soon became evident how beneficial this type of collaboration among the service providers can be in providing for special needs learners in vocational training programs.

Expansion of the program during its second phase provided multi-faceted assessment and remediation of basic vocational skills for all entering special education students. It also implemented a system of support services that includes assistance in note-taking, study skills, test taking, coaching on manual tasks, special counseling, specially supervised cooperative work experience and coordinated referral to rehabilitation services.

The program is coordinated by William Moore, an Appalachia Intermediate Unit Program Specialist, who helps ensure that all eligible students at the Vo-Tech are identified and that services are delivered to them as needed. He also coordinates the initial vocational preference survey provided by the Vo-Tech for 9th grade handicapped learners from participating school districts. By using the Singer Vocational Evaluation System at the Vo-Tech, 9th grade students are given the opportunity to gain a general appreciation of their interests and aptitudes. This information helps them choose an appropriate vocational training program.

Specifically, the A.R.M. system employs the services of two vocational evaluators, two certified vocational instructors, two teacher aides and a special guidance staff. In many ways, A.R.M. functions along the lines of the Special Education Resource Room. For example, if an exceptional learner has difficulty in a shop program, the shop teacher simply contacts the A.R.M. program through a referral form. A meeting between an A.R.M. staff member and the teacher establishes what is needed for remediation of the problem. The Student is then counseled and scheduled into the A.R.M. program. The system uses a diagnostic prescriptive approach familiar to that of Special Education. The goal of the system is to maximize mainstreaming for the maximum number of students possible.

Funding is available for A.R.M. consultation and replication services to local districts and Vo-Tech schools interested in implementing this model. A ten-minute videotape about the program is available for distribution by contacting William Moore, A.R.M. Program Specialist, Altoona Area Vocational-Technical School, 1500 Fourth Ave., Altoona, PA 16603. (814)945-8450.
Cobb and Danehey's journal article, *Transitional Vocational Assessment*, addresses the need for transitional services to ensure the successful movement of disabled students from school to labor force (or to postsecondary school). It does so by describing the attributes and elements of an effective vocational assessment model. According to the authors, transitional assessment is characterized by 1) a vocational orientation, 2) comprehensive and continuous assessment, 3) an individualized focus, 4) contemporary design (having implications for program planning and implementation), and 5) informal instrumentation such as observations, interviews, and anecdotal records. Specifically, their model consists of three elements, analogous to those of special education assessment: 1) planning, 2) placement planning, 3) monitoring/evaluation.

Screening is intended to determine the type of special services, if any, required for successful transition, and should result in the development of an Individualized Transitional Plan (ITP). Time limited services, for example, consist of short term assistance, whereas ongoing services might continue for as long as an individual is employed. Screening is followed by placement planning, which attempts to match individual client needs with community agencies most suited to meeting those needs. It is at this point that education agencies begin to develop accountability for students in transition in favor of community based support. Finally, monitoring and evaluation is required to keep track of the quality of transitional services offered to specific individuals (that being the responsibility of community service providers) as well as to assess the degree to which anticipated services have been received (the responsibility of school personnel).


**The Vocational Assessment Handbook** is designed to help personnel in any type of vocational program or agency to meet the requirements of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act, PL 98-524, which mandates the assessment of special needs populations enrolled in vocational education programs. The manual, in looseleaf format, opens with a discussion of the definition and purpose of assessment. The scope of the assessment in regard to important individual factors, and job or curriculum factors which need to be considered prior to vocational planning, are addressed. The authors break down individual assessment into six areas: vocational skills and abilities, vocational readiness and habits, independence, emotional and social tolerance, general educational development and interest. They stress the importance of these factors, as well as thorough analysis of the situational factors of the job or curriculum, in assisting the special needs individual with successful vocational planning.

Finally, the different strategies for providing assessment are presented along with the assessment tools and techniques which are appropriate for special needs populations. These strategies include screening assessments, specific skills assessments, academic assessments, and interest inventories, as well as formats for developing a work sample. Through the use of this manual, the sample forms which are included at the end of each indexed section, and the listed resources, the vocational agency or program can determine what assessment strategy is best suited to the special needs individual being served.

Written and developed by Jean P. Lehman with the assistance of Susan J. McAlonan Fall, 1986 (Sponsored by the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education and the University of Colorado, Denver, CO.)

**SOFTWARE**

**The Right Job.** Sunburst Communications 39 Washington Ave., Pleasantville, NY 10570, 1986. Contents. 4 Disks, Teacher's Guide, Cost $189.00. Requires Apple II (48K minimum). The Right Job is an interactive program that teaches mildly handicapped or lower functioning regular students what jobs may be available to them and then how to use a search process to locate and qualify for those jobs. Written at 4th-6th grade reading level but a, an interest level from 7th through adult, students are involved in activities that help them identify their interests, skills and preferences which are then matched to a number of vocations. Simulations provide experience in locating and applying for positions in desired occupational areas. Emphasis is placed on making vocational decisions based on information gathered from a variety of sources including a computer generated data base.

Disk 1. **Exploration** introduces the user to a job inventory to help in deciding what group of jobs is of greatest interest, a skill inventory that involves a self-rating activity, and a working condition inventory that requires selecting preferred conditions and then comparing them with those of various jobs. Disk 2, **Computer Job Service**, simulates an employment agency. The student fills out a short application form, selects three jobs from typical want ads descriptions and responds to questions in interviews for these jobs. Outcomes of the interviews are provided and reasons for poor scoring are described. Disk 3. **Information Search**, allows students to search a computerized job file for jobs that meet the conditions and characteristics they select. Each job record includes such information as average pay, training needed, duties and skills, and companies where the job might be found. Disk 4. **File System**, allows students or teachers to change or modify information in the job file. New jobs can be added, salaries and job requirements can be altered to meet local conditions and names of local companies presently hiring can be added. The teacher's guide provides extensive descriptions of all lessons, suggests typical lesson plans for both individual and group use and lists supplementary activities.

Special Adaptations for Handicapped Students. Because this program was written specifically for the non-college bound student working below grade level, most of the text and content should meet the vocational needs and interest of learning disabled, behavior disordered and other mildly handicapped populations. Since the teacher is able to modify the job file, any inappropriate jobs can be eliminated and those more meaningful to the type of students using the program can be added. Job descriptions in this file can be rewritten to meet the reading levels of the class. A questionnaire and vocabulary lists can help the teacher identify terms, concepts and procedures that should be taught or reviewed before a student works on the program without teacher assistance. Many teachers find that going through the program as a class or in a small group prior to individual use is quite helpful.

A sample IEP relating to The Right Job is included to facilitate incorporating the program into the student's special education plan.
Extending Horizons: A Resource for Assisting Handicapped Youth in their Transition from Vocational Education to Employment is a model for assisting disabled youth and adults in their transition from secondary and postsecondary vocational education to work. It is designed to prepare teams (modeled after the IEP annual conference requirement) of school and community people to provide continuing support for these students. The first part, In-service Guide for Preparing School-Community Teams, provides planning, resources, and organization for developing teams to meet the needs of the disabled in their transition from school to work. The model suggests one team for each student, whose members may include parents, guardians, spouses, teachers, rehabilitation counselors, friends, community agency representatives, employers, and another disabled employee who has shown himself to be successful.

The model provides for: 1) large group inservice sessions which will meet the common needs of all support people and disabled people participating in the program, 2) small group mini-workshops to meet specific needs of some participants, and 3) team meetings to meet individual needs of one student. Topics for six large group inservice sessions are outlined as well as plans for mini-workshops.

Extending Horizons includes six additional documents, as follows:

1) Roles of School-Community Support Groups describes the roles and responsibilities of school and community team members as well as steering committee members and state advisory committee members.

2) Student Paths to Employment, a booklet for the handicapped youth, presents information on skills and resources to assist in seeking employment.

3) IEP Planning is a booklet to assist support people in understanding the IEP process. It provides step-by-step instructions for designing and completing the IEP plan.

4) Family and Friends describes the importance of the IEP and the roles of parents, family members, and friends in providing support.

5) Employers as Partners includes Federal regulations concerning the employment of handicapped people, general characteristics of many handicapping conditions, and information on common changes needed to eliminate architectural barriers and possible work station adaptations.

6) School and Community Persons provides general descriptions of capabilities and dysfunctions associated with selected handicapping conditions and descriptions of effective instructional strategies.

National Center for Research in Vocational Education, Ohio State University, 1960 Kenny Road, Columbus OH 43210 1985 1 Binder. $30.00.

Life Centered Career Education: Activity Books One and Two provide easy to use curriculum activities to be used with elementary and secondary school students. The two activity books contain 22 major competencies and 102 subcompetencies organized into three domains: Daily Living Skills, Personal-Social Skills, and Occupational Skills. Activities are designed to use materials and supplies normally available to most teachers. Sample teacher-made props, games and worksheets are described and provided where appropriate. Originally designed for mildly mentally retarded secondary students, this approach has been used in regular classrooms and with other types of exceptional learners at elementary and middle school levels.