

Supporting Transition for Students with Disabilities in Wisconsin's Rural Communities: Growing Ideas and Opportunities

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Transition Improvement Grant (TIG)

- <https://www.witig.org/>



- Goal in FY18 is to provide technical assistance in transition planning and services to 15 or more rural school districts through a Community of Practice.
- TIG offered stipends of \$1000.00 for participation in the CoP.
- At the mid-year point (12/31/17), 10 were engaged.

Outreach in 3 Areas of the State

Northeast – Kathy Tuttle coordinating

Wausaukee, Niagra, Lena, Coleman, and Peshtigo in Marinette County

Northwest – Brenda Swoboda coordinating

Luck and Unity in Polk County

Southwest – Brian Kenney coordinating

Prairie du Chien, North Crawford, and Wauzeka in Crawford County

Marinette County

- The districts within Marinette County have developed goals as a team and as individual districts all focused on employment outcomes.
- As a Rural CoP, the group will set up 1-2 business tours and each district will host their own meet and greet of businesses and career fairs.

Polk County

- The districts within Polk County are meeting to share experiences and determine the transition needs of the county.
- This group planned meetings in February, March and April to discuss next steps.

Crawford County

- The districts within Crawford County are working as a team to provide 2 parent weekend events focused on employment and high expectations. The events will be held in March and April.
- The weekends will include topics such as postsecondary transition plans, self-advocacy, and employment with success stories.

Rural Transition Conference

- The First Annual Rural Transition Conference was held on November 16th, 2017 in Marshfield WI at the Holiday Inn Conference Center.
- 138 participants registered attended the event including 58 educators, 8 DWD/DVR Staff, 49 Transition Partners, and 10 TIG Staff.
- The keynote speaker was a young woman who is attending Nicolet College in Rhinelander, Ashley Mathy.
- Sessions included the topics of: Transition Planning and Services, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Work Based Learning, Partnerships with VR and Long Term Supports, Assistive Technology, Job Development, Academic Career Planning, Post-Secondary Options, Transportation, and Mental Health Supports.

Feedback from the Rural CoP Groups & Rural Transition Conference

- Appreciate the time to meet with educators from other districts.
- Gaining ideas through brainstorming and sharing.
- Find value in pooling resources (e.g. – employer and parent events).
- Found the information from the Rural Transition.
- Conference useful and particularly liked the sessions focused on identifying transportation solutions.

Ideas for the Rural CoP on Transition Moving Forward

- What are your suggestions for specific activities for Rural CoP based on identified needs of rural communities?
- What thoughts do you have about the ways school districts can connect with more employers?
- How do you think DPI/TIG can support stronger collaboration between school districts and the Wisconsin Technical College System to expand student engagement?
- Additional recommendations?

Transition Readiness Grants

- \$1.5 million in grant funding to school districts will be available to support transition readiness and postschool employment for students with disabilities in FY19 (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019).
- Awards will be determined through a competitive application process.
- Work and college experiences for students with disabilities will be prioritized. (evidence-based practices)

Transition Readiness Grants

- The funding level for FY19 is \$1,500,000.00. Grants will be awarded in amounts no less than \$25,000.00 and no more than \$100,000.00.
- All public school districts, 2x, and 2r charters with a secondary population are eligible to apply.
- DPI prepared and released an application in early March.
- Applications are due to DPI by midnight on May 15th.
- Notification of awards will be sent out by June 4th.
- Funds awarded under this grant program will need to be expended between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019.
- Grant recipients will need to expend the funds and then invoice for reimbursement.
- We do not yet have information about funding beyond FY19.

Transition Readiness Grant Application Announcement

- DPI is excited to announce the launch of the Transition Readiness Grant Program
- Beginning in the 2018-19 school year, \$1,500,000 will be provided to establish a new grant program to assist districts and independent charter schools in expanding capacity to provide transition services for pupils with disabilities. The **Transition Readiness Grant** program was established to help identify and create competitive work opportunities for pupils with disabilities who are currently not served adequately by existing programs. Grant awards must be **not less than \$25,000, and not more than \$100,000**, and will fund special education workforce transition support services, including integrated work experiences for students, pupil transportation, and professional development that leads to a transition credential for school personnel. Funding beyond FY19 has not yet been established.
- Funding will be determined based on a competitive process. The application is now available at: <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/forms/doc/f2106.doc>
- The due date is **May 15, 2018**. Please see the full application for further details.
- The announcement/link is also available on the Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities on the DPI website: <https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/about/state-performance-plan/indicators/13-transition/update>

More Information on the Transition Readiness Grants

- Priority consideration for funding will include activities known to improve post-school employment outcomes (e.g. – participation in **Project SEARCH** (information shared), obtaining paid community work experience while in high school, support for students attending postsecondary education or other type of job training; professional development in a transition certificate program, and dedicated staff time for transition to employment activities).
- Project SEARCH information:
https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dvr/service_providers/projects/default.htm
- Grant funding under this program **can** be used for transportation costs in addition to educational service costs.
- Multiple school districts or 2r charters with secondary populations may apply as a consortium. For such an application, one entity would receive funding and put in place agreements for dissemination of funds to the other partner(s) as applicable.

Input Related to Scoring Transition Readiness Grants

- What recommendations do you have for the Transition Readiness Grant scoring team based on the needs of rural schools?
- How can DPI ensure this grant program helps to foster positive outcomes for youth with disabilities in rural communities?
- Additional thoughts?

Thank You for Inviting Me!

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