

Dashboard for Goal Areas, Strategies and Action Steps

Action Step Status Key: I = In process P = Planned R = Recommendation C = Complete (including to full scale)

GOAL AREA #1: Continue to improve transition services and supports in the Boston Public Schools and charter schools for students with disabilities.

Rationale: Schools are the institutional starting place to provide special education services and supports to enable students with disabilities to successfully transition from school to post-secondary education, jobs, careers or independent living pathways. School districts also have the infrastructure and responsibility to provide vocational technical education, as well as college and career readiness and information for all students, including students with disabilities. The state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) provides technical assistance to and oversight of local school districts.

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

1.1 Promote “youth voice,” self-advocacy and self-determination skills for Boston’s young people throughout all components of the system designed to support them.

ACTION STEPS	STATUS
1.1.1 Teach self-advocacy skills and support student involvement in IEP meetings so it is a positive experience that will help reduce stigma and encourage them to disclose their disability and secure effective accommodations appropriately in post-secondary education and work settings.	I
1.1.2 Hold annual transition conference for youth, parents, mentors and others who support youth in general and with disabilities on self-advocacy, self-determination and disclosure.	I
1.1.3 Disseminate new state Advisory on self-determination to guide schools in assisting students in transition and future planning.	C

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

1.2 Ensure that youth with disabilities have necessary assessments, accommodations, supports and wraparound services (health care, housing, social services, legal, e.g.) that will enable them to be successful and stay in their school or job.

ACTION STEPS	STATUS
1.2.1 Conduct assessments appropriate to the needs of each student starting at age 14, ensuring that all staff responsible for assessments are familiar with the range of assessment tools and their purposes, and that the choice of assessment instrument is appropriate to the student and situation.	I
1.2.2 Use assessment results to develop transition plan for each student that is incorporated into the IEP.	I
1.2.3 Adapt current IEP form to record transition supports and services until the new state IEP form is operational.	P

Goal Areas, Strategy & Action Steps Dashboard // continued

Action Step Status Key: I = In process P = Planned R = Recommendation C = Complete (including to full scale)

ACTION STEPS // continued		STATUS
1.2.4	Conduct assessments and develop transition plans with services in the community for older youth with disabilities who had dropped out and are either returning through the BPS Re-Engagement Center or are seeking Hi-SET certification in alternative community-based settings.	R
1.2.5	Provide travel training for all students who need it to become independent.	I
CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY		
1.3 Increase knowledge base through professional development and training – among educators, families, youth service providers, job developers and intermediaries, and supervisors on the job.		
ACTION STEPS		STATUS
1.3.1	Provide professional development for special education staff on conducting assessments and use of internal communications and accountability on-line system.	I
1.3.2	Provide professional development for educators in the use of labor market data to develop internship, apprenticeship and job opportunities for students.	R
1.3.3	Continue to send special education staff to UMass Boston and other institutions of higher education to upgrade their transition specialist skills and knowledge base.	I
1.3.4	Share best practices on transition among BPS and charter schools through the Boston Compact.	R
CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY		
1.4 Improve the school, job training, higher education and workplace organizational cultures to promote diversity and be more inclusive of young people with disabilities, putting them in a position to succeed.		
ACTION STEP		STATUS
1.4.1	Increase inclusive placements, especially in middle and high schools, and especially for males of color with disabilities.	I
CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY		
1.5 Improve the school, job training, higher education and workplace organizational cultures to promote diversity and be more inclusive of young people with disabilities, putting them in a position to succeed.		
ACTION STEPS		STATUS
1.5.1	Ensure equitable distribution of transition resources across all BPS schools.	I

Goal Areas, Strategy & Action Steps Dashboard // continued

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ACTION STEPS // continued		STATUS
1.5.2	Build relationships with multiple intermediaries and directly with employers to provide career/higher education exploration and other pre-employment opportunities for each student based on individual interests and strengths.	I
1.5.3	Ensure flexible staffing in BPS so that students, particularly 18-22 year olds, can spend as much time as possible in external community, work or higher education settings as possible and so that staff can provide the necessary supports and technical assistance in the community.	I
1.5.4	Through Guidance services, better prepare students with disabilities for college application and success or for post-secondary alternative pathways to career.	I
1.5.5	Partner with state agencies as early as possible to develop “688” and other post-secondary plans, especially with Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) for pre-employment activities required under the new WIOA law.	I
1.5.6	Continue to use online tools at BPS such as Schoology and explore other opportunities to share best practices online and in person.	I
CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY		
1.6 Integrate work-based learning experiences at all levels that are particularly effective in building competencies for youth with disabilities		
ACTION STEPS		STATUS
1.6.1	Pre-employment activities for students, especially those in conjunction with MRC as required by the new WIOA law, should be as meaningful and close to work-based learning as possible.	R
1.6.2	Assist students with disabilities at Madison Park High School and career vocational technical education programs in other schools to find and be successful at work-based learning opportunities in school or the community.	I
CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY		
1.7 Improve the system navigation capacity of youth, families and professionals throughout the system through regularly updated web-based resource directories and other means.		
ACTION STEP		STATUS
1.7.1	Provide information and assistance to parents and students about services to which they are entitled while in high school and about adult services for which they may be eligible when they exit high school.	I

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CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

1.8 Improve data collection and metrics so as to more effectively plan and monitor progress toward successful goal outcomes.

ACTION STEP

STATUS

1.8.1 Continue the roll out of systems designed to measure student progress and outcomes.

I

GOAL AREA #2: Strengthen family and community supports for transition-age youth.

Rationale: Immediate and extended family remains a primary source of support, information and networking about higher education, jobs and career, for most youth, including those with disabilities. Neighborhood and community supports through mentors, community-based organizations and health and social service providers offer another layer of information and networking support, especially in immigrant or low-income communities.

All action steps delineated here must reflect a culturally and linguistically competent approach to immigrant families and English language learners, and take into account the role of organizations advocating for immigrant rights and acting as gatekeepers within various ethnic communities.

While most of the action steps below are being implemented in some programs and some places in the city, these activities need to be more systemic so that all families, youth and community organizations have access to consistent information, training and technical assistance.

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

2.1 Promote “youth voice,” self-advocacy and self-determination skills for Boston’s young people throughout all components of the system designed to support them.

ACTION STEPS

STATUS

2.1.1 Teach self-advocacy and self-determination skills to youth with disabilities in afterschool programs so it is a positive experience that will help reduce stigma and encourage them to disclose their disability and secure effective accommodations appropriately in post-secondary education and work settings.

I

2.1.2 Engage community organizations and service providers in school-led and/or community based transition conferences for youth, parents, mentors and others who support youth in general and with disabilities on self-advocacy, self-determination and disclosure.

R

Goal Areas, Strategy & Action Steps Dashboard // continued

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CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

2.2 Promote “youth voice,” self-advocacy and self-determination skills for Boston’s young people throughout all components of the system designed to support them.

ACTION STEPS	STATUS
2.2.1 Provide education and/or coaching for parents and other family members, youth, mentors and community-based organizations about the following:	
2.2.1.1 Transition rights	I
2.2.1.2 Self-advocacy, self-determination and disclosure	I
2.2.1.3 Youth development for young people with disabilities	R
2.2.1.4 Labor market information	R
2.2.1.5 Financial literacy	R
2.2.1.6 College and non-college career pathways	I
2.2.1.7 Social Security Benefits (SSI & SSDI), Childhood Disability Benefit (CDB), health insurance, work incentives	R
2.2.2 Ensure students and their families understand the financial implications of taking out student loans to attend public, private or for-profit post-secondary institutions, especially as it may take longer for students with disabilities to complete coursework/training.	R

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

2.3 Improve the school, job training, higher education and workplace organizational cultures to promote diversity and be more inclusive of young people with disabilities, putting them in a position to succeed.

ACTION STEP	STATUS
2.3.1 Increase the number of afterschool and other community-based programs that have inclusive programming and are welcoming of children and youth with disabilities.	R

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

2.4 Improve the system navigation capacity of youth, families and professionals throughout the system through regularly updated web-based resource directories and other means.

ACTION STEP	STATUS
2.4.1 Encourage better coordination of information dissemination and navigation activities within and among BPS, CBOs and SpedPac (Special Education Parent Advisory Council). Consider including SpedPac in BPS professional development activities as appropriate	R

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GOAL AREA #3: Ensure that students with disabilities in public and private colleges and other post-secondary programs have access to accommodations and to career services.

Rationale: Many students with milder or more moderate disabilities who graduate from high school and connect immediately to higher education or workforce pathways (e.g., job training, apprenticeship programs) either do not know they have a disability and may be eligible for services or have not learned self-advocacy skills or choose not to disclose their disability. As a result, they are more likely to struggle and disconnect from a school or job training pathway, as they no longer have the protection of the special education law that supported them in public school.

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

3.1 Improve the system navigation capacity of youth, families and professionals throughout the system through regularly updated web-based resource directories and other means.

ACTION STEPS	STATUS
3.1.1 Ensure that students access college support services (e.g., health services, homelessness/housing, mental health) when needed so they can stay connected to the higher education pathway.	I
3.1.2 Communicate pro-actively through college disability offices with all students at orientation about the services, especially accommodations, they provide to help students with disabilities be successful in higher education.	R
3.1.3 Improve communication between high school and higher education, specifically college disability offices, so that, with the students' permission, and as part of the transition process, up to date information about disabilities and accommodations is available to the college prior to matriculation.	R

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

3.2 Increase knowledge base through professional development and training – among educators, families, youth service providers, job developers and intermediaries, and supervisors on the job.

ACTION STEPS	STATUS
3.2.1 Ensure that college-based coaching or support services, e.g., Success Boston and others, are knowledgeable about disability issues and encourage students to disclose with the college's disability office.	R
3.2.2 Provide training about disabilities and accommodation needs to occupational skills training programs and apprenticeship settings.	R

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CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

3.3 Improve the school, job training, higher education and workplace organizational cultures to promote diversity and be more inclusive of young people with disabilities, putting them in a position to succeed.

ACTION STEP

STATUS

3.3.1 Encourage the development of inclusive policies and practices in occupational skills training, apprenticeship and other post-secondary training and education institutions with the goal of having the population of students/apprentices with disabilities in these programs be proportional to their prevalence in the general population.

R

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

3.4 Increase opportunities for coordination, collaboration and partnerships among schools, businesses, agencies and programs within and across multiple systems.

ACTION STEPS

STATUS

3.4.1 Ensure that college disability offices and career offices coordinate so that students with disabilities (including students participating in the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative) can take advantage of and receive the appropriate support of college career office pipelines to employers.

R

ACTION STEPS // continued

STATUS

3.4.2 Use the Career Opportunities for Students with Disabilities (COSD) national conference scheduled for Boston in 2016 to engage and improve the college career and college disability office coordination efforts with the business community.

R

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

3.5 Increase funding and capacity within each sector so that schools, state agencies, job developers and intermediaries, youth serving agencies and businesses can reach more young people with disabilities.

ACTION STEPS

STATUS

3.5.1 Provide public college career offices with job development and placement capacity for students with disabilities.

R

3.5.2 Seek the involvement of alumni associations to provide job leads for students with disabilities.

R

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GOAL AREA #4: Increase capacity and improve service coordination among state adult service, workforce development, transitional assistance and youth service agencies.

Rationale: Building blocks are in place to achieve results in this goal area. The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) has created a steering committee to implement the provisions of the new federal WIOA law (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act), including a youth workgroup of the committee that includes cross-cabinet membership of key state agencies, such as MRC, DESE, Workforce Investment Boards (WIB), Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), as well as selected career centers and municipal offices. The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) is taking the lead in implementing the principles of Employment First, which should extend to all state agencies. The Department of Mental Health (DMH) is a leader in promoting empowerment activities for the young people found eligible for its services, including programs that promote self-determination, peer mentoring models and governance roles on numerous advisory boards. The Mass Commission for the Blind (MCB) also provides direct workforce services to eligible people with vision impairments.

Beyond the adult service agencies and others that serve as a pathway with the schools through the 688 referral process, young people with disabilities are clients in other state agencies as well: foster youth in the Department of Children and Families (DCF) who have a unique set of needs as they age out at 18; incarcerated youth in DYS who will be returning to the community; young parents (virtually all of them young women) who are seeking employment, child care and Transitional Assistance to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) services through DTA; young parents in the Emergency Assistance (EA) shelter system, or young people who are still part of their parent's EA shelter household through the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD); young people with drug addictions seeking treatment through the Department of Public Health funded centers; MassHealth-eligible youth up to age 21 with mental illness or behavioral disorders that can access services through the Children's Behavioral Health Initiative (CBHI); and the network of career centers and workforce investment boards through EOLWD agencies.

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

4.1 Promote "youth voice," self-advocacy and self-determination skills for Boston's young people throughout all components of the system designed to support them.

ACTION STEP

STATUS

4.1.1 Integrate youth voice, governance, self advocacy and self-determination skills into all state agencies and their programs that serve youth and young adults with disabilities, building on the models at DMH and other state agencies.

R

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

4.2 Increase knowledge base through professional development and training – among educators, families, youth service providers, job developers and intermediaries, and supervisors on the job.

ACTION STEPS

STATUS

4.2.1 Train all youth and adult employment and training staff in state agencies and one-stop career centers about the strategy and practices that make Employment First effective.

R

4.2.2 Train the staffs of all community-based providers in methods that support competitive and integrated employment opportunities for DDS-eligible young adults receiving employment and training services.

I

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CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

4.3 Improve the school, job training, higher education and workplace organizational cultures to promote diversity and be more inclusive of young people with disabilities, putting them in a position to succeed.

ACTION STEP

STATUS

4.3.1 Promote the principles of Employment First - that people with more severe intellectual disabilities have access to and can be successful in competitive and integrated employment - across the public employment and training systems in Boston and across the state.

R

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

4.4 Increase opportunities for coordination, collaboration and partnerships among schools, businesses, agencies and programs within and across multiple systems.

ACTION STEPS

STATUS

4.4.1 Oversee the implementation of WIOA, especially for people with disabilities and disconnected youth, across state agencies, including the provision of opportunities for community and public input.

I

4.4.2 Establish interagency coordination and accountability agreements across agencies at the cabinet as well as individual agency levels to ensure more efficient and effective employment and training services for consumers and their families. For example, the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), as the federally-designated vocational rehabilitation agency (VR) that is part of EOHHS, should play a central role alongside the Department of Career Services (DCS) and EOLWD and the Massachusetts State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) coordinating these disparate pathways into employment pipelines.

R

4.4.3 Strengthen the formal agreements (MOUs) between MRC and other state agencies, such as DDS, to ensure seamless coordination of employment finding and post-hiring supports.

R

4.4.4 Involve state agencies in school and community-based services before the student is eligible for adult services.

I

4.4.5 Ensure that state agencies begin all formal transition planning services starting at age 14.

I

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

4.5 Improve the system navigation capacity of youth, families and professionals throughout the system through regularly updated web-based resource directories and other means.

ACTION STEPS

STATUS

4.5.1 Ensure that all community-based agencies and schools serving youth and families are knowledgeable about programs and benefits, eligibility requirements, the impact of work on SSI eligibility, where to make referrals and up-to-date information across all relevant agencies, including DTA, DPH, DCF, DCS, DHCD, and programs serving homeless youth and families, among others.

R

Goal Areas, Strategy & Action Steps Dashboard // continued

Action Step Status Key: I = In process P = Planned R = Recommendation C = Complete (including to full scale)

ACTION STEPS // continued	STATUS
4.5.2 Ensure staff in all youth serving programs, schools and agencies-, youth and adult employment and training staff, and disability organizations are knowledgeable about the services available and required under WIOA by the workforce development and vocational rehabilitation systems.	R
CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY	
4.6 Improve the system navigation capacity of youth, families and professionals throughout the system through regularly updated web-based resource directories and other means.	
ACTION STEPS	STATUS
4.6.1 Fully fund initiatives that are part of Employment First.	P
4.6.2 Increase funding for the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative (ICEI) so that more students with intellectual disabilities and autism can participate in postsecondary education leading to employment training experiences.	P
4.6.3 Increase funding for shelter and housing options to reduce homelessness among young parents, many of whom have disabilities.	P
4.6.4 Restore DTA employment and training funding to levels that ensure beneficiaries receive high quality services connected to WIOA.	P
4.6.5 Identify and advocate for other funding increases for state agency services that would bring to scale services and supports for young adults with disabilities.	P

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GOAL AREA #5: Re-connect “Opportunity Youth” to school and career pathways by supporting youth-serving agencies to better meet the needs of older youth who have hidden or undiagnosed disabilities.

Rationale: As described in the “Profile of Boston Youth with Disabilities and their Pathways” section of the Action Plan narrative (pg. 19), about 60% of transition age students can become disconnected by dropping out before graduation, not being eligible for adult services and/or failing to engage in work or higher education after graduation. They may show up in any of a number of community based “destinations” and youth development programs. Many community-based agencies that serve this population are under-resourced and with insufficient expertise to provide them with the educational and social supports they need. They need access to disability experts for a range of situations that can arise that are beyond their expertise to resolve. But, referrals to outside resources can be difficult to make because agencies and programs are so segmented, thus program staff are not aware of the range of services and options available for their students. Even within these networks, programs may be unaware of the conditions, expectations and components of other programs. The particular requirements of skills training programs and the occupational requirements of the specific jobs for which individuals are trained are especially important to consider when making referrals.

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

5.1 Ensure that youth with disabilities have necessary assessments, accommodations, supports and wraparound services (health care, housing, social services, legal, e.g.) that will enable them to be successful and stay in their school or job.

ACTION STEPS

STATUS

5.1.1 Improve program intake and assessment processes and documentation to screen for hidden disabilities by including questions that might better identify behaviors characteristic of certain types of disabilities. Include a uniform question about SSI/SSDI benefits on intake forms/processes at all agencies that serve youth and families to assist staff in determining the likelihood that a student or young adult may be receiving disability related benefits.

R

5.1.2 Use “universally designed” asset-based intake and assessment instruments that include questions about work experience and general self-advocacy skills (not only disability-specific) that have been shown to be associated with work and learning success in adulthood.

R

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

5.2 Increase knowledge base through professional development and training – among educators, families, youth service providers, job developers and intermediaries, and supervisors on the job.

ACTION STEPS

STATUS

5.2.1 Provide training to staff of agencies working with “opportunity youth” about hidden disabilities (e.g., learning, non-verbal learning, attentional, autism spectrum, executive functioning, emotional/behavioral), universal design, self-advocacy and disclosure, trauma, system navigation, youth development, etc.

P

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5.2.2 Use capacity building models such as case studies/"grand rounds" where especially challenging situations are presented to experts with program staffs from the same or different agencies in attendance to maximize learning; distance technologies and other internet based group meeting modalities should be considered to maximize efficiency and learning.	R
5.2.3 Establish mechanisms to systematically embed and institutionalize knowledge in agencies and systems. Suggestions include using a train the trainer model from the outset; assign a lead at each program; have leads meet at regular intervals for updates and to share best practices; and hold trainings at least annually.	R
CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY	
5.3 Improve the school, job training, higher education and workplace organizational cultures to promote diversity and be more inclusive of young people with disabilities, putting them in a position to succeed.	
ACTION STEPS	STATUS
5.3.1 Provide technical assistance as needed to agencies working with "opportunity youth" to ensure that inclusive program practices and policies are integrated into the infrastructure.	P
CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY	
5.4 Increase opportunities for coordination, collaboration, and partnerships among schools, businesses, agencies and programs within and across multiple systems.	
ACTION STEPS	STATUS
5.4.1 Ensure that youth service agencies have systematic access to the latest information on theory and best practices in the disability field by creating or expanding linkages to resources at academic institutions, state agencies and other entities that have expertise in fields such as neuropsychology, learning and other disabilities and special education.	R
5.4.2 Improve information sharing by ensuring that for those students with IEPs who drop out of high school and re-engage in secondary education through a youth serving agency, every effort is made to ensure that the "receiving" school or program has access to the IEP and other relevant documentation if the student/family has agreed to share this information.	I
CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY	
5.5 Improve data collection and metrics so as to more effectively plan and monitor progress toward successful goal outcomes.	
ACTION STEPS	STATUS
5.5.1 Review, revise /or augment existing performance measurement and outcome measurements to account for barriers specific to disconnected youth.	R
5.5.2 Improve systems to collect and report data accurately and consistently in a timely manner to ensure that planning, policies, funding and other decisions are evidence-based.	R

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GOAL AREA #6: Increase capacity of employers in the private, non-profit and public sectors to hire, retain and advance youth/young adults with disabilities.

Rationale: The Boston area has many companies known for employing people with disabilities and business and provider partnerships across the state that are supporting innovation in the training and placement of persons with disabilities in competitive and integrated employment. These partnerships provide a platform to build upon and expand the number of businesses and employers that will commit to recruit and hire young people with disabilities for their talents and abilities. Boston also has numerous intermediary or pipeline agencies. But many of them do not identify participants with hidden disabilities and thus are not able to tailor the work and non-work related supports that will help them be successful.

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

6.1 Increase knowledge base through professional development and training – among educators, families, youth service providers, job developers and intermediaries, and supervisors on the job.

ACTION STEPS	STATUS
6.1.1 Incorporate internal training strategies of companies/employers to increase the understanding of disability, inclusion, self-advocacy, disclosure, universal design and trauma for young people as part of supervisor professional development capabilities in growing and managing a more diverse workforce.	I
6.1.2 Actively engage and provide training and information resources to non-disability specific service and intermediary organizations that work directly with business “pipelines” about disability, inclusion, self-advocacy, disclosure, universal design, trauma and policies and practices related to working with students with hidden disabilities to make their programs and pipelines inclusive. Use creative ways to engage and increase involvement of staff, such as webinars, peer training, case conferences, etc.	R

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

6.2 Improve the school, job training, higher education and workplace organizational cultures to promote diversity and be more inclusive of young people with disabilities, putting them in a position to succeed.

ACTION STEPS	STATUS
6.2.1 Use universal design, affinity groups, employee resource groups and other strategies (e.g., the “CEOs Against Stigma” initiative of the MA chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness) to create and sustain inclusive organizational cultures that promote the development of a diverse workforce that includes young people with disabilities.	I
6.2.2 Encourage business, human resource and trade associations (e.g., Boston Chamber of Commerce, Retail Association of Massachusetts, Associated Industries of Massachusetts, Society of Human Resource Management, the New England Council etc.) to establish member policies and practices that create increased inclusive employment options for youth with disabilities.	R
6.2.3 Provide training to human service and non-profit sector agencies and employers on creating trauma-informed workplaces.	I

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CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

6.3 Increase opportunities for coordination, collaboration, and partnerships among schools, businesses, agencies and programs within and across multiple systems.

ACTION STEPS

STATUS

6.3.1 Establish a coordinated statewide initiative to engage CEOs and other business executives that have created inclusive companies to recruit and educate colleagues in their own or other industries about creating employment options for youth/young adults with disabilities.

R

6.3.2 Launch a similar initiative to support the engagement of small businesses in creating employment opportunities for youth/young adults with disabilities.

R

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

6.4 Integrate work-based learning experiences at all levels that are particularly effective in building competencies for youth with disabilities.

ACTION STEPS

STATUS

6.4.1 Use industry-based curricula and current labor market information in pre-employment and job training services in the schools and community in order to prepare transitioning youth for 21st century jobs and careers. Employers need to be involved in articulating the demand-side by: 1) breaking down the job description into detailed sets of required tasks; 2) working with skills training schools and programs to design training; and 3) collaborating with disability service agencies to understand needed support.

R

6.4.2 Extend the development of industry based internship and apprenticeship models from the trade industries to other business sectors such as information technology, health care, and advanced manufacturing for students as part of the employment and training services offered.

P

6.4.3 Provide technical assistance to companies to develop work based learning models such as internship and apprenticeship for recruiting and engaging transitioning youth with disabilities.

R

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

6.5 Increase funding and capacity within each sector so that schools, state agencies, job developers and intermediaries, youth serving agencies and businesses can reach more young people with disabilities.

ACTION STEPS

STATUS

6.5.1 Continue to develop and expand employment collaboratives and networks that convene and provide technical support and other resources to businesses and intermediaries, with the goal of increasing outreach to, engagement with and hiring of youth and young adults with disabilities.

I

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6.5.2 Increase the numbers of young adults with disabilities hired by employers with federal contracts as part of the mandate to increase the hiring of people with disabilities in accordance with the requirements of Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Section 503) at 41 CFR Part 60-741.¹ R

GOAL AREA #7: Continue to build an infrastructure that raises awareness and resources, that addresses systems issues, and that promotes collaboration to support the transition to employment and career for Boston youth with disabilities.

Rationale: It is challenging enough for organizations to do their job and engage in collaborations that directly enable them to serve their clients or achieve their mission. Yet there are multiple systems that can either pave or block the pathway to employment and career success for Boston youth with disabilities, and most organizations working in their own spheres do not have the full knowledge to take advantage of potential resources for their clients. Creating this task force was the first step to raise awareness and build relationships among organizations and people working in these multiple systems.

Having such an organized entity to continue can be instrumental in reporting and sharing implementation results of action plan recommendations; continuing to learn from each other so as to improve system processes and outcomes; serving as the voice for Boston youth with disabilities in larger city or state efforts around improving workforce development opportunities for all people in need; collaborating to address long-standing or newly-identified barriers; and serving as a vehicle to raise awareness and resources from public or private funders, especially when having a collaborative in place is a requirement of funding.

A common refrain among service providers, businesses, schools, advocates, youth and families is the difficulty in knowing what resources exist in the community and how to access them. Whether in the form of case management or professional development or web-based data, information about services, eligibility requirements and other resources needs to be more easily accessible. The system should be designed to respond to the ways in which consumers experience the need for information. e.g., based on the individual's age, location, career and employment interests. For businesses, working with a coordinated system of intermediaries is central to their engagement.

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY

7.1 Improve the system navigation capacity of youth, families and professionals throughout the system through regularly updated web-based resource directories and other means.

ACTION STEPS

STATUS

7.1.1 Improve the system navigation capacity of youth, families, and professionals across multiple sectors through the development of a staffed web-based resource directory that is centralized, easily accessible, and multilingual with understandable descriptions of programs and services, recruitment and application procedures, up to date and reliable contact information, and maintained and updated as programs and staffing change. P

¹ Section 503 prohibits federal contractors and subcontractors from discriminating in employment against individuals with disabilities (IWDs), and requires these employers to take affirmative action to recruit, hire, promote, and retain these individuals. The new rule was implemented on March 24, 2014.

Goal Areas, Strategy & Action Steps Dashboard // continued

Action Step Status Key: I = In process P = Planned R = Recommendation C = Complete (including to full scale)

7.1.2	Ensure that the resource directory can be queried in ways that are responsive and relevant to employers' requirements.	R
7.1.3	Augment the centralized electronic directory with field expertise at strategic intersections of education, disability service and workforce development intermediaries to provide training and technical assistance to consumers, providers and other stakeholders throughout the various sectors and systems.	R
CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGY		
7.2	Increase opportunities for coordination, collaboration, and partnerships among schools, businesses, agencies and programs within and across multiple systems.	
ACTION STEPS		STATUS
7.2.1	Create a new coordinating vehicle to keep the many stakeholders from multiple sectors together to implement this Action Plan and work towards developing a model of collective impact, by identifying key indicators and appropriate metrics, representing this constituency in broader city or state initiatives, continuing to build collaborations and synergies among members, raising awareness and resources, and, if appropriate, overseeing the development of training and knowledge dissemination and managing the system navigation function (see #7.1 above).	R