

# Transitional Employment for Students with Disabilities

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# Transitional Employment for Students with Disabilities

Jocelyn Kennedy

## Abstract

*Prevailing policy and current practice in transitioning students with disabilities emphasizes the importance of school/community-based work experience combined with parents' high expectations for their child's future, collaboration with various agencies outside the school system, summer employment, and attendance at a regular high school; these recommendations are supported by evidence-based research. Articles published nationally provide current trends in research and practice as well as historical evidence of past practices that have proven effective in preparing students with disabilities in their transition beyond high school into the world of employment. I summarize current best practices and offer new insights into student programming. By enhancing the educational experience of our students, we support their transition and improve their chances at successfully gaining meaningful employment within their home community and province.*

*Keywords: students, employment, transition, disabilities*

Educators have long been interested in implementing educative practices that promote positive post-school transitional outcomes for students with disabilities to flourish in their schools, workplaces, and communities (Carter, 2013). The role of secondary education has aimed to prepare all high school youth for their successful transition into either further studies at post-secondary institutions or directly into the world of employment. Saskatchewan's Ministry of Education (2015) has created a document entitled *Actualizing a Needs Based Model to Support Student Achievement* which establishes a structure for strategic, innovative and collaborative leadership for all students through the early years from Prekindergarten through Grade 12 education. Their plan promotes higher student achievement and wellbeing for Saskatchewan children and youth and improved literacy skills for all. This comprehensive strategy is designed to guide *all students* to develop their skills and abilities and is the foundation for the province's social and economic growth (Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2015). Saskatchewan also has a population of students with disabilities whose educational and transitional needs vary from the majority of school-age students. For this reason, these students require alternate approaches and supports in order to successfully transition into employment following high school completion.

## Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to examine best practices in schools' preparation of students with disabilities for employment beyond high school. A meta-analysis of current literature was used to explore some of the critical elements that have an impact on transition into employment for this specific group of youth. In addition, promising practices that merit attention in improving and advancing programs of students' work experiences are explored. These evidence-based practices will be utilized to develop a comprehensive transition approach for Saskatchewan students with disabilities as they transition beyond high school. The Government of Saskatchewan acknowledges the barriers disabled people experience in their 2015 document entitled *People before systems: Transforming the experience of disability in Saskatchewan*, by stating "[p]eople experiencing disability often do not have the same opportunities as others to participate in the economy. Barriers to education and employment need to be addressed in order to create more opportunities for people experiencing disability to be employed" (p. 27). The government's

recognition of the current situation among people with disabilities in Saskatchewan provides the forum for continued research on this topic.

### Research Questions

1. Which aspects of the current model of program delivery for Saskatchewan's students with disabilities create meaningful and, purposeful opportunities to develop work readiness skills?
2. While attending high school, which programming factors influenced students' quality of learning experiences in both academic and workplace environments to facilitate the transition from high school to post-school employment?
3. How do these opportunities impact the students' post-school employment outcomes?

### Significance of the Study

By analyzing results from current research on this topic, a comprehensive transitional approach will be constructed with the ultimate objective that it will be implemented in order to meet the current needs of students with disabilities as they transition beyond high school into employment.

### Methods

Through a meta-analysis of research, a variety of qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, quasi-experimental, and case studies were investigated. Key terms used to for this research were: students, employment, transition, and disabilities. Articles were accessed through the following sources: SAGE Publications Inc., Routledge, ProQuest, Government of Canada, Saskatchewan's Ministry of Education and the Government of Saskatchewan. The data used in this research dates from 1995 to 2015.

### Literature Review

At the present time, Saskatchewan students with disabilities who require alternate education services in order to complete their high school education are designated as "Requiring Intensive Supports." Their education co-occurs within an inclusive classroom model combined with a jointly created plan called an Inclusion and Intervention Plan (IIP) (Saskatchewan Learning, 2006). This annual design is developed by a team of individuals comprised of parents or guardians, teachers (both classroom and student support services), school administrators, occupational therapists, educational assistants, psychologists, and oftentimes agencies from outside the school system such as the Ministry of Social Services, Ministry of Justice, or varying medical practitioners. This team works collaboratively to create annual goals that facilitate growth and development for the individual student, while considering varying exceptional conditions. According to the 2015 document entitled *Actualizing a Needs-Based Model* by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, each student's annual IIP is part of a holistic transition plan. From year to year, its emphasis may vary for each student. It may mean transitioning from one grade to another within the same school, or it might mean transitioning to a new school or even beyond high school. The focus of this research will be on students with disabilities' transition *beyond high school* and determine high school programming factors that impact post-school employment outcomes.

Students enrolled in this type of programming take a combination of both academic, career, and life skills courses throughout their high school careers. The program requires students to take a minimum of three Career and Work Exploration (C.W.E.) courses (Government of Saskatchewan, 2015b). The goal of the combination of these courses is to develop both social and job-related skills in order to transition students with disabilities into life beyond high school and into some type of employment. For many, this

is a monumental task. According to the Government of Saskatchewan Disability Strategy Consultation Report (2014) entitled *Our experience, our voice: The reality of today, the opportunity to shape tomorrow*:

Getting a job can be a bigger challenge than usual for these young people. Some high school students experiencing disabilities are not included in work opportunities experienced by other peers, including volunteerism. As a result, they do not receive on-the-job mentoring and have fewer opportunities to develop the kinds of work and social skills employers are looking for. (p. 21)

As a provincially mandated program for students with disabilities through their educational programming, it remains unclear why there are some Saskatchewan students who continue to be excluded from this program and these experiences.

All students who enroll in public education endure a variety of transitions throughout their school career. They all, eventually, move beyond the parameters of publicly funded schools and into the next stage of their lives. For many students, it means post-secondary education or directly into the world of employment. According to Levinson & Palmer (as cited in Dunn, 1996), “compared to their nondisabled peers, students with disabilities are more likely to experience unemployment or underemployment, lower pay, and job dissatisfaction” (p. 11). Upon review of more recent research on this topic, transition into employment success is strongly linked to the following themes: school based work experience, parents’ high expectations for their child’s future, collaboration amongst agencies, summer employment and attendance at a regular school. The following discussion of each of these topics provides evidence of their effectiveness in providing the transition supports necessary for successful post-school employment of students with disabilities.

### School-Based Work Experience

Work experience is a school-offered program designed to allow students to sample a variety of jobs and explore career interests. The term is synonymous with vocational training in much of the literature on this topic (Harvey, 2002). The Saskatchewan Ministry of Education uses Career and Work Exploration (C.W.E.) as the specific term for this program (Government of Saskatchewan, 2015b). Work experience training allows students to develop job-related skills and explore career paths while they attend high school to assist them beyond high school completion. Instruction occurs in integrated community settings under the supervision of school personnel. Students vary in the amount of time spent in each job. Skills that are targeted at each job site are linked to the student’s IIP.

Work experiences are important for students with disabilities because employment provides a context for career development by promoting awareness of the world of work, exploring interests and abilities, developing skills, and assimilating into society (Carter, Ditchman et al., 2010). Youth empowerment, family involvement, and activities that connect youth with transition planning services and work experiences influence their post-school employment outcomes. By facilitating the connections amongst and between these services, students with disabilities have enhanced opportunities to be gainfully employed and make positive contributions to society and the economy.

According to the 2011 research by Carter, Austin, & Trainor, and the Saskatchewan Plan for Growth Vision 2020 and Beyond (Government of Saskatchewan, 2012), students who participate in paid or non-paid work experiences during high school are more likely to be employed after graduation. Kim and Drymond (2010) surveyed special education teachers from Illinois. Their research supports these findings. Their study determined that Community Based Vocational Instruction (CBVI) helped students learn work behaviors and job skills, increased self-determination and independence, assisted students in identifying vocational goals, and provided interactions with nondisabled students. The work of Harvey’s (2002) comparison study on transitional outcomes for students with and without disabilities reinforced this finding. The respondents with disabilities who participated in vocational education while in high school earned higher wages than their peers with disabilities who did not participate in vocational education. The findings also indicated a stronger attachment to the labor force for respondents with dis-

abilities who were vocational education participants. Harvey (2002) offered several recommendations but his final one was that vocational education for students with disabilities appears to be a legitimate program study option that can lead to positive outcomes. Based on this evidence from the current research cited, community-based work experiences for students with disabilities provides the opportunity for school-aged students to gain the skills required to successfully transition into employment once they leave the school system.

One pivotal, longitudinal study provided key information with regard to student outcomes. The National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS) was a comprehensive study conducted by the United States (U.S.) Department of Education that began in 2001. Its purpose was to provide a national picture of the experiences and achievements of young people with disabilities as they transition into early adulthood. Information was collected over a period of ten years from parents, youth, and school. Students were age 13 through 16 at the start of the study. Data was collected biennially from the 2001-2002 school year and continuing until the 2009-2010 school year. Each period of time is referred to as a "wave," so 2001-2002 is Wave 1 and 2009-2010 is Wave 5. The data collection for this study included telephone interviews, school surveys, youth assessments, and transcripts. It included more than 8000 American youth. The data from this study has been widely used by many researchers to determine trends and issues and areas for future studies.

Wagner's (1991) analysis of the results of The National Longitudinal Transition Study of youth with disabilities identified more positive benefits of work experience.

Students who had taken vocational training during their last year of high school were 9% more likely to be competitively employed. If youths' vocational education included work experience, the likelihood of employment was 14% higher than students who had not engaged in work experience. (Wagner, 1991, p. 27)

Additionally, Phelps and Wermuth (1992) used the same study results to determine that each of the programs with high quality graduate outcomes featured supervised work experience. The analysis of the results of this data points to the benefits of combining academic and work-based training for students with disabilities while they are still in school to build their capacity for employment beyond high school.

### Parents' High Expectations for their Child's Future

Parental expectations are linked to students with disabilities' academic achievement in high school and employment outcomes. Parents with higher expectations provide their children with the opportunities, support, and encouragement to function more independently (Doren, Gau & Lindstrom, 2012). Youth with higher parental expectations of self-support and of acquiring a job had better employment outcomes according to an analysis of data collected from the NLTS research (Wehman et al., 2014).

What parents think and expect plays a vital role in children's perceptions of their abilities. Parents with well-defined expectations for their children establish goals and dreams with their children.

### Collaboration & Consultation

"A collaborative approach creates a forum for discussing ideas, reflecting on interventions, and sharing expertise and perspectives" (Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 4). Team-members work together to identify needs, develop plans, coordinate services, and provide each other with support (Saskatchewan Education, 2011). Students with disabilities have specific needs; their individual needs are identified within this approach.

Saskatchewan students with disabilities currently follow an annual IIP intervention plan jointly developed to set individual annual goals. Utilizing a collaborative approach is supported by researchers Phelps and Hanley-Maxwell (1997) who stated that "intervention plans are more likely to be carried out when they are developed jointly because they are facilitative rather than authoritative" (p. 211). For

this reason, this already-established procedure within Saskatchewan Education should continue. In his analysis of the results of the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988-1994, Harvey (2002) reinforced this tenet by stating:

[s]econdary vocational programming should meet students' needs and should consider local and national demand for labor to ensure positive post-school outcomes. It should be designed to maximize a student's potential to compete in the labor market, earn a living wage, and have focused career opportunities. Programming needs to be designed in partnership between vocational and special educators. (p 118)

Based on his analysis, using a collaborative approach to consider local economic and labor needs, students' opportunities for employment following high school will be enhanced.

Teachers involved with students' transition planning also require the training, skills, and abilities to be knowledgeable about the employment services available for students with disabilities in their own communities, and beyond. Teachers require access to supports such as funding to take additional and on-going training required as labor market and community networks evolve and change. Special education and transition teachers play an integral part of forming and implementing many of the students' goals and can provide valuable feedback and recommendations about the strengths and interests of their students (Levinson & Palmer, 2005). For this reason, teachers' skills and training need to be ongoing in order to assist their students. Principals can assume a leadership role by providing the supports required for their teachers, establishing links with community agencies and by the planning and development of specific policies and ensuring resources are provided, where necessary (Levinson & Palmer, 2005).

Students with disabilities, themselves, should be part of the transition planning process. They ought to have the opportunity to make informed decisions along with their collaborative team members. By attending all meetings, they will be empowered to take responsibility for important decisions about their own future (Levinson and Palmer, 2005). They also agreed that including students in transition planning meetings increases their self-determination and ability to set goals and make choices.

Parents and family caregivers have valuable information to share and are an integral part of every collaborative team. Their skills in coping with the support needs of the student influence both the progress toward annual IIP goals while they are still in high school as well as their overall success in the adult community, including post-school employment (Phelps & Hanley-Maxwell, 1997). In Saskatchewan's 2014 Disability Strategy (Government of Saskatchewan, 2014), one priority area theme was designated as "Support for Caregivers." One section of the report outlines the responses from Saskatchewan participants in 2013-2014 during the information gathering process. "Throughout the consultations, family caregivers openly shared their experience with disability and the impact on their lives. We heard of the incredible commitment and devotion of caregivers. Yet, many people told us they feel unsupported, stressed out and isolated" (Government of Saskatchewan, 2014, p. 23). If we expect parents and family caregivers to be supports to their children with disabilities, they, too, require supports necessary to ensure that they are able to care for their family members and assist them in developing the academic, social and worksite skills necessary to transition into employment following high school completion. The collaborative efforts of the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Social Services would be a starting point to provide financial supports for respite, training for respite workers and for families of disabled children.

Feedback on Saskatchewan's Disability Strategy (Government of Saskatchewan, 2014) indicated that once students leave the school system, there is a "lack of a continuum of care. People are often frustrated because services and supports are often not available at life's critical transition points due to age and/or ineligibility" (p. 20). Reports from parents who provided feedback through survey results claim that it is a common issue if they leave the school system and are neither employed nor taking post-secondary education or training. Those parents who have gone through this transition refer to the experience as "falling off a cliff" (Government of Saskatchewan, 2014, p. 20). For this reason, a life-long support and planning process needs to be established that focuses on the needs of the individual. Collaboration by service providers, individuals, caregivers and agencies to develop a plan that supports the needs of the in-



dividual must occur *well before the individual reaches 18 years of age* (Government of Saskatchewan, 2014, p. 21). The collaborative effort required by the members necessary for this process to occur reinforces the importance of working together to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

According to research by Benz, Lindstrom, and Yovanoff (2000) who examined secondary transition practices amongst American youth aged 16-18, students who participated in the Youth Transition Program (YTP) experienced favorable outcomes. They participated in career-related work experience and completed student-identified transition goals that were highly associated with improved graduation and employment outcomes. These students worked with transition specialists along with a teacher coordinator and a rehabilitation counselor during the last two years of high school and beyond school, if necessary. Through the combined efforts of a minimum of two agencies working together with families to meet the unique needs of these students, situations such as the one described above by the parent of a student with a disability falling off a cliff could be avoided. Upon analysis of the testimonials by parents in the Government of Saskatchewan 2015 Disability Strategy data collection, the current Saskatchewan model appears to lack the continuity to be an effective practice that facilitates success for students as they transition beyond high school.

This continuity can be better achieved through strong collaboration built among community, schools, businesses and parents. "Collaborative team members share knowledge, develop skills, enrich problem solving, and gain insights as they work together on behalf of students" (Saskatchewan Education, 2015, p.4). School personnel, parents, and other agencies develop collaborative relationships and grow professionally while supporting each other in the achievement of common goals (Saskatchewan Education, 2015).

Through the collaboration and networks of school and their community, the transition from high school into post-school employment can be smooth, as they have worked together to create opportunities that match each student's skills, interests and abilities and facilitate post-school employment.

### Summer Employment

Preparation for the world of work continues to be a central focus of all educators. For the economy to grow and prosper, young people need to join the workforce. Schools aim to prepare students with disabilities with the skills and opportunities to acquire meaningful careers and independent living. According to Carter et al.'s (2010) study, working during high school can contribute to positive adolescent development by enhancing students' autonomy, influencing their vocational identity, shaping their career awareness and aspirations, developing their workplace values, skills, and knowledge, and promoting skill development. Most research focuses on programming during the school year, but summer offers a spike in jobs available to youth. Carter et al. (2010) also stated that students with disabilities who are employed during the summer months from ages 14-22 "gain a combined total of 1 to 2 years of additional opportunities to further develop their employment, self-determination, social and recreational skills, as well as establish relationships in the community" (p. 195). These summer work opportunities provide the chance to further develop students' social and work-related skills while alleviating the issue of school schedules.

In Saskatchewan, partnerships such as the Saskatchewan Association for Community Living provide support to families and employers to facilitate the employment of students with disabilities within their community. They provide supports such as job coaches to assist with on-the-job worksite skill training, resume writing and job interview preparation skills. Their partnership enhances summer employment opportunities for students with disabilities as they work collaboratively with community-based businesses, families, and even schools to facilitate suitable work for these students.

### Attendance at a Regular School

A final area of focus for students with disabilities and their successful transition into post-school employment is the benefit of attendance at a regular school. Wehman et al. (2014) analyzed the results

of the NLTS-2, already described, and concluded “youth attending a regular school had higher rates of employment than youth attending any other type of school” (p. 329). Phelps and Hanley-Maxwell (1997) agreed with Wehman et al. They ascertained that students with disabilities at the high school level who are successful in post-school outcomes are educated in age-appropriate settings, most often regular classrooms. Students with disabilities need to access and become actively engaged in the educational opportunities available to their nondisabled peers (Phelps & Hanley-Maxwell, 1997). Research clearly supports the inclusive movement for students with disabilities to be enrolled in neighborhood schools alongside their non-disabled peers. The experiences they gain by on-going access to nondisabled peers and opportunities allow students with disabilities to develop their academic and social skills and be actively engaged in their communities. This ongoing immersion into their community provides the bridge to post-school employment opportunities, as they will have created a network of past employers and service providers as they move beyond high school.

## Future Research

Although research supports vocational training through CWE, the opportunities available for work experiences and competitive jobs vary widely. Factors that influence these opportunities depend upon whether the school/division offers and promotes work-based experiences as essential adjuncts to their courses of study, and whether there is a strong collaboration with youth and adult employment entities which can help support work experience (Fraker & Rangarajan, 2009; Leucking & Leucking, 2013). A provincial transition plan whose efforts are a result of the collaboration between Ministries of both Education and Employment would provide a framework of evidence-based practices for professionals to follow in order to provide consistent services to students with disabilities as they move both within and beyond the current education system. Future research that supports the development of an effective provincial transition plan is required.

Building the capacity of teaching staff in order to meet the transitional needs of students with disabilities is required. Post-secondary institutions need to provide both undergraduate and graduate level training in this area. Professional development opportunities for those professionals already working in the field are required as student needs grow and evolve, as does the labor market. Research into effective professional development practices for professionals in the field would ensure better understanding and promotion of best practices in schools. Additionally, a provincial initiative to enhance the importance of C.W.E. courses is required. Eventually, the majority of students end up in the labor market in some capacity. The knowledge and skills all students’ gain by taking these courses gives them an increased opportunity to be successful within the realm of employment. Further research would demonstrate improved learning and employment outcomes that result from participating in these courses.

## Implications for Practice/Recommendations

At the present time Saskatchewan students enrolled in the Alternate Education Program are scheduled to participate in a minimum of three (and maximum of four) community-based work placements throughout their Grades 10-12 years (Saskatchewan Learning, 2006). These work placements provide the opportunity for students to engage in community-based work that allows them to develop both social and academic skills that are expected of employees. Saskatchewan’s Ministry of Education has divided each school year into semesters for high school students meaning that each year is divided in half. Semester 1 occurs from the beginning of the school year until then end of January. Semester 2 runs from the beginning of February until the end of June. Students who participate in C.W.E. courses are eligible to take *one per semester* for grades ten and eleven, but then are out of options for further courses, because there are only four, in total. This creates an even greater issue for students with disabilities who remain in the education system until 21 years of age. For those students who require a combination of academic and vocational training, there are no additional Ministry approved courses that involve work site placement for students with disabilities. A potential solution would be to have all students with

disabilities take a C.W.E. course each semester for as long as they are enrolled in a Saskatchewan high school. This coordinated effort would allow their school programs to bridge the connection to their communities and employers with the goal of providing a transition from education into employment for all students with disabilities. Literature on transitioning students with disabilities indicates that obtaining work experience during high school is among the most prominent and well-documented predictors of favorable post-school employment outcomes (Benz et al., 2000; Benz, Yovanoff, & Doren, 1997; Heal & Rusch, 1995). The implementation of a greater number of course options would eliminate the limited opportunities identified.

In order to increase the number of C.W.E. courses available for students to take one course each semester during their high school career, a promise of adequate staffing and training would be required by the Ministry of Education along with each school division's commitment in order to support this initiative. Principals would need to build the capacity of their current staff members through the promotion of further training and professional development opportunities in order to work with outside agencies; they would then work collaboratively to determine the vocational training and life skills important for *each student* through their IIP. The elements of work-force preparation for students with disabilities are the same as for their non-disabled peers. These elements include awareness of interests and aptitudes, exposure to career options, and assessing and building skills, however, students with disabilities require more extensive and individualized support from school personnel and other adults (Levinson & Palmer, 2005).

A potential solution to this "end of service" issue documented by parents' feedback during the information gathering stage for the Saskatchewan Disability Strategy would be for school divisions to sponsor a "Transition Resource Fair" specifically for students with disabilities and their families (Government of Saskatchewan, 2014). Community-based organizations would provide the forum for key resource people working within this area to explain the service that their agency provides to the individual and family throughout the transition process. Schools would promote and facilitate family involvement by supporting them in accessing information and services available. School divisions could also support the initiative by using the event as a learning and professional development opportunity for staff who are either new to the field or desiring heightened learning in this particular area. This collaborative effort initiated by school divisions and schools would enhance the connectivity of services for students with disabilities that extend as these students move beyond the school system and into more community-based services.

Above all other factors, the research cited has identified that students with disabilities who participate in some type of vocational training through supervised worksite experiences through their high school career tend to have better employment outcomes than those who do not participate in this type of programming. Therefore, another way to enhance students' C.W.E. experiences is to create a network of employers that would promote the hiring of students with disabilities. These champion employers could educate other employers about the benefits of hiring students with disabilities in such areas as how to accommodate work-specific needs and make job roles and descriptions more flexible. Public awareness and education of the skills and abilities would enhance the workplace options available to students with disabilities.

Research has clearly indicated that students who have supportive parents or guardians, a strong collaborative team, opportunities for both school-based and summer employment, and who attend a regular neighborhood school alongside nondisabled peers find themselves in a significantly better position to be employed following high school. They have had the opportunity to develop both the social and work readiness skills required to be successfully employed over the duration of several years with the support and guidance of school staff and their collaborative team. Professionals involved in educating students with disabilities need to work collaboratively with families, outside agencies, and local community members to ensure these students have the opportunities to develop the skills necessary to be involved in the labor force in their greatest capacity. Through combined efforts, students with disabilities can find employment that provides for personal development and allows them to lead a satisfactory quality of life.

Success in today's work environment requires teamwork and problem-solving skills. The new 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies reflect the need for schools to shift more curricula to include learning in the workplace. Research on the effects of employment barriers encountered by students with disabilities will be central to maximizing their participation (Phelps & Hanley-Maxwell, 1997). Through the combination of additional C.W.E. credits for students with disabilities in each semester of their grades 10-12 years and specifically trained staff to support this initiative, Saskatchewan's students will have the opportunity to develop the employment and social skills needed to be employed following high school graduation. Achievement of this goal aligns with The Government of Saskatchewan's Disability Strategy (Government of Saskatchewan, 2015) whose recommendation number 6 is "INCLUSION IN THE ECONOMY: Expand opportunities for people experiencing disability to contribute to the economy" (p. 27). Through enhanced efforts, all students with disabilities would have access to the work training they require during their high school years to be eligible for meaningful and purposeful employment following high school.

## Conclusion

The skills needed by workers to compete in today's workforce are complex and continually changing. A major focus in having a smooth transition plan for students with disabilities is to assist them in finding employment that provides for personal development and allows a satisfactory quality of life. The aim of this research was to identify current programming factors for Saskatchewan's students with disabilities that affect their transition beyond high school into post-school employment. Its results could be the catalyst for a comprehensive career development and transition approach for students with disabilities within the province of Saskatchewan.

Through a meta-analysis of research, specific evidence-based methods proven effective are: school-based work experience, parents' high expectations for their child's future, summer employment, attending a neighborhood school, and collaboration and consultation amongst agencies. With the government's support as indicated in the Saskatchewan Plan for Growth Vision 2020 and Beyond (Government of Saskatchewan, 2012), students with disabilities will have equal opportunity to develop to their potential.

Just as Saskatchewan's opportunities will provide the foundation for future population and economic growth, we must as a province be mindful that the benefits of growth should provide everyone in our province with the opportunity to realize his or her full potential. (Government of Saskatchewan, 2012, Saskatchewan Plan for Growth Vision 2020 and beyond, p. 61)

These services, together, provide the framework for successfully transitioning students with disabilities into post-school employment and encouraging them to be actively involved in the labor force.

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