

A Snapshot of Federal Investments in Citizens with Significant Disabilities: *The Self-Sufficiency Investment Model*



EDUCATION

- Full inclusion in community school via use of UDL, RTI and other evidence-based strategies
- Optimal exposure to general ed curriculum at appropriate age level
- Access to same extracurricular activities and opportunities as nondisabled peers



TRANSITION

- All partners presume employability and full community participation of youth into adulthood
- Transition planning begins as early as possible
- Full exposure transition activities offered to nondisabled students
- Work experiences and jobs during secondary education = adult employment and thus required
- Early linkages to post-secondary support to retain employment



EMPLOYMENT

- Presumed eligibility to employment supports via VR, one-stops and local/state programs
- Outcome is integrated employment in the general workforce
- Access to skills training based on needs of local employers
- Receive ongoing supports to retain job
- Encouraged to work full-time or as close as possible to FTE
- Paid same wages as non-disabled peers in comparable positions



HOUSING

- Public funds directed at getting person into home in integrated setting.
- Ongoing personal supports to ensure optimal independence in the community.
- Focus investment not on programs and facility-based services, but rather on individualized supports and natural supports via innovation, customization and personalization through self-direction



FINANCIAL PLANNING

- Allow consumers and families to control allocated public resources.
- Increase asset limits tied to eligibility of social insurance and other safety net programs to \$10K.
- Exempt various savings vehicles from asset limits
- Promote special tax advantaged savings tools for PWD
- Require financial literacy as part of public supports



A Snapshot of Federal Investments in Citizens with Significant Disabilities: *The Cyclical Dependency Model*



EDUCATION

- Segregated into separate classroom space and disconnected from age-appropriate general ed curriculum
- Sent out of home district to attend segregated private school (paid for by public school district)
- Not on diploma track; presumption alternative assessment and curriculum is necessary throughout educational experience.



TRANSITION

- Transition planning presumes low expectations of youth with disabilities.
- Transition strategies are not fully explored or prioritized as part of IEP.
- Transition indicators are not weighted as heavily as other education performance indicators.



EMPLOYMENT

- Presumption of unemployability and thus ineligible for VR services or other employment supports.
- Individual typically placed into prevocational services, day habilitation or sheltered workshop (all of which are segregated from society)
- Subminimum wages often paid.
- No skills development to strengthen chances of securing job in generic workforce.



HOUSING

- Only form of housing that state Medicaid programs are required by are facility-based institutions.
- Group homes, institutions continue to be heavily invested in by public sources.
- Lack of \$\$ to pay for innovative individualized supports or to create natural supports create barriers to living independently.



FINANCIAL PLANNING

- Current Asset Limit has not been revised since 1985. Remains at \$2,000 for individuals.
- PWD have no savings accounts that are tax advantaged and exempt from asset limits.



WHERE THE RUBBER HITS THE ROAD:
COMPARISON OF FEDERAL DISABILITY INVESTMENT MODELS & RATE-OF-RETURN ON INVESTMENTS

LIFE CATEGORY	CYCLICAL DEPENDENCY MODEL = THE PAST, AND PART OF THE PRESENT			SELF-SUFFICIENCY MODEL: THE FUTURE (?)		
	TREND	OUTCOMES	COSTS	TRENDS	OUTCOMES	COSTS
Education	Place students with disabilities in separate special ed programs/ classes or private school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Segregation from mainstream • Unsustainable expense for LEAs/SEAs¹ • Lower academic outcomes² 	\$25K-55K per student per year	Inclusive Education Practices	Higher academic and behavioral outcomes for both disabled students AND their non-disabled peers ³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More cost effective⁴ • Average cost \$12K-15K⁵
	Overuse of AA-AAS for 1% of Students with most Severe Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automatic non-diploma track for students and highest dropout rates⁶ • Limited access to age-appropriate general ed curriculum or classroom • Lack of investment in communicative technologies⁷ 		Diploma Track for ALL Students with Disabilities	Increased expectations that students can and should graduate from school, preferably with a diploma.	
Transition	Fragmented services, limited program accessibility, and training focused on low-paying jobs or segregated activities ⁸	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low, deteriorating employment rates⁹ • Little exposure to employment-readiness transition programs • Automatic demand for costliest services after exiting school.¹⁰ 	N/A (ICI??)	Increased access to PSE options	32% of students with I/DD who did not received VR services but not PSE obtained integrated employment and earned \$195/week; 48% of those who received some PSE & VR gained integrated employment and earned ave \$316/week. ¹¹	PENDING (OSERS)
				Increased Access to Employment Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth with I/DD achieve employment outcomes at about the same rate as other transition age youth with disabilities (52.3% vs. 53.7%).¹² • Youth with I/DD who achieved competitive employment worked 24.4 hours/week and earned on average \$7.70 per hour. 	

¹ NY State Department of Education joined Mayor Bloomberg recently to announce revisiting of state and local policies that are resulting in 4,000 students being bussed out of NY public schools and placed into segregated private school settings for students with special needs at a price tag of over \$100 million annually to taxpayers.

²In 50 studies comparing the academic performance of mainstreamed and segregated students with mild handicapping conditions, the mean academic performance of the integrated group was in the 80th percentile, while the segregated students score was in the 50th percentile (Weiner R., 1985). Additional meta-analyses confirm a small to moderate beneficial effect of inclusion education on the academic and social outcome of special needs students. (Carlberg, C. and Kavale, K. 1980; Baker, E.T., and Wang, M.C., and Walberg, H.J., 1994-95).

³Sailor, W. (2010); Cecil County, Maryland School District (2010)

⁴A 1989 study found that over a fifteen year period, the employment rate for high school graduates with special needs who had been in segregated programs was 53%. But for special needs graduates from integrated programs the employment rate was 73%. Furthermore, the cost of educating students in segregated programs was double that for educating them in integrated programs (Piuma, 1989). A similar study by Affleck, Madge, Adams, and Lowenbraun (1988) demonstrated that the integrated classroom for students with special needs was more cost-effective than the resource program.

⁵Blackorby & Wagner (2001).

⁶The dropout rate for students with disabilities is approximately twice that of general education students. Of those who do not complete high school, about 36% are students with learning disabilities and 59% are students with emotional/behavioral disabilities (Blackorby & Wagner, 1996).

⁷Kearns, J. et.al (2011)

⁸National Council on Disability (2007).

⁹According to the American Community Survey, four out of five persons with disabilities requiring significant supports are not considered part of the labor force.⁹ Only one in ten individuals with mental disabilities receiving Social Security Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments are considered to be in the workforce.⁹ While data specifically focused on employment trends in the significantly disabled is limited, we do know that state mental retardation/developmental disability (MR/DD) agencies provided day and employment supports to roughly 460,000 people in 2001.⁹ Among these individuals, approximately 23% of individuals supported by MR/DD agencies nationwide were employed in integrated employment settings, with individual state outcomes ranging from 2% to 56%.⁹ These numbers have remained stagnant for the past seven years.⁹ Employment outcomes for young adults with disabilities are deteriorating. From 1989 to 2000—both peak business-cycle years—the employment rate for persons ages 25 to 34 with self-reported work limitations fell from 57.5 to 40.9 percent (Mathematica, 2009; Houtenville and Daly 2003).

¹⁰About 1.3 million persons ages 14 to 30 received SSI disability benefits in December 2007, at an estimated annual cost of \$8.0 billion, and more than 300,000 received DI benefits in June 2008, at an estimated annual cost of more than \$2 billion. On average, people who enter SSI before age 18 remain on the rolls for 27 years, receiving a stream of benefits worth more than \$100,000 per youth (Mathematica, 2009; Rupp and Scott 1996).

¹¹Think College Fast Facts (No. 1, 2009) *Postsecondary Education and Employment Outcomes for Youth with Intellectual Disabilities*.

¹²Congressional Testimony from Commissioner Lynnae Ruttledge, Rehabilitative Services Administration, March 2011.

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	TREND	OUTCOMES	COSTS	TRENDS	OUTCOMES	COSTS
Employment	Sheltered Workshops, Prevocational Services, Day Habilitation			Automatic access to SES & Customized Employment Strategies		
Housing	ICF/MR	For every \$5 mil, only 39 people served	\$128,275	Host/Foster Family	113 people served per \$5 mil.	
	HCBS Residential Facility	For every \$5 million, 71 people served.	\$70,133	Own Family	200 people served per \$5 mil	
Savings & Asset Development	SGA & Asset Limits			Increase in/Lifting of Limits		
	No Tax Advantaged Savings Options for PWD			ABLE Act		