Use the prompts below to reflect on the discussion in **The Journey** webinar, *“Creating the Perfect Storm: A Guide to Developing Meaningful Vocational Experiences for Youth with Complex Needs”.*

*Reflect on your specific transition program, your district transition programs, or your county transition programs. Identify where these programs are strong (“Glows”) and where there is room for improvement (“Grows”)*

| **Elements of Successful Vocational Programs** | **Considerations** | **Reflections****Where Do You *Glow*?****Where Do You Need to *Grow*?** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Student Involvement** | *Early Years.* *Students...** *Taught how to be involved in their transition planning and given opportunities to practice*
* *Provided activities/services relate to the Postsecondary Employment Goal*
* *Gain skills through hands-on work opportunities*
* *Have opportunities to learn what it means to ‘work’*

*High School Years.* *Students...** *Involved in planning and actively involved in IEP and transition planning meetings*
* *Volunteer and participate in authentic work experiences*
* *Job shadow and participate in active career exploration*
* *Involved in work activities during the school day*
* *Access ongoing hands-on work experiences*

*High School+ Years.* *Students...** *Given opportunities to practice self-determination such as directing IEP their meetings, setting their goals, and engaging in self-management*
* *Access to authentic work opportunities in the community during the school day.*
* *Connect to all agencies/organizations necessary for post-school success.*
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| **Parental Expectations (“Buy-In”)** | *Parents can be the ‘make-it-or-break-it" factor, but may need support**Remember:** *The parent brings the historical view of the student that can be so useful in understanding the youth*
* *Start conversations early on adult life, employment, & community membership*
* *Parental fears and concerns are real and should be respected*

*High Expectations of Parents make a difference in adult outcomes** *Encourage/support families to have high expectations for youth’s abilities*
* *Pair expectations and adult outcomes with meaningful activities*
* *Address the ‘elephant in the room’... What if the student fails while striving to reach those expectations?*

*Parent concerns for entry level work (ex: cleaning the cafeteria)** *Help parents understand that early career development and work opportunities are often not about the task they are doing but instead about general work skills they are learning.*
* *Explain that engaging in regular, daily work helps build work stamina*
* *Highlight the need to scaffold work experiences to have more rigor as the youth are more competent and gain additional skills.*
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| **Administrative Support** | *Administrative Support for Transition Planning Activities* * *Essential to reach out to discuss transition activities and service needs*
* *Gain support for “outside of the box” activities*
* *Support for Transportation to the community*
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| **Community Partners: Employers, Agencies, etc.** | *Services Agencies* * *County Board of Developmental Disabilities (redetermination for eligibility to occur at age 16)*
* *Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) - Reach out early (age 14)*
* *Invite all agencies associated with the youth needs to attend IEP and/or transition planning meetings when transition being discussed.*

*Employers and Volunteer Organizations* * *Create a ‘symbiotic’ relationship: Employers/volunteer organizations must receive as much value to the activity as the student*
* *Put forth effort to maintain ongoing employer relationships*
* *Identify both volunteer and paid employment opportunities*
* *Seek diversity in the employer/volunteer experiences to provide greater access and diversity to career exploration.*

*Develop Authentic Work Experiences** *For young students, seek authentic work activities that can be brought into the classroom when they cannot be out of the classroom*
* *Engage in cleaning and custodial activities that may forge employer relationships and lead to other more meaningful opportunities*
* *ALWAYS be on the lookout for community opportunities and take the risk to approach community organizations and businesses.*
* *Use your team’s Social Capital. Who do you know? How can they help?*
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| **Teamwork is the Secret!** | *No one teacher or staff person can do it alone!* * *Every member of the team brings resource's that contribute to the student success*
* *Who is on YOUR team?*
* *What can each of your team members contribute to student success?*

*Reflect on one of* ***your*** *student success stories.* * *How are each of the elements of vocational success represented in your success story?*
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| **Next Steps** | * *Select at least one element of vocational success where you can ‘grow’.*
* *Identify at least one step that your team can take to enhance the selected element of success.*
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