

School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP)

The School to Work Alliance Program (SWAP) is designed to provide employment-related assistance to youth and young adults with disabilities, who are experiencing mild to moderate barriers to employment. Disabilities can take the form of physical, emotional, or learning disabilities. SWAP provides assistance that not only produces a desirable employment outcome (such as a career-path job), but also teaches appropriate job seeking and job retention skills that can be utilized throughout a lifetime.

SWAP is a collaborative initiative between the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and local school districts, and is supported by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). The SWAP program provides case management and direct services to youth who:

- Have mild to moderate needs in employment;
- Are applicants of or are eligible to receive DVR services (meeting disability documentation requirements and able to benefit from the program); and
- Need short-term support to become competitively employed and to achieve successful community outcomes.

Purpose of SWAP

The purpose of SWAP is to provide successful employment outcomes, increased community linkages, and new patterns of service for youth within all categories of disabilities. The program's goals include:

- Building on current transition planning efforts;
- Filling the case management gap for the targeted population; and
- Supporting collaboration between DVR, the Colorado Department of Education, and local school districts.

Typical SWAP Services

Clients being served through SWAP are eligible for services typically provided through DVR, such as evaluation and diagnostic services, vocational counseling and guidance, physical and mental restoration services, and training. Additionally, SWAP may provide services such as:

- Career exploration
- Career development
- Employment-related instruction
- Job development / placement
- Case management
- One year of follow-up

SWAP is designed to provide a new pattern of service that will enhance existing transition services and to provide employment services to an under-served population of youth. Unique components include:

- Year round community-based services;

2015-2016 SWAP Sites School District/BOCES

Academy 20.....	719-234-1333
Adams 12	720-872-2660
Adams 14	303-853-3294
Adams 50	720-542-4582
Aurora	303-344-4910
Boulder.....	720-561-5312
Brighton.....	303-655-4197
Buena Vista	719-395-4064
Cañon City	719-276-6173
Centennial BOCES	970-352-7404
Cherry Creek	720-886-5871
Co. Springs 11.....	719-520-2592
Delta	970-874-7607
Denver.....	303-866-3869
Douglas County.....	303-387-1104
Englewood/Sheridan.	303-866-4458
Estes Park	970-586-2361
Ft. Lupton	303-857-7295
Greeley 6	970-348-1080
Jefferson County	303-982-7014
Littleton.....	303-347-4418
Mesa County	970-254-6402
Moffat County.....	970-756-7927
Montrose.....	970-249-7783
Northeast BOCES.....	970-774-6152
Pikes Peak BOCES	719-380-6256
Poudre.....	970-490-3286
Rio Blanco BOCES.....	970-629-5333
Salida	719-207-1509
San Juan BOCES.....	970-247-1178
San Luis Valley.....	719-589-5851
St. Vrain.....	303-772-7700
Thompson	970-669-8349
Uncompahgre BOCES	970-626-2977
Windsor.....	970-686-8078
Ute Pass BOCES	719-686-2457



- Case management services; and
- One year of follow-up services after successful employment.

The Colorado Department of Education, through a contract with DVR, provides joint training and technical assistance, product development and dissemination, conflict resolution assistance, and program monitoring to 36 local SWAP sites.

Funding

Funding of a SWAP site occurs when schools provide state or local funds to DVR, which are then matched with federal funds. These funds are used to pay for staff and other expenses related to SWAP. Additionally, DVR pays the cost of case services for youth assisted by the project. Participation in SWAP is optional by local districts.

SWAP Target Population

SWAP services would be appropriate for:

- Youth between the ages of 16-25, and
- Applicants of or eligible for DVR services, and
- Have mild to moderate needs in employment, and
- Will be ready to work after short-term service provision, and
- Typically living within the boundaries of a school district or BOCES participating in the SWAP program. (Youth who do not live in a participating district or BOCES may access vocational rehabilitation services directly through the DVR program).

Youth could be:

- In-School served by:
 - Section 504 programs
 - IDEA [Special Education] programs
 - Suspected or known disability not under any other category
- Out-of-School
 - Graduated or aged out
 - Drop-out or at risk of dropping out
 - Under or unemployed

SWAP would not be appropriate for:

- Youth aged 14 or 15
- Youth with significant needs who will require extensive services for placement
- Youth identified as “most severe” or currently eligible for supported employment services
- Youth with on-going legal problems that make placement in a work setting difficult
- Youth who need long-term services, extensive training or attend a 2 or 4-year college full time program.

Referrals:

The appropriate time for referral is when an individual’s primary focus is employment and they are available for services. Referrals can be made from the schools through the IEP or 504 process, through a DVR counselor, or directly to a SWAP office. To make a referral contact the coordinator in the community in which the youth lives.

The contents of this handout were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, the content does not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government.