

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

A common Vision and Mission, with two (2) goals, was developed by the NGA Policy Academy Core Team and incorporates the driving focus of the BIWG/NGA implementation team as the Phase I initiative.

VISION: All individuals, with and without disabilities, live, learn, work, and participate together in all life experiences.

MISSION: To increase the number of Florida youth and young adults with disabilities who participate and demonstrate success in post-secondary education certification and obtain and maintain competitive integrated employment.

GOALS:

Goal 1: Florida youth and young adults with disabilities participate in work experiences and opportunities that ultimately lead to a living wage, work related skills development, income and benefits potential, and asset accumulation.

Goal 2: Florida youth and young adults with disabilities participate and demonstrate success in post-secondary educational opportunities and/or other employment related opportunities.

Each BIWG/NGA agency and organization developed its implementation plan for achieving this Vision, Mission and Goals, both with short term and long range activities. These implementation plans will move forward a number of the Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF)/BIWG recommendations, as well as address broader and related systems issues, for a comprehensive effort to improve a young adult's transition to the adult world and success in attaining employment and/or participating in post-secondary experiences.

Below are the BRTF/BIWG recommendations that are addressed through these efforts including an update on the progress accomplished since the inception of the BIWG with an emphasis on activities occurring within the last six months.

Short Term Recommendations (1 year)	Semi-Annual Update
1) Most Critical	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designate the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC) to establish, facilitate, and coordinate a BRTF Implementation Working Group (BIWG), which will include participation from agency heads or their designated senior staff who can make policy and/or budget decisions and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accomplished and Ongoing – Currently, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities is considering full implementation of the Interagency Service Committee for Youth and Young Adults with Disabilities whose charge it will be to establish goals to insure the

<p>recommendations and their staff needed to support planning and implementation. This working group should include, but not be limited to, the Department of Education (DOE), Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), Department of Education Vocational Rehabilitation (DOE-VR), Agency for Healthcare Administration (AHCA), Department of Health – Children’s Medical Services (DOH-CMS), Department of Children and Families (DCF), Workforce Florida, Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, and the Florida Housing Finance Corporation. The BIWG should meet at least quarterly to oversee, direct and coordinate the implementation of the BRFT recommendations.</p>	<p>successful transition to employment or further education of youth and young adults with disabilities and to eliminate barriers that impede educational opportunities leading to future employment. It is likely that this committee will take up the charge of the BIWG and include its current member agencies and organizations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The BIWG has met on the following dates since its last semi-annual report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ February 20, 2006 ➤ May 12, 2006 ➤ June 23, 2006 ➤ July 24, 2006
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Request the Agency/Department heads of the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council BIWG report the progress of implementation of recommendations in this report every six months to the Governor and annually to the Legislature with the first report due July 15, 2005. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accomplished and Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish a Florida-based website with information that empowers people with developmental disabilities, and their families, to make informed decisions, and increase their full participation and inclusion in home, school work, and the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council is entering into a contract with the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities at USF for this purpose. Project completion is anticipated to be July 31, 2007.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a process for ensuring that families are informed about the long-term impact of their decisions (e.g. FCAT, diploma options, course selection, and guardianship options) on their child’s access to school, post-secondary programs and employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Children’s Medical Services (CMS) has published an additional 20,000 healthcare transition brochures, <i>Envisioning My Future</i>, for distribution among CMS enrollees between the ages of 12 and 21 and their families ▪ CMS is in the process of identifying a Transition Liaison in each of its area offices throughout the state to coordinate with CMS Central Office, within their communities, and with other agencies and organizations for transition activities and related issues.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ FDDC is entering into a contract with the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities at USF for development of a comprehensive transition website for students, families, and service providers. Project completion is anticipated to be July 31, 2007. ▪ DVR collaborated with BEESS to develop and distribute the newest transition brochure, <i>Checklist for Students with Disabilities Transitioning to Adult Life</i>, to transition stakeholders statewide for student and family use as a planning tool.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Involve families of transition age students, and the communities, in which they live so that opportunities for employment, based on a person's interests and capabilities, can be identified early and the school system can work to help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ APD is in the process of commissioning a study through Delmarva, Inc. to determine the current level of involvement and knowledge of individuals and their families with regard to transition services, planning, and outcomes. ▪ CMS has contracted with the Family Resource Coalition to assemble a Young Adult Advisory Group with 9 CMS enrollees between the ages of 12 and 21 to provide input and insight to CMS about transition from a young adult's perspective.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All IEPs must consistently include evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Knowledge and understanding by the student and/or his/her legal guardian of what he/she is entitled to under the IDEA and ADA including assistive technology and transportation ➢ A statement of interagency responsibilities that should be, and that are, operative before a student exits school. ➢ Services provided by non-educational agencies. ➢ An outcome-oriented process that includes, but is not limited to, if and how the student will be involved in post-secondary education, career training, continued career development, integrated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At the 2006 Partners in Transition Summit, 25 local teams either began or continued work on their local level plans for implementing the Florida Strategic Plan for Transition. Technical assistance is being provided to the local teams and a 2007 summit is being planned to further the process. ▪ The Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (BEESS) is responsible for monitoring compliance with IDEA 2004, including the provision of procedural safeguards and the following transition IEP requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ During the student's eighth grade year or the school year of the student's 14th birthday,

employment, supported employment and/or adult education at the point of exit from high school.

- Individualized and meaningful vocational evaluations having been conducted.
- Meaningful experiences leading to post-school community participation and the realization of individualized employment, independent living and other post school objectives.
- Acquisition and utilization of transportation options.

whichever comes first, a statement of whether the student is pursuing a course of study leading to a standard diploma or a special diploma;

- Beginning by the student's 14th birthday (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team), including the student and the student's parents, and updated annually:
 - A statement of the student's desired post-school outcome which shall be developed through a student-centered process;
 - A statement of the student's transition service needs under the applicable component of the student's IEP that focuses on the student's IEP that focuses on the student's course of study, such as vocational education program;
 - Consideration of instruction or the provision of information in the area of self-determination to assist the student to actively and effectively participate in IEP meetings and self-advocate.
- Beginning by the student's 16th birthday (or younger, if determined appropriate as determined by the IEP team), including the student and the student's parent and updated annually and thereafter, a statement of needed transition services for the student including courses of study needed to assist the child in reaching those goals and, if appropriate, a statement of interagency responsibilities or any needed linkages;
- Development of appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to

	<p>training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Beginning not later than 1 year before the child reaches the age of majority under state law, a statement that the child has been informed of the child's rights under this title, if any, that will transfer to the child on reaching the age of majority.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examine the possibility of allocating a portion of the Federal Workforce system funds including the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) state set aside (\$20 million for FY 03-04) for competitive, integrated employment, including self-employment and training to benefit people with developmental disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A \$1million appropriation was made during the 2006 legislative session for this purpose. The BIWG will be involved in planning for the use of these funds as well as measuring outcomes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Endorse the APD five-year initiative to enable 25% of people currently in segregated day programs to access and maintain employment as part of the performance measure to achieve employment of 50% of all people receiving day services to attain employment by 2009. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accomplished and ongoing. ▪ DVR has contracted with the Program for Rehabilitation Leadership at Georgia State University to conduct the Community Employment Capacity Initiative to assist in understanding the barriers to successful transition from day programs to community based employment and to make recommendations for the success of this initiative. ▪ The Able Trust continues to review and award grants to community based organizations implementing competitive employment for individuals transitioning out of segregated day programs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement procedures to identify employment aspirations of people with developmental disabilities (including employed, unemployed, and underemployed) and develop an implementation plan to reach their goals in a timely manner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DVR as the lead agency for employment for individuals with disabilities continues to focus on each individual consumer's needs, desires, and individual issues impacting their successful, competitive, integrated employment outcome. ▪ Leon County Schools (LCS) in partnership with the Department of Education's Division of Vocational

	<p>Rehabilitation and Office of Interagency Programs (OIP); and the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) is implementing an evidence-based pilot which utilizes the Transition Services Integration model in conjunction with Customized Employment and Discovery for career preparation and work-based learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Through FDDC funding the Statewide Competitive Integrated Employment Training Team is piloting two sites using evidence-based practices starting with the Discovery Vocational Profile process for individuals with the most significant disabilities to explore their employment aspirations and develop individualized plans for reaching their goals.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educate and inform all stakeholders regarding available housing resources and options in Florida including: How to blend and braid various options to maximize community living. How to increase the amount of affordable housing funds that are dedicated to assisting people with developmental disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Florida Housing Finance Corporation held a public forum in January on housing issues specific to people with disabilities in order to gather input for improvement and new directions. The Corporation's Multi-Family Department is working to insure that the recommendations are taken into consideration as planning and new initiatives are undertaken. In addition, HB1363 which passed in the 2006 legislative session made great strides in addressing some of the affordable housing challenges faced by individuals with disabilities. Highlights of the bill include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ \$108 million for Hurricane Housing Recovery Programs of which \$15 million is for farm worker and special needs housing ➤ \$30 million for Extremely Low Income (ELI) Housing (income at or below 30 % of area median income) ➤ Allows forgiveness of loans for ELI units ➤ Provides that rents fro ELI units are restricted to corresponding levels in the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DVR addresses community living arrangements as a related factor impacting an individual's desired employment outcome.
Short Term Recommendations (1 year)	Semi-Annual Update
2) Essential	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage agency heads to incorporate BRTF recommendations into each agency's long-range program plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A number of member agencies have accomplished this by incorporating the recommendations into their five-year strategic plans.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop practical solutions to barriers in the creation and support of individual development accounts and self-directed accounts that allow the braiding of funds and embrace asset-building goals such as: Participating in the FDDC asset-building summit, Clarifying conflicting interpretations of current regulations, Recommending new policies or regulatory language, and Requesting federal waiver and/or interpretation of proposed policy or practice changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ FDDC Asset Development Summit occurred in April 2006 at which a plan was developed to strengthen policy and infrastructure to support the asset development of individuals with disabilities. Some of the plans highlights include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Connecting IDA providers and micro-enterprise lenders with individuals with disabilities to meet asset goals without jeopardizing public benefits ○ Creating a web-based information source on statewide asset development and financial education programs ○ Providing targeted technical assistance to cross agency State Asset Development Work Groups to design policy and system solutions ○ Reform state policy so that the distribution of SHIP dollars are based on the 30/30 Initiative and people with disabilities on fixed income receive their share of funds for housing rental assistance and expanded home ownership opportunities; ▪ The Florida Freedom Initiative (FFI) has received a one-year no cost extension and has secured two banking partners for Individualized Development Accounts – the program component critical to asset development.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aggressively involve financial institutions and other private sector stakeholders to develop strategies to invest financial resources in IDAs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An Asset Building Conference was sponsored by the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council in Spring 2006 which involved financial institutions and other stakeholders to develop strategies for building the assets of individuals with developmental disabilities. ▪ FFI has secured two banking partners (Premier Bank and Sun Trust Bank) for IDAs under the Florida Freedom Initiative.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council's Business Leadership Network (BLN) initiative to a statewide project including the involvement of the Able Trust as a funding partner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The BLN initiative has been expanded through the support of a Medicaid Infrastructure Grant obtained by APD. Currently, there are eight state supported BLNs. ▪ Two teams from the 2006 Partners in Transition (PIT) Summit requested to create BLNs and are being supported through the PIT technical assistance and training project which is funded through the FDDC.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a system for ensuring that students and their families and educators are informed about the acquisition, utilization and ongoing upgrades of assistive technology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BEESS disseminated a technical assistance paper (TAP) addressing the transfer of assistive technology. BEESS participated in the development of an interagency agreement addressing the transfer of assistive technology. Once finalized, the information will be disseminated to school districts to share with their students, parents, staff, and partner agencies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct APD employees to refer individuals on the waiting list who want employment and do not need long-term services to alternative, generic employment resources such as One-Stop Career Centers, Vocational Rehabilitation, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DVR has contracted with the Program for Rehabilitation Leadership at Georgia State University to conduct the Community Employment Capacity Initiative to assist in understanding the barriers to successful transition from day programs to community based employment and to make recommendations for the success of this initiative. ▪ The One-Stop service system employs Disability Navigators in 14 of the 24 workforce areas to assist individuals with disabilities who require generic employment services to navigate the system.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a Governor's initiative to establish public/private 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With the support of the Governor, the Florida

<p>partnerships (grocery companies, medical groups/sites, Business Leadership Networks, private foundations) that will enhance employment, transportation, housing and other support systems needed by people with developmental disabilities to live in their community.</p>	<p>Developmental Disabilities Council started the BLN network in the state, and established four BLNs under the scope of its project. APD has taken up the project and expanded the number of BLNs in the state to eight.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two teams from the 2006 Partners in Transition (PIT) Summit requested to created BLNs and are being supported through the PIT technical assistance and training project which is funded through the FDDC.
<p>Mid Term (2-3 years)</p>	<p>Semi-Annual Update</p>
<p>1) Most Critical</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State agencies must work collaboratively to identify and align policies, practices, and resources that: a) Facilitate the provision of comprehensive, person-centered services and supports, and b) Eliminate barriers that impede inclusive community living options, competitive, integrated employment, and smooth transition among and between programs and systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The strategic planning conducted by the state agencies and organizations in the BIWG have moved forward the collaborative identification of where policies, practices, and resources can be better aligned for greater inclusive opportunities. ▪ The Florida Partners in Transition continues to meet and provide support through technical assistance and planning resources to county school systems based on the Florida Strategic Plan for Transition. The third annual Partners in Transition Summit was held in April 2006. BIWG member agencies/organizations continue to play a leading role in PIT activities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transition outcome measures, which incorporate the research-based Transition Guideposts for Success articulated in the partners in Transition Florida Strategic Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BIWG is working with FETPIP to develop a three-tiered data system for aligning and reporting performance measures relative to transition services in the state. ▪ A cross-agency work group has been developed to accomplish this recommendation and will begin meeting in August 2006.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Existing Florida Department of Education (DOE) data collection system (warehouse) is enhanced so that performance information, relative to the transition system, can be provided to each process and partner in order for all aspects of the system to be improved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BIWG is working with FETPIP to develop a three-tiered data system for aligning and reporting performance measures relative to transition services in the state.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement a method to provide appropriate, individualized employment training and services (including transportation services) beginning at an early age (middle school) as a method to develop and refine employability and technical skills ultimately resulting in integrated, competitive work for students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DVR continues to financially support and collaborate with High School/High Tech (HS/HT) programs statewide during SFY 2006-2007. Through a DVR contract the Able Trust, HS/Ht students ages 14-22 are provided opportunities to explore jobs or post secondary education leading to technology related careers. ▪ The DVR School-to-Work Transition Guidelines & Best Practices were revised April 2006 to better meet the needs of transition students. DVR now encourages 16 year old students to apply for VR service if they wish to participate in community work experiences. Because of this initiative, DVR has also expanded the roles and responsibilities of VR Technicians to insure VR representation in Florida high schools and to meet the increased demand for VR transition services. ▪ DVR initiated the first summer employment pilot project in Area 4 (Tampa/St. Petersburg) for transition students this year. This effort involves collaboration with school officials, local employers, and on the job training financial support from DVR. ▪ DVR is currently drafting new contractual agreements with school districts to help fund community based work experiences (CBWE) for VR students with an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) during SFY 2006-2007. Florida School for the Deaf and Blind and 51 school districts have applied for this new fiscal year funding support, compared to only 8 school districts under the original Third Party Cooperative Agreement (TPCA) with DVR. ▪ The National Governors' Association has provided the BIWG with information and support regarding evidence-based practices that are effective for improving outcomes for youth with disabilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revise special diploma competencies and course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The FDDC and DOE are jointly sponsoring the Access

<p>requirements making all graduation options meaningful which, for example, include; Employment-related competencies and experiences, and Futures financial planning coursework.</p>	<p>and Opportunities Work Group which has been examining what school based preparatory experiences and lifelong learning opportunities are available to students earning a special diploma and developing recommendations for how to increase access and opportunities for students on the special diploma track.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Currently, 62 of the 67 school districts are offering Special Diploma Option II. DOE is finalizing a Guide on Option II which will be available to the public by the end of the summer. ▪ BEESS workgroup is drafting examples of major/minor areas of study leading to a special diploma as part of the K-12 initiative.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make necessary statutory, regulatory and/or policy changes at the state level to ensure that assistive technology follows the student (e.g., from school to home, school to school and school to post-school). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SB 2550 was passed by the 2005 Legislature and required interagency agreement to insure that assistive technology devices remain with young persons with disabilities as he or she transition from one program to another. ▪ BEESS disseminated a technical assistance paper (TAP) addressing the transfer of assistive technology. BEESS participated in the development of an interagency agreement addressing the transfer of assistive technology. Once finalized, the information will be disseminated to school districts to share with their students, parents, staff, and partner agencies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Require APD and Florida Workforce Development system to develop strategies together to employ people with developmental disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recent DVR Employment Initiatives Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Coordinating employment efforts through 11 BLNs; ➤ Educating employers about the benefits of DVR funded on-the-job training which expands training options for consumers who earn wages as they acquire valuable work experience/skills from the employer; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promotion of self-employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leon County Schools (LCS) in partnership with the Department of Education's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Office of Interagency Programs (OIP); and the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) will implement an evidence-based pilot which utilizes the Transition Services Integration model in conjunction with Customized Employment and Discovery for career preparation and work-based learning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish cross-agency performance management and quality improvement strategies that define accountability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BIWG is working with FETPIP to develop a three-tiered data system for aligning and reporting performance measures relative to transition services in the state.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seek federal approval to expand the Florida Freedom Initiative that is currently approved on a pilot basis statewide for 1,500 people with developmental disabilities to all Individuals enrolled on any waiver programs, if the pilot proves successful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A one-year, no-cost extension has been granted for the Florida Freedom Initiative, and APD is in negotiations with the Social Security Administration to extend the waiver beyond that timeframe to insure adequate time for meaningful outcomes and data collection
Mid Term (2-3 years)	Semi-Annual Update
2) Essential	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand the Florida Freedom Initiative, contingent on demonstration of effectiveness to promote employment and home ownership for people with developmental disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A one-year, no-cost extension has been granted for the Florida Freedom Initiative, and APD is in negotiations with the Social Security Administration to extend the waiver beyond that timeframe to insure adequate time for meaningful outcomes and data collection
Mid Term (2-3 years)	Semi-Annual Update
3) Important	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish on-going funding for training and certification of providers in the employment field. Develop and implement a competency-based curriculum for certification and on-going training of employment personnel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ FDDC will fund year two (2006-07) of the Statewide Competitive Integrated Employment Training Team project to develop a training system that will build a network of qualified employment professionals throughout the state. ▪ Under the scope of the MIG, a total of 13 supported

	<p>employment and benefits management trainings for people working in the disability field have been scheduled in the four pilot sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ FDDC has funded the Micro-Enterprise Training and Technical Assistance project for individuals with developmental disabilities to create small self-employment business opportunities ▪ The Supported Employment Web-Based Training Initiative was expanded from the pilots funded by the FDDC to an on-going training opportunity funded by APD.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A statewide assessment system which measures year-to-year progress, that is, whether every student is learning; and their progress is included in school grades. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HB7087 requires that DOE implement an alternate assessment tool that accurately measures the skills and competencies established in the SSS for students with disabilities for students seeking a special diploma. Furthermore, it requires the learning gains of exceptional students seeking a special diploma, as measured by an alternate assessment, to be included in each school's grade calculation by the 2009-2010 school year.
Long Term (3-5 years)	Semi-Annual Update
1) Most Critical	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand transportation opportunities for people to gain timely, responsive and affordable rides to workplaces, including evenings and weekends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Under the scope of the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG), APD has conducted five transportation forums throughout the state during the spring of 2006 to solicit public input and recommendations for transportation that is timely, responsive, and affordable in the state. ▪ The FDDC is currently soliciting proposals through competitive RFP to find a provider to create a guidebook that teaches methods of accessing public transportation to people with developmental disabilities.

**APPENDIX II
 FLORIDA'S BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE ON INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY LIVING,
 TRANSITION, & EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL
 DISABILITIES
 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

Short Term Recommendations (1 year)
1) Most Critical
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designate the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC) to establish, facilitate, and coordinate a BRTF Implementation Working Group (BIWG), which will include participation from agency heads or their designated senior staff who can make policy and/or budget decisions and recommendations and their staff needed to support planning and implementation. This working group should include, but not be limited to, the Department of Education (DOE), Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), Department of Education Vocational Rehabilitation (DOE-VR), Agency for Healthcare Administration (AHCA), Department of Health – Children’s Medical Services (DOH-CMS), Department of Children and Families (DCF), Workforce Florida, Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, and the Florida Housing Finance Corporation. The BIWG should meet at least quarterly to oversee, direct and coordinate the implementation of the BRFT recommendations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Request the Agency/Department heads of the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council BIWG report the progress of implementation of recommendations in this report every six months to the Governor and annually to the Legislature with the first report due July 15, 2005.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish a Florida-based website with information that empowers people with developmental disabilities, and their families, to make informed decisions, and increase their full participation and inclusion in home, school work, and the community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a process for ensuring that families are informed about the long-term impact of their decisions (e.g. FCAT, diploma options, course selection, and guardianship options) on their child's access to school, post-secondary programs and employment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Involve families of transition age students, and the communities, in which they live so that opportunities for employment, based on a person’s interests and capabilities, can be identified early and the school system can work to help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All IEPs must consistently include evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Knowledge and understanding by the student and/or his/her legal guardian of what he/she is entitled to under the IDEA and ADA including assistive technology and transportation ➤ A statement of interagency responsibilities that should be, and that are, operative before a student exits school. ➤ Services provided by non-educational agencies. ➤ An outcome-oriented process that includes, but is not limited to, if and how the student will be involved in post-secondary education, career training, continued career development, integrated employment, supported employment and/or adult education at the point of exit from high school. ➤ Individualized and meaningful vocational evaluations having been conducted. ➤ Meaningful experiences leading to post-school community participation and the realization of individualized employment, independent living and

<p>other post school objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Acquisition and utilization of transportation options.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examine the possibility of allocating a portion of the Federal Workforce system funds including the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) state set aside (\$20 million for FY 03-04) for competitive, integrated employment, including self-employment and training to benefit people with developmental disabilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Endorse the APD five-year initiative to enable 25% of people currently in segregated day programs to access and maintain employment as part of the performance measure to achieve employment of 50% of all people receiving day services to attain employment by 2009.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement procedures to identify employment aspirations of people with developmental disabilities (including employed, unemployed, and underemployed) and develop an implementation plan to reach their goals in a timely manner.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and implement individual transition plans for people in segregated settings based upon their employment aspirations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage local Public Housing Authority's (PHAs), to: (a) Include in their local plans a percentage of Section 8 vouchers for people with developmental disabilities, (b) Continue to fund those vouchers currently used for people with developmental disabilities in the future, and (c) To include in their plans the option of Section 8 for homeownership.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create new housing non-profits or establish partnerships with existing nonprofit housing organizations so that at least one non-profit organization exists in each county that provides affordable housing options for Individuals with developmental disabilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educate and inform all stakeholders regarding available housing resources and options in Florida including: How to blend and braid various options to maximize community living. How to increase the amount of affordable housing funds that are dedicated to assisting people with developmental disabilities.
<p>Short Term Recommendations (1 year)</p>
<p>2) Essential</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage agency heads to incorporate BRTF recommendations into each agency's long-range program plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop practical solutions to barriers in the creation and support of individual development accounts and self-directed accounts that allow the braiding of funds and embrace asset-building goals such as: Participating in the FDDC asset-building summit, Clarifying conflicting interpretations of current regulations, Recommending new policies or regulatory language, and Requesting federal waiver and/or interpretation of proposed policy or practice changes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aggressively involve financial institutions and other private sector stakeholders to develop strategies to invest financial resources in IDAs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide user-friendly, accessible information to people with disabilities and their families regarding employment, self-employment and the creation of personal wealth.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure through oversight and monitoring that providers are using person-centered, self-determination approaches to achieve individual employment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council's Business Leadership Network (BLN) initiative to a statewide project including the involvement of the Able Trust as a funding partner.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Include the achievement of employment goals/outcomes in the performance evaluation of agency heads.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that individual employment outcomes are achieved through person-

centered self-directed service approaches.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct APD employees to refer individuals on the waiting list who want employment and do not need long-term services to alternative, generic employment resources such as One-Stop Career Centers, Vocational Rehabilitation, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a system for ensuring that students and their families and educators are informed about the acquisition, utilization and ongoing upgrades of assistive technology.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a Governor's initiative to establish public/private partnerships (grocery companies, medical groups/sites, Business Leadership Networks, private foundations) that will enhance employment, transportation, housing and other support systems needed by people with developmental disabilities to live in their community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the Agency for Persons with Disabilities quality management grant from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, entitled "Consumer Approach to Quality Management."
Short Term Recommendations (1 year)
3) Important
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish standards for people-centered planning that will be implemented by employment providers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Require annual reports and presentations to the Governor and legislators regarding employment outcomes for people with disabilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council's statewide inclusion alliance and public awareness campaign.
Mid Term (2-3 years)
1) Most Critical
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State agencies must enable and empower people with developmental disabilities to: a) Pursue economic self-sufficiency, as well as meaningful and productive lives, particularly work in competitive, integrated settings; b) Live in inclusive environments in the community; c) Receive services and supports that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ••Consumer-driven and directed, with strong involvement of family and others, when requested by the person with a disability, ••Based on individual needs, informed choice, and personally determined goals, outcomes, and choice of providers, and ••Consistent with each person's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, and capabilities; and d) Live free of abuse, neglect, financial and sexual exploitation, as well as violations of human, legal and civil rights.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ State agencies must work collaboratively to identify and align policies, practices, and resources that: a) Facilitate the provision of comprehensive, person-centered services and supports, and b) Eliminate barriers that impede inclusive community living options, competitive, integrated employment, and smooth transition among and between programs and systems.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An individual profile of all people with developmental disabilities receiving and requesting services including information on transition services, employment, housing, and health care.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Person-specific information used to monitor outcomes and drive quality improvement for people with developmental disabilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transition outcome measures, which incorporate the research-based Transition Guideposts for Success articulated in the partners in Transition Florida Strategic Plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A statewide assessment system which measures year-to-year progress, that is,

<p>whether every student is learning; and their progress is included in school grades.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An incentive system, which rewards schools for students achieving integrated, competitive employment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Existing Florida Department of Education (DOE) data collection system (warehouse) is enhanced so that performance information, relative to the transition system, can be provided to each process and partner in order for all aspects of the system to be improved.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement a method to provide appropriate, individualized employment training and services (including transportation services) beginning at an early age (middle school) as a method to develop and refine employability and technical skills ultimately resulting in integrated, competitive work for students.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop alternative approaches to funding practices and formulas, which would ensure choice for families and funding which follows the student, (e.g., expand use of McKay Scholarships to include community rehabilitation providers and other creative approaches).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revise special diploma competencies and course requirements making all graduation options meaningful which, for example, include; Employment-related competencies and experiences, and Futures financial planning coursework.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make necessary statutory, regulatory and/or policy changes at the state level to ensure that assistive technology follows the student (e.g., from school to home, school to school and school to post-school).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create strategies for teachers to become educated and/or certified in “transition”.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A coordinated set of school to post-school transition services, activities and outcomes as envisioned in the Partners in Transition Florida Strategic Plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Require APD and Florida Workforce Development system to develop strategies together to employ people with developmental disabilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create strategies to assist providers in the conversion / transition from segregated services to community employment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruit providers who demonstrate BRTF values and principles to meet the demands of people seeking competitive employment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish cross-agency performance management and quality improvement strategies that define accountability.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Amend Chapter 393, F.S., to make employment the primary service objective for people with disabilities. If people of working age do not have an employment goal on their support plan, other day services can only be received by exception or prior approval process.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seek federal approval to expand the Florida Freedom Initiative that is currently approved on a pilot basis statewide for 1,500 people with developmental disabilities to all Individuals enrolled on any waiver programs, if the pilot proves successful.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Require peer support and circle of support opportunities for each person with developmental disabilities to be included in support plans and individual education plans to facilitate ongoing and meaningful relationships, natural supports and community membership.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with the Florida Housing Finance corporation (FHFC) to amend its housing development applications in a manner that will optimize resources dedicated to providing affordable and accessible community-based housing for people with developmental disabilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand school systems’ life skill curriculum and transition planning to include all housing options, housing market options, and financial planning for each of those options.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand the existing role of community colleges and other inclusive educational institutions to provide outreach to and lifelong educational opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish public/private partnerships, including universities, community colleges, and vocational/technical schools, to expand the availability of training resources to all providers in order to promote best practices and quality outcomes, including but not limited to competency-based curriculums.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify potential resources to provide technical assistance to other providers specifically to assist in transitioning from adult day training to employment services and from group living arrangements to supported living models.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider incorporating 2003 Legislative proviso language in Chapter 393, F.S., directing the AHCA in collaboration with the APD to expand the consumer-directed option to all Individuals who are currently enrolled in the Developmental Services' Home and Community-Based Services Waiver and the Family ad Supported Living Waiver.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a two year Governor's initiative to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Establish a statewide inclusive community living education and resource program through a university or other educational institution. This resource would provide ongoing education, training and assistance for people with disabilities and their families about community living opportunities (including such topics as asset-building, self-determination, employment, housing options, social security benefits, work incentives, etc); and ➢ Obtain resources to establish an inclusive community living education and training network available to people with disabilities and their families by blending state agency resources, grant funding, and private banks and corporate contributions. State agencies' participants include representatives from Agency for Persons with Disabilities, Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of Blind Services, Department of Education (especially community colleges), and the Association for Individuals in Supported Employment (APSE), etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Require all state agencies providing services to people with disabilities to adopt regulations and polices that encompass self-determination principles, as well as a plan to add training and technical assistance for provider personnel.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assess the feasibility of expanding the requirement of statewide universal design codes to all state/federally-funded multi-family (3 units or less) and single-family housing for people with developmental disabilities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish interagency agreements to assure full implementation of recommendations in community living with clear goals, targets and performance measures for each agency.
<p>Mid Term (2-3 years)</p>
<p>2) Essential</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement a simple, streamlined, web-based application for eligibility and for referral to all possible services and programs in Florida.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An evaluation of services received in terms of accessibility and appropriateness, as well as efficiency and cost-effectiveness;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop new and enhance existing instructional programs which support professional and industry standards and create opportunities for youth to demonstrate self-determination, social interaction, and skills necessary to achieve and maintain physical and emotional health.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a system for qualifying new and existing personnel responsible for

<p>providing employment-related services and supports, including on-the-job training, supported employment and other approaches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand the Florida Freedom Initiative, contingent on demonstration of effectiveness to promote employment and home ownership for people with developmental disabilities. ▪ Eliminate state-imposed work disincentives. An example includes people with disabilities not being declared a “minority” for minority business purchase priority. ▪ Create asset developmental strategies (individual development accounts).
<p>Mid Term (2-3 years)</p>
<p>3) Important</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish on-going funding for training and certification of providers in the employment field. Develop and implement a competency-based curriculum for certification and on-going training of employment personnel. ▪ Adopt and implement a uniform set of quality indicators for employment outcomes that are consistent with leading-edge policy and practice nationwide.
<p>Long Term (3-5 years)</p>
<p>1) Most Critical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider options as part of Florida’s Medicaid modernization that significantly reduce or eliminate disincentives associated with income from employment and other asset-building activities, which may affect eligibility for Medicaid. ▪ Expand transportation opportunities for people to gain timely, responsive and affordable rides to workplaces, including evenings and weekends. ▪ Increase and maximize funding to expand the number of people who can receive services under the Developmental Services Home and Community-Based Services Waiver, Consumer Directed Care Plus Waiver, and/or the Family and Supported Living Waiver.
<p>Long Term (3-5 years)</p>
<p>2) Essential</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider implementing the “Interim Report on Best Practices for the Employment of People with Disabilities in State Government, October 29, 2004.” As a result state agencies can serve as model employers to the business community for the hiring of people with disabilities.
<p>Long Term (3-5 years)</p>
<p>3) Important</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand employment options by simplifying the procurement process and vendor qualifications. ▪ Create tax credits that encourage the hiring of people with disabilities and assist in real costs that may be necessary for employing some people with disabilities. ▪ Provider preferences in the state procurement process to businesses that employ people with disabilities, especially people with significant disabilities. ▪ Integrate data systems across agencies. ▪ Develop a quality improvement strategy based on performance outcomes.

