

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;
- 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 38 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.

2014-2015 SWAP Sites School District/BOCES:

Academy 20.....	719-234-1333	Jefferson County.....	303-982-7014
Adams 1, 12	720-872-2660	Littleton.....	303-221-2031
Adams 14	303-853-3294	Mesa County.....	970-254-6008
Adams 50	720-542-4582	Moffat County	970-756-7927
Aurora	303-344-4910	Montrose.....	970-249-7783
Boulder	720-561-5312	Northeast BOCES	970-774-6152
Brighton.....	303-655-4197	Pikes Peak BOCES	719-380-6256
Buena Vista.....	719-395-4064	Poudre	970-490-3286
Cañon City	719-276-6173	Rio Blanco BOCES	970-629-5333
Centennial BOCES	970-352-7404	Salida.....	719-207-1509
Cherry Creek	720-886-5871	San Juan BOCES.....	970-247-1178
Co. Springs 11.....	719-328-3092	San Luis Valley	719-589-5851
Delta	970-874-7607	St. Vrain	303-772-7700
Denver	303-866-3869	Thompson.....	970-669-8349
Douglas County.....	303-387-1104	Uncompahgre BOCES.....	970-626-2977
Englewood/Sheridan	303-866-4458	Windsor	970-686-8078
Estes Park.....	970-586-2361	Ute Pass BOCES.....	719-686-2457
Ft. Lupton.....	303-857-7295		
Greeley 6.....	970-348-1080		

