

# Serving Younger Students Presentation Capacity Building Conference

October 24, 2023

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# PRESENTERS

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# AGENDA

- Who Are Younger Students and Why We Serve Them?
- Challenges of Serving Younger Students
- Progression of Pre-employment Transition Services Model:
  - Assessing the Student's Need for Pre-ETS
  - Provision of Pre-ETS Training and Development
  - Application in the Real-World

# AGENDA (CON'T)

- **When to use Potentially Eligible vs. VR Application**
- **Recommendations**
- **Strategies to Serve Younger Students in Schools**
- **Links to Available Resources**

# WHO ARE “YOUNGER STUDENTS”?

For the purpose of today’s training, we have defined “younger students” as students with a disability between the ages of 14-16.

As of October 2023, 2116 TWC customers are between the ages of 14-16 (44% are potentially eligible and 56% are in other phases).



# WHY SERVE YOUNGER STUDENTS?

WIOA says, “**Pre-employment transition services** must be made available Statewide to all students with disabilities, regardless of whether the student has applied or been determined eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.”

Experience has shown us that students who receive multiple Pre-ETS over an extended amount of time, especially work-based learning<sup>1</sup>, are more successful at achieving post-secondary goals.

<sup>1</sup> Doren and Benz (1998)

# CHALLENGES SERVING YOUNGER STUDENTS

- Need Pre-ETS that focus on younger students.
- For younger Students, schools focus on academic credits and not Pre-ETS.
- Often start Pre-ETS with Seniors, but this could be too late.
- We should start conversations about goal setting, talking to parents, and working on skills earlier (even before the age of 14).

# CHALLENGES SERVING YOUNGER STUDENTS (CON'T)

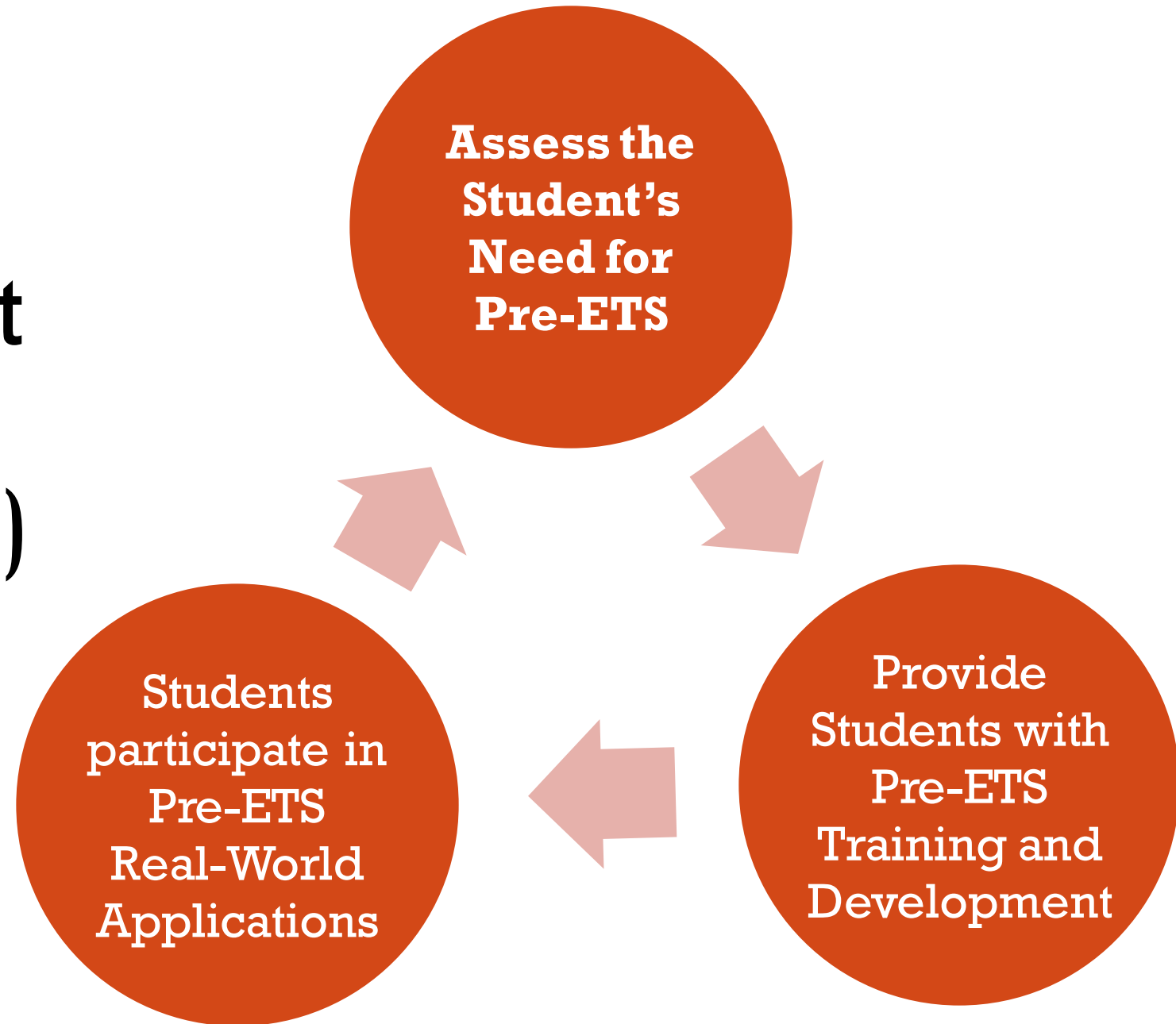
- Not having school administration buy-in to let VR Counselors have access to Younger Students.
- Younger Students may not understand VR jargon (e.g. Service Providers).
- Misconception that we can only provide a Pre-ETS service once.



Turn Problems  
Into Opportunities



# Progression of Pre- Employment Transition Services (ETS) Model



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Would the Student benefit from learning more about their abilities?

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Would the Student benefit from enhanced self-confidence/self-esteem?

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Can the Student effectively communicate, convey, negotiate, and assert their interests and desires?

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Does the Student know how to request and accept help?

# ASSESSING STUDENT'S NEED FOR PRE-ETS SELF ADVOCACY

# ASSESSING STUDENT'S NEED FOR PRE-ETS CAREER EXPLORATION

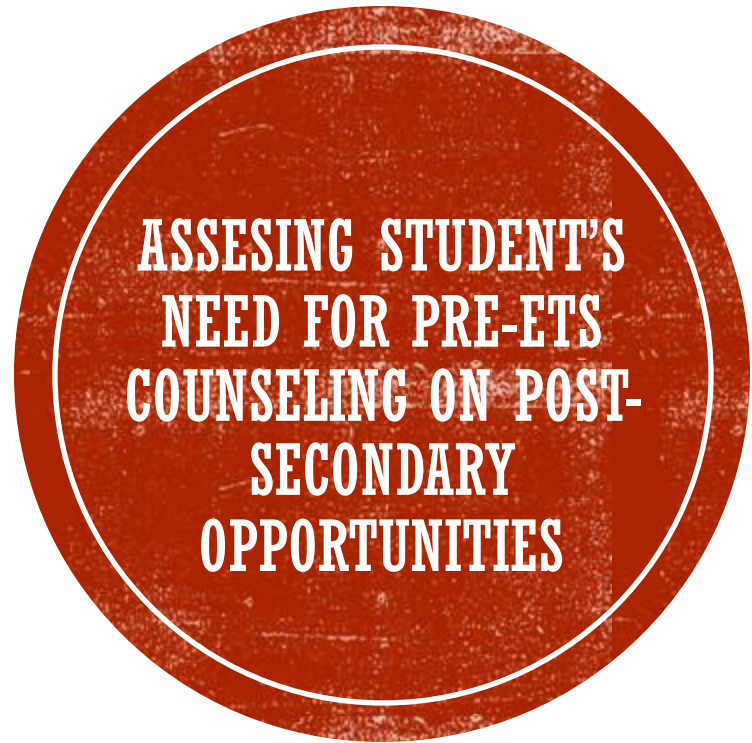
- What is the Student passionate about? Do they have a plan to achieve their dreams?
- Would the Student be motivated by participating in interest Inventories, labor market information and assessments including Texas OnCourse, O'NET, LMCI, Jobs Y'all?
- Is the Student open to attending virtual career fairs, job shadowing, industry tours, or accessing informational interview videos with businesses in their career pathway of interest?





# ASSESSING STUDENT'S NEED FOR PRE-ETS JOB READINESS

- Does the Student know how to set goals to achieve their dream job?
- Does the Student have a work history?
- Would the Student benefit from soft-skills training to improve interaction with their peers & teachers that could be transferred over to the workplace?
- Is there an area of job readiness that the Student needs to work on, such as time management or conflict resolution?



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Does the Student know how to plan for college to achieve their dreams?

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Do they have a support system to help them explore post-secondary opportunities?

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Is the Student considering post-secondary training, vocational training and/or the military?

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Can the Student express what accommodations may be needed to participate in classes?



# ASSESSING THE STUDENT'S NEED FOR PRE-ETS WORK-BASED LEARNING

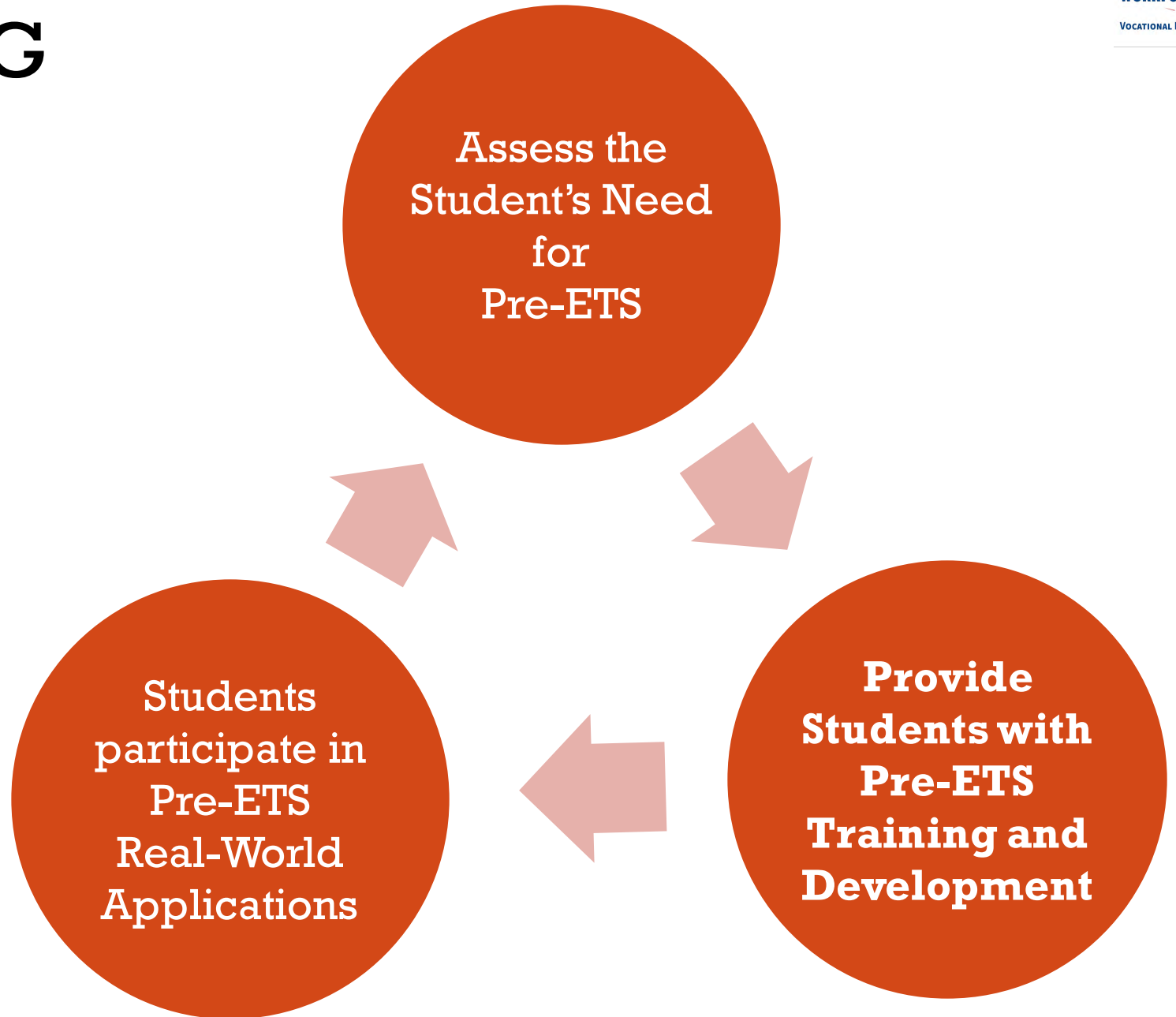
- Would they like to explore different jobs through short-term work experiences such as SEAL?
- Is the Student motivated to make money?
- Would summer work experience help them develop a concept of work?
- Would an internship or volunteer position benefit the Student through an Employment Services Provider (ESP), (Work Experience), or Paid Work Experience (PWE), or as a counselor-directed placement?

# OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- What if the school doesn't have enough younger Students?
  - Younger Students can be grouped from multiple schools to participate in a training together with the same provider.
- Students are sometimes busy during summer and can't participate in Pre-ETS.
  - Let the Student know they can get services during the school year, including Spring Break and Christmas Break.

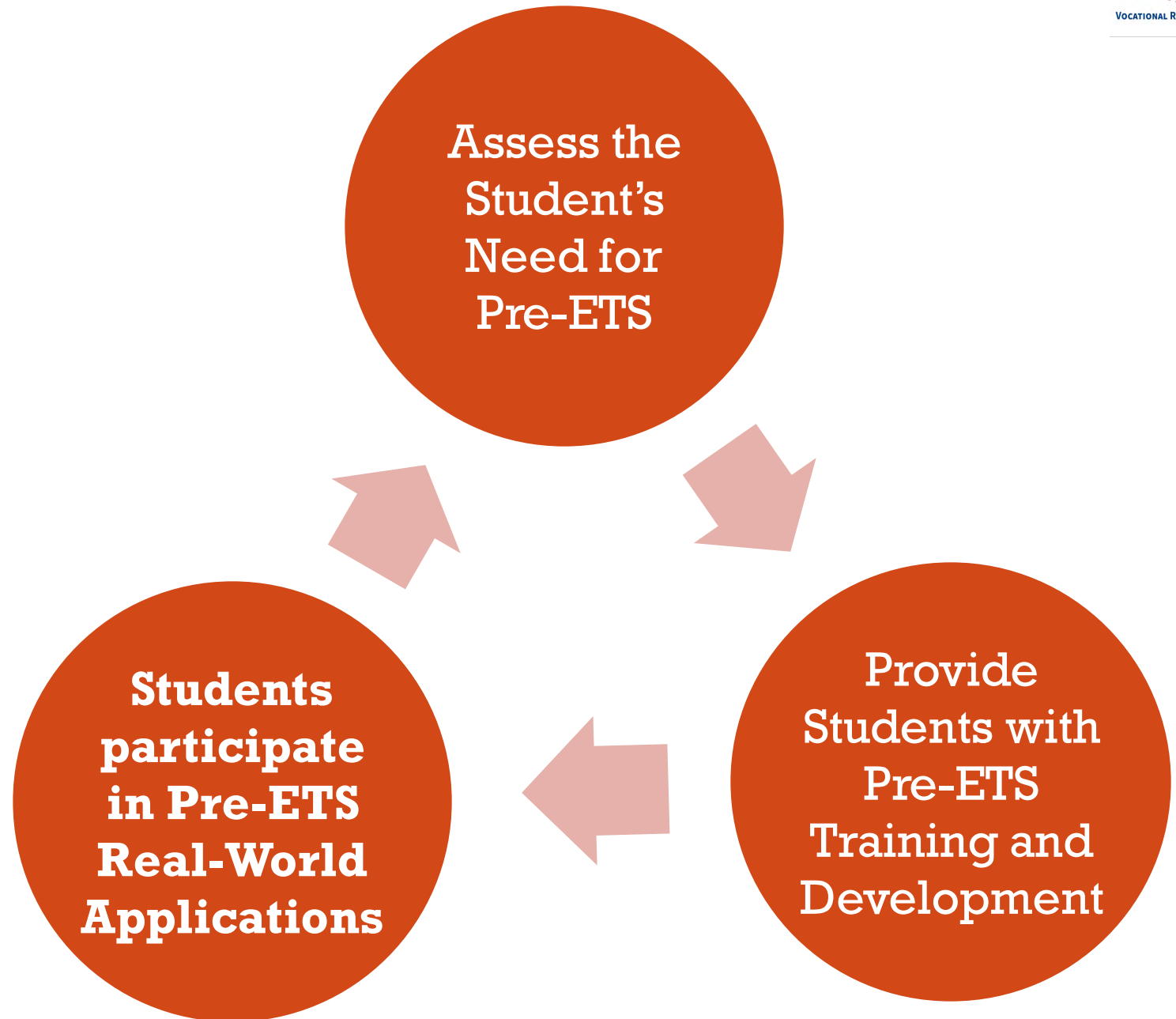
# PRE-ETS TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- Contracted Pre-ETS
- Explore STEM!
- 2023 Pre-ETS Summer Activities
- Vocational Adjustment Training Courses (Pre-ETS)



# PRE-ETS REAL WORLD APPLICATIONS

- Work-based Learning
  - Summer Earn and Learn
  - Year-round Paid Work Experience
  - Job Shadowing
  - Unpaid Internships
- Group Skills Training



# PRE-ETS SUPPORT SERVICES

- **Driver's and Transportation Training - Public Transportation is not always available.**
- **Applied Behavior Analysis (Social Skills Training).**
- **Birkman Career Exploration Assessment – provides in-depth information about the best employment environments that will be most effective for Students (great tool for C&Gs).**
- **Parental Involvement in GSTs and other available Camps – provides specific information about services and supports for their Student with disability.**

Reference the Menu of available Pre-Employment Transition Services (available to VR Staff only)

# WHEN TO USE POTENTIALLY ELIGIBLE

Use Potentially Eligible for a Younger Student When:

- a) The Student will only need Pre-ETS at this time;
- b) The Student has not expressed interest in applying for VR services;
- c) The Student would like to participate in a Pre-ETS activity in the immediate future; or
- d) The Student is at the beginning of their career exploration with limited experience or knowledge of career interests and would benefit from Pre-ETS at this time.





# WHEN TO TAKE AN APPLICATION

Take an Application for a Younger Student When:

- a) The Student has a need for additional support services which cannot be provided under potentially eligible, such as, work experience training, transportation, and will need an IPE to participate in Pre-ETS;
- b) The Student has expressed interest in applying for VR services and does not plan to participate in Pre-ETS immediately; or
- c) The Student has identified their Career Pathway of Interest and will benefit from VR services on an IPE.

# COORDINATING PRE-ETS PROVISION BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND VR

- Interagency collaboration between VR and Schools is required for joint planning and coordination by WIOA in 2014. <sup>4</sup>
- According to MOU, communication is encouraged between school and agency. Participation in meetings should also be discussed and expectations should be expressly communicated between all parties.
- Consider taking time to learn your counterparts' duties.
- Demonstrate intent at successful collaboration with frequent communication, mutual respect and consensus in decisions.

# COORDINATING PRE-ETS PROVISION BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND VR (CON'T)

- Counselor and Rehab Assistant (RA) should work in partnership:
  - Introduce RA to the schools, students and parents/guardians as a member of the team early in the process.
  - Work together to get necessary forms signed as soon as possible.
  - Add 'Release Forms Follow-Up' to your weekly Counselor/RA meetings.
  - Discuss implementation of system for forms being signed and/or sent home and returned ("Who does what?")

# COORDINATING PRE-ETS PROVISION BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND VR (CON'T.)

- Follow the 'It Takes a Village' approach.
  - ARDs are a great time to discuss beneficial programs with guardians;
  - Parents/Guardians want the Students to build independence;
  - Indicators can be met with VR "participation." This looks differently for each counselor and campus, so communication is important.
  - Find "Your Person"- Establish main points of contact for Sped Referrals, 504 referrals, scheduling contact, Admin, etc.
  - Agree on frequency of meetings.

# COORDINATING PRE-ETS PROVISION BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND VR (CON'T..)

- Establish a goal to serve Younger Students and getting them enrolled in TWC services sooner and quicker.
- Best time to work with Younger Students is after school and/or after 5 pm. So, flexibility is important.
- Develop a “School Plan” using TWC template documents or one of your own creation.
- Follow-up with Students and Parents/Guardians on a timely basis.

# COORDINATING PRE-ETS PROVISION BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND VR (CON'T...)

- Remember that Pre-ETS is not a linear process. Reassess the need for additional Pre-ETS after each service. Younger students may need exposure to the different Pre-ETS categories and services more than once.
- Goals can be shared between VR and Schools and expressed on IEP paperwork and VR plans for employment.
- Ensure students understand that services through TWC do not stop at graduation and that VR is 'the Bridge'.



# SERVING YOUNGER STUDENTS IS A WIN-WIN

- Multiple Pre-ETS provided to a Younger Student over time increases their chance of future employment.
- If the family is involved, research shows it will lead to better outcomes.
- Serving Younger Students make them available for future Pre-ETS projects/camps.
- Students participating earlier intervention tend to need less assistance and intervention as Adults with Disabilities.

# LINKS TO AVAILABLE RESOURCES

1. [Pre-ETS Catalog from by Texas A&M](#)
2. [Transition and Employment Guide from Texas Transition Student-Centered Transitions Network](#)
3. Transition Intranet Page - [Vocational Rehabilitation Division: Transition Services for Students and Youth with Disabilities \(texas.gov\)](#)

# LINKS TO AVAILABLE RESOURCES (CON'T)

4. [VRSM C-1305-6: Providing Pre-Employment Transition Services](#)
5. [Memorandum of Understanding \(texas.gov\)](#)

*Thank You for Attending the*  
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