

# Inclusive Higher Education in Kentucky

*Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) Programs*

**KATS Network**

*2021 Assistive Technology Summer Institute*

June 14, 2021

# UK Human Development Institute (HDI)

- UK-HDI is Kentucky's University Center on Disability and part of the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) national network.
- For more than 50 years, HDI has served as a major leader in thought, policy, and science regarding the lived experiences of people with disabilities.
- A major, university-wide unit of UK, administered through the Office of the Vice President for Research.
- HDI's mission is to improve inclusion, independence, and opportunities for people with disabilities and their families throughout the lifespan.
- Priority areas include *early childhood, education, leadership & self-advocacy, employment, health, universal design & assistive technology, and research & evaluation.*

# Questions I Hope To Address Today

- I. Why are we talking about higher education and students with significant disabilities?
- II. What is the correlation between higher education and employment for individuals with significant disabilities?
- III. What are our expectations as a state related to people with disabilities and Kentucky's workforce?
- IV. What is the Kentucky Supported Higher Education Partnership?
- IV. What are Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Programs and what do they mean for students?

# Underrepresentation of Students with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) in Higher Education

## In Kentucky:

- Only **18% of students with disabilities** (*across disability categories*) are enrolled at a college or university.
- Only **6% of students with ID** are enrolled at a college or university.

Kentucky Post-School Outcomes Center (KYPSO), Youth-One-Year-Out (YOYO), 2020

# Underrepresentation of Students with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) in Higher Education

*The underrepresentation of students with ID in higher education is a longstanding and pervasive problem in Kentucky.*

Yet, we know that higher education:

- Equips students with significant disabilities with the knowledge and skills needed for success in life; and
- Yields a solid return on investment.

# Power of Higher Education to Improve Outcomes

- Students with ID who complete *at least some* postsecondary education are more likely to:
  - be employed;
  - work more hours;
  - earn more per hour; and
  - be employed in a greater range of vocations [*Cimera et al., 2018*].
- **64%** of students with ID who attended *an inclusive higher education program* were employed one year after college exit [*Grigal et al., 2019*];
  - **72%** were employed two years after exit [*Grigal et al., 2019*].

# Employment First

“It is the policy of the Commonwealth of Kentucky that competitive integrated employment in the community shall be considered the first and primary option for persons with disabilities of working age who desire to become employed.”

Governor Andy Beshear, Executive Order, June 29, 2020

*This policy includes students with disabilities of working age who desire to become employed, including students with significant disabilities.*



# Kentucky Supported Higher Education Partnership (KSHEP)



## KSHEP is:

- A network of Kentucky colleges and universities offering inclusive higher education programs, such as Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) programs.
- Committed to harnessing the power of inclusive higher education to improve employment outcomes for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

## And will:

- Contribute positively toward building a truly inclusive workforce in Kentucky.



# Overview of CTPs

# Comprehensive Transition & Postsecondary Programs (CTPs)

*Higher education programs that have been through an approval process and can offer access to federal financial aid*

- Created by the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA, 2008).
- Designed to support students with ID who want to continue academic, career and technical, and independent living instruction at an institution of higher education (IHE) in order to prepare for competitive integrated employment.
  - ✓ Social and academic integration of students with ID with their non-disabled peers;
  - ✓ Individualized person-centered planning to improve needed skills and competencies for employment in a preferred career;
  - ✓ Course of study leading to a meaningful credential.

# CTPs - *Requirements*

Requires students with ID to have at least one-half of their participation in the program, as determined by the institution, **focus on academic components** through one or more of the following activities:

- Taking credit-bearing courses **with students without disabilities**;
- Auditing or otherwise participating in courses **with students without disabilities** for which the student does not receive regular academic credit;
- Taking non-credit-bearing, non-degree courses **with students without disabilities**;
- Participating in internships or work-based training in settings **with individuals without disabilities**.

(HEOA, 2008)

# CTPs – *Program Eligibility*

## Students who:

- Have a documented ID

## Student with an ID means a student –

- (A) with a cognitive impairment characterized by significant limitations in:
- (i) intellectual and cognitive functioning; and
  - (ii) adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills.
- (B) who is currently, or was formerly, eligible for a FAPE under the IDEA.

(HEOA, 2008)

# CTPs – *Federal & State Financial Assistance*

## Students with ID enrolled in an approved CTP:

- Are eligible for **Federal and State financial assistance** (*even if they don't have a high school diploma and are not pursuing a standard degree*).
  - Federal Pell Grant, Work-Study; and
  - Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES) Program funding.
    - *\$500 if enrolled in at least six hours in an academic term.*
    - *\$250 if enrolled in less than six hours in an academic term.*

# KEES & CTPs

- **The ONLY eligibility requirements** for students enrolled in an approved CTP to receive KEES are:
  - Received an alternative high school diploma, **or**
  - Attended a Kentucky public HS and is student with ID; **and**
  - Enroll in a Kentucky CTP.

KRS 164.7882

*No further application or action is required in order for the student to receive KEES.*

# CTPs in Kentucky

There are currently three Kentucky IHEs with approved CTP programs, and one CTP application in process:

- Murray State University
- Northern Kentucky University
- Bluegrass Community & Technical College
- **University of Kentucky** (*application submitted*)

# Universal Design & Assistive Technology

These programs work to provide diverse and multiple pathways to student success with a commitment to **Universal Design (UD)** and **Assistive Technology (AT)**.

- Attend to the principles of UD and AT in all program activities, including distance education and extracurricular activities;
- Provide support to faculty and staff in the areas of UD and AT;
- Ensure that mentors receive an AT assessment and address the needs of those who do not have access to technology;
- Support diverse stakeholders in better understanding and effectively implementing the principles of UD in physical, learning, and virtual environments; and
- Ensure that all content is accessible and utilize best practice for adult learners.



# What Are the Barriers?

A **2018 Focus Group** found that the greatest barriers to students with ID enrolling in higher education were:

- Lack of funding;
- Lack of knowledge, information, and communication;
- Lack of programs.

# How are we addressing these barriers?

Working with partners to *increase higher education options, access, and success* for students with ID.

- To enroll and be successful in inclusive higher education programs *after leaving high school*;
- To enroll and be successful in inclusive higher education programs *while still in high school* (Dual Enrollment).

# U.S. Dept of Education Q&A (2019)

## *Increasing Postsecondary Opportunities and Success for Students and Youth with Disabilities*

Describes how SEAs, LEAs, and State VR agencies may coordinate to assist students and youth with disabilities, **including students and youth with intellectual disabilities** who are in high school and at postsecondary education institutions, **through appropriate supports funded under the IDEA and WIOA.**

# Kentucky's Commitment and Investment

During both the 2020 and 2021 regular sessions, the Kentucky General Assembly appropriated \$500,000 to HDI to support students in inclusive higher education programs.

- To provide customized technical assistance and direct support to IHEs to **establish or enhance** postsecondary programs that advance the academic success and social inclusion of students with ID.

# Statewide Technical Assistance Center at HDI

HDI provides customized technical assistance to existing CTPs and IHEs interested in establishing a program.

- Program improvement for current CTPs;
- Establishment of new CTPs;
- Development and implementation of student-centered planning;
- Academic and social supports and services (including mentoring);
- Collaboration and coordination across systems;
- Individualized support to students and families;
- Promoting leadership development of and by people with ID;
- Conduct research and evaluation.

In light of the inequities that have disproportionately characterized the education and postsecondary life of Kentucky students with significant disabilities, we intend to:

- challenge the *status quo*, and
- work with partners and other stakeholders to pursue multi-systems and transformational change.

**Improved educational, employment, and other life outcomes  
for students with significant disabilities.**

# Resources

## *CTP Program Briefs*

- [Students and Families](#)
- [Educators](#)
- [Institutions of Higher Education](#)
- VR Counselors & Other Providers (*COMING SOON*)
- State & Federal Financial Assistance (*COMING SOON*)

## *Additional Resources*

- [KentuckyWorks - Postsecondary Education](#)
- [Employment First Kentucky](#)
- [ThinkCollege](#)

# Contact Information

If you would like additional information, please contact:

**Johnny W. Collett**

*Deputy Director, HDI*

[johnny.collett@uky.edu](mailto:johnny.collett@uky.edu)

**Erin Fitzgerald**

*Disability Program Specialist, HDI*

[Erin.Fitzgerald@uky.edu](mailto:Erin.Fitzgerald@uky.edu)





**QUESTIONS**

**ANSWERS**