

CTE Summit_2019

Transcript of Presentation by OSERS Assistant Secretary and RSA Commissioner, Mark Schultz & Assistant Secretary for Community Colleges at OCTAE, Casey Sacks

Casey: I'm Casey Sacks(?) and it is great to be with you all today. So career technical education. In my office we do a whole bunch of things. Career technical education which is not super surprising to you, technical education is also in the title. We also have correctional education, so we have a number of programs that are running in jails and prisons across the country, and community colleges. So, I talk to you after spending nine years with the Colorado community college system and another several years with the West Virginia community college system. I was most recently the Vice Chancellor for the West Virginia system, so I had nine colleges, nine presidents, and ten more that I spent most of my time with. Both of those systems supervise career and technical education for their respective states, so I come at this with a very rich history of how CTE works, and how state systems work, and what K12 and community colleges can do to better collaborate with each other.

Mark: Good morning everyone. So, I officiate the introductions by day. I was just home for the holidays and there is nothing like going back home. When you called me esteemed, you put in your place right? I have seven sisters and they worked very hard to keep me humble. So my background. Actually I was a degree in architecture and I got into the disability field by working in a center for living and started doing various re-design, working with people with disabilities. I when you become passionate for it and really saw what a difference it made in people's lives. I went from working for a center for independent living to working as a record assistive technology programmer when the grant first came out many years ago. Worked there for about 18 years then went into vocational rehabilitation and became the director of VR and was there for about 10 years, at which time I moved into deputy commissioner position in the department of education and ironically the part of the reorganization I had vocational rehabilitation, special education, career development education, and the federal Title programs. It was a great opportunity for the last few years to gain some experience and knowledge of all of those programs. You look at how we can work more collaboratively to be more impactful and efficient in the services that are being provided to students, particularly students with disabilities. I learned a lot between that process and the rest of the story, coming to RSA and just a little over a month ago being asked to take on the acting assistant secretary position for OSER. So, Casey and I see each other a lot in meetings but this is the first time we've actually had an opportunity to sit down fact-to-face and talk between ourselves. We're going to take advantage of that and learn and thin about each other's programs, through the presentation, but also get around to the tables and learn what you are all doing as well. I think we're both here for the day and we want to take that opportunity to learn from you and to listen as much as possible.

Casey: Sure, go ahead.

Mark: We're figuring this out as we go along. I think you saw the purpose of the summit is pretty well outlined. It creates an expectation for you. I know that you all probably came with your own individual expectations of what you thought you were going to get out of participating in the Summit. It may be just to learn and to be able to meet each other, perhaps for the first time. I'm going to share a little story on expectations that I think help me realized what a difference that creating a new expectation can make a in the lives of people with disabilities. So when I was with the assistive technology program, one of the things we did every year was go to the state fair. The state fair was a big deal in Nebraska and we exhibited some of the assistant technology devices. One year we actually had a large monitor, about a 60-inch screen and we were showing videos of assistive technology in use. One of the videos featured athletes who had a disability and were using some of the technology, and as we were showing that a family comes by and they had a young boy in a power chair and he pulls up to my monitor and he's watching all of these athletes do some amazing things. One of the athletes comes out onto a ledge and rolls out in a chair and proceeds to roll over the ledge and drop. He was on a bungee cord in the chair. It was unbelievable, I mean starting to bounce, and I'm seeing the family's reaction and the young boy in the wheelchair is going, "cool". I was looking at the parents and their jaws were on the floor. At that moment they each had very different expectations based on doing thing. My hope for you is that you're this patient in the summit today and it provides you with an opportunity to say, "That's really cool" or you're going to hear some things and just literally have your jaw on the ground thinking, "we've never thought of that, here are ways we can together". That's my hope for you in terms of creating that expectation. Also, I will go on to say that we want to create an expectation at a state level, so as you're working together, we want to make sure that you're creating an expectation that there's a commitment from leadership at all levels. Within the state education agency, is their buy in is occurring, that you're involved in getting your message about the needs of the students with disabilities into the state plan, into discussion, into strategic plans within the department of education or whatever department you're working with. So that students with disabilities are clearly a part of those decisions. There's a need to communicate those decisions so their aligned with whatever else is occurring within the department. The reason that collaboration is so important at the state level is because that models what happens at the local level. We want to be able to do that. When we're at the state level we want to continuously be looking around the table so that you're sitting around the table looking at who else is there for your state, who's missing? Who should be there? Now if that's not apparent, that's part of the discussion I want to have, is who else needs to be a part of this discussion looking at how you can collaborate moving your efforts forward. Whether that's CTE, juvenile corrections, the business community, youth leadership, parents. We didn't ask this question but how about mental health or DB agency representatives from either of those agencies here? That might be someone else to consider that plays an important part, particularly with some of the responsibilities that VR programs now have around section 5.11. Looking at who needs to be

there, right? Now it's to recognize that if you get to partners to get together and talk, that the change doesn't happen overnight. It takes a while for change to occur. That's the reason it's important to start measuring your outcomes because you need to start looking at, "are we making a difference or not?" Being able to measure your progress, so establishing benchmarks and looking at performance measures that help inform you as you move forward on your collaboration. So are you making a difference? If you're not seeing any progression or that you're falling back, being able to look at your data, look at the performance measures and being able to assess, "what do we need to do to make a change? How do we correct this or revise things so we can have a positive impact?" The other thing that provides you an opportunity to start creating those measures is the planning process for each of our program. So, for VR programs, it's typically going to encourage the WIOA, the workforce innovation opportunity state planning process. So there are opportunities to be engaged and involved in that both on the VR but also in terms of workforce in general and making sure that individual students with disabilities are included in that planning process. That planning process sets the vision for the state, but also there are requirements to look at what's going on locally and having local plans developed, and that feeds into the state plan. That happens for VR, that happens for special education, also happens for CTE, so I'm going to have Casey talk a little bit about that process so you can understand how you might engaged and involved in that as well.

Casey: Can I get a show of hands of who already been engaged in their current Perkins state planning process? Fabulous. So in your state, these are great resources for you because they are people who know who you want to talk to and how you really engage in the process, and immediate resource I can hand to you is to look at CTE.ed.gov and you are welcome to do it on your smartphones while I'm talking. What you look at on that page on the left-hand side is a tab that says state profile, and if you go to the state profile, you really don't care about the whole country, what you care about is your state. So what you do is you go in there and you pull up Colorado and you look at, "how much money does Colorado? Who's in charge of this? Where are they spending the money?" What's that look like? So 16 months ago, Congress reauthorized this act, we're in version five of what keeps being reauthorized. CTE has been very bipartisan, very popular in the last few years, so we're excited about that and we feel like we've had a lot of support certainly, which is exciting to be in that state. I've been doing this a long time and I haven't always felt like that. There have been many years where Congress says CTE is going to be funded at zero. This is a much better space. When it was reauthorized 16 months ago, states went in to process some things, "great, you've had the last plan for 11 years. What are we going to do with this new plan?" So, you folks who raised hands have been engaged or looking at performance measures or looking at outcomes. We have a dozen states who have actually said they're going to write a joint plan with WIOA, so the Perkins plan and the WIOA plan are going to be the same plan, which is very exciting. That's one of those things that's allowed but is not required, and so it's exciting to me to see who's taking advantage of that for where it makes sense. So if it makes sense in your state to recognize that you can do that, WIOA's do kind of plan revisions right now if that's a good opportunity for you to say, "you know lets integrate

this with our Perkins plan.” That might make sense for you, it might not and that’s fine, but just to know that you do have colleagues in the room who are doing this as a joint effort, I think is helpful to know. When I’ve been talking over the last year and almost a half about the Perkin planning process there is a number of things that states get to decide they don’t come from the federal level and so I think that is also really important to recognize. The first thing that your state decides in writing a Perkins plan is how the funds are split between K12 and community colleges in CTE programs. In states like Colorado, 70% of the funds go to community colleges, and states like South Carolina, 70% of the funds go to K12, and then you’ve got everything in between for all kinds of reasons in between. To recognize that also it means that there are different priorities in your state and we’ve been asking to please make these decisions intentionally and with intention as opposed to, “we’ve always done it this way so that’s why we do it this way.” We’re getting some really interesting stuff, I know Hawaii has a 50/50 split and when you ask Hawaii why they do that they say, “Well because it’s fair.” Certainly people get really emotionally tied to how our dollars are being spent, what does that mean for our state? So if you’re in a state that’s saying, “We really want robust middle school engagement and we want spend more CTE dollars in much younger grades so that we can do more career outreach and really help people understand what career path might look like”, then you might expect to see that you’re going to spend more of the dollars in the K12 system. If you’re in a state where you’re saying, “Gosh we needed 6,000 computer programmers yesterday and we really need these certifications immediately and our businesses are screaming to these employees”, you might expect to see more dollars being spent in the postsecondary system. There are different reasons and we’re really seeing state’s engagement, dialogue, and process. One of the things that’s new in the new act is a requirement to do what’s called a local needs assessment. So, this local needs assessment is really a look at labor market data to say, “Gosh, who’s hiring people from our programs in our area? And how do we make sure we’re meeting our local labor market needs?” So, similarly, if you know you need welders and you don’t have a welding program, then that would be a really good indicator that maybe we want to invest in a welding program with our Career Technical Education dollars because we’re seeing that these participants would get employed in our communities. But, the flip-side of that, and what’s much harder for the educators in the room and anyone at your table who is an educator who validates this, if you saturate the market with cosmetologists and you produce 500 cosmetologists within your community last year and they’re not getting jobs, it really begs the question of “why are we still spending money on this program where students aren’t getting jobs?” The implication that many of you know, of closing a program or to not continue to invest in a program, are really challenging things. So, some of your education administrators need some real support in this area so that there is this groundswell of the whole community saying “of course it makes sense that we would invest in programs where there is the greatest in unmet needs. I’ll pause because there’s a million more things... but, I know we can talk through about how you really engage employers and what are those workforce needs.

Mark: So, I think that's a discussion you can have at your table – how do you engage employers? And what do you need to do to strategize and be able to make sure that you're addressing the local place of marketing needs and driving your strategies forward using that information. So that's part of what you can do. I think one of the things that I want to emphasize is just the support that you work through your strategies, that how do you sustain those outcomes? It's just really important that we work together both within RSA and OSEP being able to fund the technical assistive. It plays a valuable role in making sure that as you implement your strategies, they can be sustained with time, provided with the support that you need. How many of you are intensive TA states? There's a few here. It's been shared with me that those states who have received intensive TA have benefitted from completing infrastructure analysis and being able to articulate a flow of services that helps to reduce some of the duplication and to identify and focus on the gaps in terms of services and supports for students with disabilities going through the transition process. By having that kind of deliberative process and be deliberate about it, then there is a stronger collaboration that occurs and that you're getting better buy in from your partners if you have that discussion, that you're being more effective and efficient if you do that. So, how do I know that to be true? Well, those states that have been able to replicate data based decision or capacity building model have set up interdisciplinary local teams, and they're reported that it's successful, it works, because there's been increases in collaboration, increases in consensus building among your partners and agencies that participate, you're experiencing more research sharing. For the professional education side of things, there has been an improved performance in the indicators, so the performance indicators. Particularly on 1, 2, 13 and 14 – so you don't know what those are and that maybe is why we're discussing it. But, generally students that have an IEP generally are graduating... more of them are graduating with regular diplomas as a result of the collaborations going on. That there are fewer students who are dropping out, that they're more engaged, that the percentage of students that have appropriate measurable goals that enable them to reasonably meet their postsecondary goals, has increased. That includes an appropriate course of study that would be important in connecting to CTE. Also, there's been an increase in post-secondary outcomes that occur one year after graduation as we survey. Looking at that, there's more students who participate who participate in the process or the result of the process are moving onto to higher education and employment. So, it has value. We're also seeing from those states who have done this, there are increases in student and agency IEP participation that more students are accessing pre-employment transition services and that there are more successful case closures, so it has value – we know that. Also, as I came over to the OSER side of things, my experience primarily and the reason I came to the federal value was because of the VR focus in our state. So I started to look for those connections between education and employment and it was pretty easy because the foundational principles are pretty much the same. As you'd look at it on the education, what do we have? We have individualized family services and we have individualized education plans, and on the VR side we have individualized plans for employment and Casey you have?

Casey: Life and education training programs for adult educators. That just rolls right off your tongue. The idea is that one size fits all, it's not really the ideal mode for learning and I think everyone in the room recognizes that we have these learners that have individualized needs and then all of our different programs and services are really trying to read the signs so that we can best meet those needs, whatever it happens to be at the time.

Mark: So as we begin those discussions, there are some confusing connections that can be made to that process right? So, foundational principle individualized, it is based on the needs of the student and that's true regardless of any program you're working in. So, there's a connection to be made. Also in education employment, we look at the least restricted environment on the education side. On the employment side we call it competitive integrated employment, so I'm looking at those opportunities. There is also a roll of assessment involved and again going back, what are the particular needs of the student? As an employee, what are those needs and how can we help support them?

Casey: In the assessment space, something that is new in the Perkins plan is that I'm actually really excited about and I fully own up to being a data geek so that could be part of my excitement. We're just aggregating program level data by all kinds of student type, so we call all the different student groups in Perkins special populations, so this will be one of our special populations, so is race, so is gender, so is veteran student status, and homeless student status – we have lots of different special populations that are identified in Perkins. We are just aggregating our program level data by all of these special populations and then asking our CTE administrators to use that data to figure out, “gosh, does your program match whatever your population is?” So I will give you a really funky example, if half the students in high school are Hispanic and only 1% of the students in my welding program are Hispanic, I'm going to start asking the question of “why is that?” There may be a good reason and there might be comparable reasons. So, we won't know at the federal still for a couple of days what that aggregated program level looks like, but you could know the day. You already have that data for your students and your programs, so to start looking at it and to say, “Gosh, we have these students with disabilities and there is a lot of them in this particular school district or area and they are really underrepresented in particular programs”. That allows us to start asking questions about potential barriers in those programs and if there are things that we can do to be a lot more successful with folks, which I am clearly excited about. We did a cool project when I was in Colorado, at the community college of Aurora, where we brought in a technical assistant provider to particularly talk about race with our math faculty. So, our math faculty disaggregated their course data by race and then looked at their pass rates, so they had students with the same test scores coming in, but they found that depending on the race of students there were really different pass rates in their classes. We worked with them to say, “are there barriers within your calculus class that are preventing particular student groups from being more successful”. So they did really neat things with each other, they changed their syllabi so that they had fewer immediate barriers even just written barriers. They observed each other's teaching so that they were able to go in and say, “Gosh, you do a really good job

with women and I am not passing at the same rate” and that kind of thing, and being able to tell what each other were doing well. It turned into such a phenomenal professional development experience for that math cohort, that we expanded it to other colleges. TO hear my faculty talk about it at the time, they would say things like “well first I didn’t believe the data, then I went home and cried about my data.” It was very powerful to just aggregate that student program level data to figure out, not just at the school how we were doing, but even within the individual classrooms.

Mark: Well Casey I think I’m doing a good job in that area because I did grow up in San Francisco. So the other connection I would make between education and (inaudible 23:09), around parent and teacher involvement and the IEP process and then on the VR side we have informed choice, so can you share a little bit more around how students are involved in the planning process in CTE?

Casey: Sure. Not as much as you may actually think. In the Perkins state plan it really depends on the state how involved students are going to get in the process. They’re not one of the groups that you’re going to see as heavily involved. You’ll see some student participation, but not broadly. Some of that is, where the broad participation that we’re really thinking about it more like, “what do your employer groups need? What are all the different education providers asking for?” Its more outcome based, so in CTE we’re really interested in our students getting jobs, our students moving on to further education. So, we’re interested in what’s happening to those students but not as much in the planning process of, “Josephine, what are you doing in this particular class and what do you want?” So it’s a different paradigm for the CTE process.

Mark: So I think that presents a great opportunity for you to talk about how CTE can learn from what’s going on in special education and VR programs about the involvement of students. The important part of that planning process, particularly when you look at your career pathways and making those decisions.

Casey: So not in the Perkins state plan and that’s not where you’re going to see it, but when you talk about an individual career plan, one of the things we see in the CTE space is that we really talk to students about, “what’s your career and academic plan?” So, it’s more about, “let’s figure out what your goal is and how we’re going to get you to achieve that goal in the context of education.” I was thinking, a lot more macro in terms of federal required regulation planning process, and you’re talking to me here more about “how do we help the student get to the program that they’re looking for.”

Mark: And similarly it continues on the adult education side, so the requirement for that education plan. You can see those foundational principles that I talked about, really I think are brought together in transition services really well. You start to look at that and then transition from education to employment. So how do we look for those same opportunities within our CTE partners as well? Both IDEA and Rehab Act have provided for processes around transition and have certain requirements that help facilitate that process so students can succeed in

postsecondary education and competitive integrative employment. We obviously weighed opportunities here, particularly as we look at the federal level. For me, there are great opportunities to start looking a bit closer at how we can have an increased collaboration at the federal level, both between RSA and OSEP, but also in the work with OCTAE and our partners in the department of labor. How can we create greater collaboration and results in a workforce system that moves from education to employment in a way that doesn't duplicate our efforts, creates more effectiveness and efficiency for students with disabilities engage with their outcomes for them as well? There are a lot of things that we can do that I would be looking at, the joint technical assistance that we've been providing for the last five years and extended now for another year, as well as joint guidance opportunities – looking for where we can provide guidance that helps to support the direction we want to go in terms of the increased collaboration. I think that you're uniquely positioned to collaborate both with the state and local levels – there are local individuals here as well- ensure that there's coordination, and actual implementation for the things that you create in the next day and a half. Right? The strategies that you put into place actually can be taken back and you can start to work on implementing those. It will take some time, but you're in a position to do that because: 1) it's required by law. So, the Rehab Act and its implementing regulations require VR agencies to enter in informal interagency agreements with the state education agency. It has to describe how you're going to collaboratively plan and coordinate transition services, and that includes pre-employment transition services. For those students with disabilities that actually need those services. That's the foundational document and it's essential to ensuring that students with disabilities experience that smooth transition from education to postsecondary or from education to employment. In addition to that document, that interagency agreement should also delineate responsibilities that both the state education and VR have to youth with disabilities who are seeking some minimum wage employment. So, that needs to be addressed in both how we document, and what services are being provided to those students that are required by section 5.11 – rehab that.

Casey: So that's actually something I think that CTE just learned a lot from the VR community. It's not just students with disabilities that need that transition plan, but it's all students that really need to figure out, "Gosh, how do I get a job?" and how is this a meaningful experience that is going to lead to further education or work? And what does that look like? Within Perkins we really ask states in local plans to then come out and say, "Okay what does that look like for our state?" It looks a little bit different in each state, but the general overarching umbrella is, how do we ensure that students are the services they need and access to the programs that need so that they can transition into work?

Mark: There are some big differences as we start talking about planning and perhaps another part of your discussion is that eligibility for programs because if you start looking run all the way from special education and identifying students with disabilities who have an IEP. VR becomes a little bit broader in terms of the scope of who's eligible there and the services being provided because it includes students who dropped out, it includes students who are on section, or on a

504 plan. Then you've got career education which is even broader in terms of their scope. So, that's a discussion. How do those interplay with each other? As you start to talk about that. I just want to share with you that this capacity building Institute provides this great opportunity in terms of your networking, research sharing, and technical assistance. From a personal perspective, I was sitting in your chair several years ago and I was a VR director at the time. We got together, we got our team to... I think was to Charlotte... and we started the discussion about how we could work together and that was my first actual introduction to the person that ran the CTE person in Nebraska. As we sat there and started talking, we started seeing all kinds of opportunities, and that was Rich Cob, who is there, and we had community we had other representatives, and it really added great rich discussion about the opportunities that existed. We didn't let it end there, we took it back to our state and continued to work together and develop a great collaboration that goes on today. The favorite thing that we did was starting to look at the collaboration across programs and we ended up creating a slide chart, which based on the aid of the student you would slide it across and be able to identify who should be at the table. That was like '74, look around you. This is a way, so Lydia is there in the back – glad to see its still working. It became a valuable tool for educators, but also for families, for parents. As they came into those meeting looking at who ought to be here and then asking why aren't they. So when I ask about DD and mental health before, those agencies were listed and there were partners in development on that slide chart. It also identifies the particular services you might be considering as you start to develop the IEP, so I'm glad to see that it still exists and we're still using it. Apparently in Nebraska.

Casey: So one that we did in West Virginia that I felt really proud of when we were there was the community colleges. If you talk community college folks in your space, they don't have enough counselors, they don't have enough peace management support. So, one of the things that we did was VR put a case manager in every community college in the state. They said, "We have these people and rather than the people who are experiencing our services and are being provided with our services are enrolled in the community college, we'd love to see that kind of collaboration." They put the case management in our colleges and all of a sudden our students didn't have to go anywhere to get the kind of support they needed. It was such an easy thing, I just had to come up with nine offices, which really wasn't that big of a list. It was a great collaboration and it came from exactly what Mark is describing is just when you start talking to each other and hearing, "oh you need that? I have that. Let me help you." I think it's really powerful in the states.

Mark: So, when we were talking and we started working through the course of the next several years, as a result of I think our introduction to the summit, is that CTE provides real world skills. Competencies and experience. It's just like beyond special education when you start talking about work-based learning, right? They're doing it for all students, so why shouldn't you be working together to make sure that students with disabilities are there at the table as well. It helps to learn about different career pathways, to see who gained those experiences. You can make better informed decisions as you move forward. CTE is, I've been told numerous times,

those students participating in CTE programs stay in school, they stay engaged. That would be true for students with disabilities who are involved in those programs as well. It's a great way to be engaged in hands on experiences. I think that project SEARCH is a great example. How many of you know what project SEARCH is? Okay, a little over half. It actually provides an opportunity for students in their last year of school to be participating in a work-based learning experience for that last year. SO they participate in school for the first hour of the day, then they get into a work environment in hospitals or other settings. Over the course of the school year they experience three different rotations and different kinds of jobs, gives them a great opportunity to gain some skills and transfer later on. It's a great opportunity for the business to learn what the students capable of, and being able to hire that student. They have a very great success rate doing so. In Nebraska we had, I think, 17 of those project SEARCH sites. One of those happened to be Dunkin Aviation. That's where they fly in planes – people that own very expensive private planes and private jets flew into Lincoln Nebraska to Dunkin and they had those planes customized. There were a number of jobs that those students were doing. One of those jobs was to do customized seating in the planes. We had a student that was working on the upholstery and was working on one of the industrial sewing machines that helped with the upholstery and, unfortunately, that student got caught up in that sewing machine – but don't worry, he's completely recovered. But, project SEARCH is a great experience, and it really made a difference in lives of students with disabilities because it gave them the confidence and it actually impacted on everybody. It gave parents confidence in their child, they actually them doing things that they never thought they would be capable of. It created new expectations, Right? Just like I said in the beginning. Creating those expectations based on what your perspective is, but it also changed those mentors, those businesses, those people that worked side by side with those students – it was actually an incredible experience for them – you saw growth in those individuals as well. Really supportive of...

Casey: That is not unlike in NCTE a lot of the apprenticeship programs that we're really seeing, and so many of the work-based learning experiences that were trying to get to more students. Right now we've got a high school stem apprenticeship program running in 6 states. So, it's in Oregon, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Kentucky, Maryland, and Nebraska. It's exactly the same idea, how you get students real work-based learning experiences. How does this work? How do we work with the companies? What does it take to really get someone into an apprenticeship program? Because what we see is that companies hire students after these experiences, but the company likes the work that they got out of the student, and it makes tons of sense to be able to fill that pipeline with people that they have experience with and that they've trained and that they've collaborated with education providers to really fill that worker pipeline. So again, it's the same priority, just in two different program areas. To talk more about how are you moving then? If you're a state that's choosing work-based learning as one of your Perkins core educators, then how might this fit in or be able to really address "how are we getting more students into work?" and to talk about what the priorities are in your state and the kind of outcomes you're trying to achieve in your state that project SEARCH might be

another one of those things. You know, you're doing it with a small population of students, is there a way to do something very similar with all of your students.

Mark: So great opportunities, right? As you work through those discussions. The other thing that I learned as we were working with our CTE program is that being engaged also led to the increase likelihood of postsecondary success in school and employment. I think that was true for all students that were engaged in the process that also was true for students with disabilities. I think most importantly for participation in any CTE program helps inform goals for the student and for the teacher. You can experience different work-based learning experiences, you can make better career choices as you move forward on a career pathway, if the consequences are better decisions anyway. So, I also help form transition goals for students with disabilities. It's more focused on connecting real world skills that are value added that can result in greater opportunities for that student when they get out into the work environment. So, that's what were all about for VR programs as well as on special education side – is maximizing the potential for those students with disabilities (inaudible...). Also, maximize the opportunities that exist for them to be able to experience success. So that's what we're looking to... I think in terms of the collaboration around education and employment, and most importantly CTE needs to be a part of that discussion.

Casey: I think about the collaboration space that you're mentioning, and even just collaboration so adult education and career technical education are both in my office, but in your state they're not all in the same offices. So, one of the programs we've been trying really hard to get the word out to states is something called 'ability to benefit'. This has existed for years and years, this isn't a new thing but it might be new to you. Ability to benefit it a provision that allows students who don't have a high school diploma or GED to take advantage of Pell Grants, if they are going to be Pell eligible. So what it means is that you get them on to a career pathway, so you get them into career technical education, and they take two classes and successfully pass them. Once they successfully pass those two classes then they can use financial aid to continue through that career pathway. So I think that student who maybe doesn't have that high school diploma or GED wants to do a welding program, comes in and takes two classes in the welding program, proves that they have the ability to benefit if they can be successful, and then they can move forward to complete that program using financial aid. The reason I think of this for a collaboration is that paying for those first six credit hours only works when your workforce investment folks step up and say, "Yep, we really need to invest in this person. Instead of doing kind of that traditional non-credit training, what we'll do instead is use the workforce dollars to pay for those first six credit hours." It takes some real intention on the part of the state and we call it braided funding all the time but I know being in a state that's a lot harder than it sounds, but it is being very intentional about bringing those WIOA dollars to help support the students so that they can get into a career pathway program and then move forward in a way that allows them to access Title IV financial aid dollars to be able to complete and move into employment.

Mark: So, this next day and a half provides a great opportunity to you. You've got all the experts sitting at the table. To have that discussion, to share your experiences, to share examples, to learn from each other, learn from each other states about what's going on and what's working well, and some of those things that perhaps aren't working so well. Talk about how the interplay between what's required in your IDEA, your Rehab Act, under Perkins IV, and where they intersect. Find the commonalities, both in terms of the services being provided and the performance measures that are there, look for ways that you can strengthen what's going on through that discussion. I encourage you to share that knowledge and experience, about how you're overcoming challenges and to be able to share that not just with your table, but across tables as well. I was to give you an example, kind of end with an example, of what went on in the federal level and what we learned through that process through the PROMISS grants. I think some of you may be familiar with that, but it was a collaboration project and PROMISS stands for Promoting Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income. It was actually an interagency collaboration between the departments of education, labor, human services, and social security at the federal level. There aren't many favorite bureaucracies are there? Between that collaboration there were six model demonstration programs that were funded in various states. One was actually a collaboration of several states, actually two were. The focus of that collaboration was to look at intervening early, so when families and students with disabilities that were on SSI, we would see what we could do to help break that cycle of reliance on benefits and on SSI so that we could improve the outcomes through that process, through the services and supports that we're providing with this grant. What I want to focus on is what we learned from that experience in terms of the systemic lessons learned on the federal level. RSA and OSEP collaborated with those other federal agencies and what they learned is this: that we had to understand the unique role through responsibilities and capabilities of each of the programs. Same thing you're doing at the table right? We found out we were using different terminologies. We had to be able to crosswalk that and translate that terminology to understand what we were even talking about and many times the same thing, right? We needed to collaborate on an ongoing basis. All of this is based on relationships and it takes time to build those relationships. To be able to have the confidence in each other to know that you're talking about the same thing, that you can work together, that you are both striving for the same outcomes. That communication is critical. Consensus decision making takes a lot of time. So again, just building that relationship, getting some trust going there, and I think being able to then come back to consensus. To value the diversity and perspective that each of the partner brings to the table is important to see it and take a look at it from their side, from their perspective as well, to understand where they're coming from. Also, just know that at times there's going to be some tension created as a result of the discussion but because of processes, policies, or laws, maybe it's not possible then what can you do looking for those commonalities? Recognize and appreciate that there's some shared accountability that needs to go on, particularly not just for all students, but for students with disabilities. We all have that shared accountability. Hopefully that all sounds familiar, we struggle with it at the federal level, same thing here going on at the state level, and also happens at the local level. We're kind of all

together on this. I'm going to conclude it now and turn it over to Casey to wrap up. I think we're all in this together. I wish you all the success in the world with the next day and a half as you start to identify the issues for your state and then to start building the strength you need in those partnerships as you plan and implement your own models and resolutions to some of the problems. Thank you.

Casey: Thanks Mark. I would just offer... give yourself permission to make mistakes. You might not be the preeminent expert at whatever it is, and it's okay. Even to ask people at other tables how you do this or what do we have to do here or where do we have flexibility here – you have a lot of great resources in this room and so to use them and give each other that space to be able to do the work and to figure out how do we work together, and what's going to make the most sense in our state for our students to be the most successful. I'm just thrilled that you're doing this because I know in the states where I've worked how meaningful this can be and so I hope for students that the work you're doing here today and tomorrow can be just as meaningful in the states where you are.