New High School High Tech Coordinator & Manager Orientation Guide

Introduction to The Able Trust

The mission of The Able Trust is to advance employment for Floridians with disabilities through engagement, investment, and collaboration.

Established in 1990, the vision of The Able Trust is that all Floridians with disabilities achieve their employment potential. As we work in communities across Florida, our youth programs are helping students with disabilities develop their employment goals and learn about postsecondary and career options as they plan their future.

The organization was created by the state legislature as the direct support organization for the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). As a legislatively created organization the Able Trust is subject to legislative direction and action.
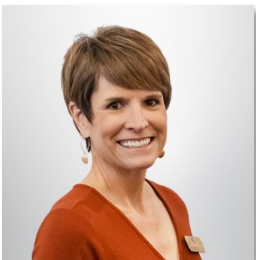
Who's Who at The Able Trust

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The Able Trust and the Legislature

The Able Trust is the direct support organization for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), housed in the Florida Department of Education. A portion of the funding for High School High Tech (HSHT) comes from VR and, as an organization, we try to align our work with VR to support the effort to help Floridians with disabilities enter and remain in the workforce.

The Able Trust was created by the Florida Legislature, resulting in regular reviews of the organization's efficacy, impact and continued need.

What this means for you, HSHT coordinators and managers:
- If you and/or your organization utilize social media platforms, tag The Able Trust in posts about High School High Tech and use hashtags #FloridaHSHT #AbleTrust.
- Send us pictures of your students and activities throughout the year.
- Send in high quality stories about your students, their successes and the impact of High School High Tech
- We may inquire about events or happenings with your programs that The Able Trust staff and legislators can attend.
- We may ask for you to recruit your parents and families to send emails, write letters or call their legislators.
- Your successes are our successes. Let's work together to highlight all the work we accomplish.

HSHT Overview

What is HSHT?
The best one sentence description of HSHT-*HSHT is a career and college exploration program for high school students with disabilities*. You may elect to have a different description of the program.

HSHT has three basic goals:
1. Ensure students graduate high school
2. Enable students to explore a variety of careers and post-secondary options
3. Increasing the enrollment of students with disabilities in postsecondary education options.

The Able Trust aims for HSHT students to not just enter the workforce post high school, but to enter a career which will allow them to become self-sufficient. This can be either "blue collar" or "white collar" work; with a certificate from a technical school, Associate's degree, Bachelor's degree or graduate degree; entering the armed forces or apprentice program.

Originally created to encourage high school students with disabilities to enter STEM fields, HSHT has transitioned to focus more on careers that will allow students to be successful and self-sustaining. Coordinators should focus on in-demand and growing fields with an emphasis placed on continuing education as a path to employment. The framework HSHT is based around are the Guideposts to Success, research derived principles that have been proven to help students transition to adulthood successfully.

Guideposts to Success
The HSHT framework are the Guideposts for Success. The National Collaborative on Workforce & Disability developed the first five guideposts. The Guideposts are not a curriculum, but rather a framework for developing HSHT programming. The Able Trust expects sites to develop meaningful opportunities around the Guideposts, their student's goals and available community resources. More in-depth descriptions of the Guideposts will be provided later, but the Guideposts are:
- School based Preparatory Experiences
- Career Preparation & Work-Based Experiences
- Youth Development & Leadership
- Connecting Activities
- Family Involvement & Supports

HSHT around Florida
There are currently 46 HSHT programs spread in 39 counties that serve between 1,100-1,300 students each year. The counties HSHT operates in are:

Alachua	Bay	Seminole	Brevard
Broward	Clay	Duval	Columbia
Desoto	Dixie	Gilchrist	Escambia
Flagler	Hernando	Lake	St. John's
Hardee	Hillsborough	Marion	Leon
Levy	Madison	Orange	Miami Dade
Nassau	Okaloosa	Pinellas	Wakulla
Palm Beach	Pasco	Polk	Volusia
Putnam	Sarasota	Gulf	Union

HSHT Documentation & Reporting

Enrollment

Students must be enrolled each year. The MOA states that each site must have <mark>the minimum 15 students enrolled by *October 31* each year</mark>. (Programs may be afforded extensions when relevant.) However, sites can enroll students all year round. All students enrolled in HSHT will be made known to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation for additional services. If your organization already refers students to Vocational Rehabilitation this does not affect that process. Data collection points necessary for the VR referral are the last four digits of the student's social security number, name of school, signed release form and documentation stating the student's disability-an IEP of 504 plan.

There is a hard copy version of the enrollment form available under the HSHT Resources tab on the Able Trust's website that can be downloaded at any time. The packet contains information about VR as well as a release form. The completed release form needs to be kept by the organization. Once the information has been gathered it will need to be entered into our online portal. Complete instructions for the online portal are also available under the HSHT Resources tab on the Able Trust website.

Quarterly Reports

Narrative and finance reports are due on the **10th of October, January, April, July.** The forms are generally released a month in advance to provide ample time for completion. The narrative report asks for qualitative and quantitative data. The narrative questions change every quarter, so be sure to pay attention to them. *Accuracy with the quarterly reporting is imperative. Ensure you are collecting and imputing the information as accurately as possible.*

In addition to entering the narrative and uploading the finance report in the the online portal, please remember to email a few quality pictures too. The higher resolution the picture is, the better quality it is. The Able Trust uses your pictures for the website, marketing materials and other printed materials, so it is important to send them electronically. Please feel free to send us pictures at any interval though; not just with the quarterly reports.

Student Exit Surveys

Each Spring, the Able Trust will release the exit survey for your students. The exit survey is very short and provides your seniors an opportunity to identify the aspects of HSHT that they liked, found important, what their plans are post high school, and other information. The information collected from these surveys enables the Able Trust and the HSHT coordinators/managers to make program improvements ensuring HSHT stays relevant to the participants. The surveys are due back to the Able Trust along with the fourth quarter report on July 10.

Career Experiences Data Collection

Sites will complete the HSHT Career Experience Report and submit to the Able Trust with each quarterly report (October 10th, January 10th, April 10th, and July 10th). Photos depicting each student and Career Experience should be included with the report. Students *should not* be included on the report until they have completed their career experience documentation.

Finance Reports

Sites will complete the Finance Report along with the narrative report each quarter. The completed finance report must be uploaded to the grant portal. Each HSHT Organization must submit a budget for program expenses that totals the annual grant award amount. <mark>Florida VR funds must be expended by June 30th of each year.</mark>

Each budget must include line items for the HSHT Program site:
1) Column one itemizing the portion from the grant;
2) Column two itemizing the amount your organization is providing to support the project, if applicable.
3) Additional columns may be added to itemize other funds from private, community, state, and federal sources.

It is recommended, though in no way required, that organizations utilize fewer budget lines in developing their HSHT budget. This allows for greater flexibility in spending funds throughout the course of the year. If at any point you need to adjust your budget during the year, please contact Coleen first for approval.

Online Reporting System
The Able Trust utilizes an online portal for HSHT contract renewal and document submission and the quarterly narrative and finance reports. Each site has unique login information specific to them. This is the same system you will use for quarterly reporting. You will be able to fill out all the fields directly on the site. The instructions for logging in are:
1. Enter email and password.

2. At the top right side of the screen, enter the code "oranges" (without quotations) into the 'Enter Access Code Box' and select Enter

3. The next screen provides a general narrative on the HSHT program. Click on the blue 'Apply' button on the right side of the screen.

4. You now have access to the full HSHT contract/grant application. Follow the directions to enter your information. The following information should be included as file attachments (i.e. Word, Excel, or PDF): Budget, Staff Resumes,

5. At the very bottom of the form, you have the option to Save or Submit your file. Select 'Save' if you still have information to enter at a later date. Select 'Submit' if you are ready to submit your work to us.

Career Experience Policy
Career experiences are an important aspect of the Florida High School High Tech Program (HSHT). Providing HSHT students with the opportunity to gain work-based experience and exposure while still in high school provides a number of tangible benefits: gaining insight into various careers, professions, and educational pathways; gaining an understanding of different work environments; expanding professional networks and contacts; and providing an opportunity to reflect on personal career interests and skills.

It is the intent of the HSHT program that every enrolled student has the opportunity to participate in one or more meaningful career experience during their HSHT tenure. **It is expected that annually 50% of enrolled students participate in experience(s) that meet the HSHT Career Experience Guidelines.**
Career Experience Guidelines
- A Career Experience is considered one or more of the following experiences which totals a minimum of 30 hours during a 12-month period:
  - Volunteering

- o   School-Based Enterprise Career Experience
  - o   Career-Based Exploration Program (i.e. Teen Court, Sheriff's Explorers Club)
  - o   Summer or Seasonal Camp Employment or Volunteer Experience
  - o   Career Certifications (includes JROTC; if earned in that year)
  - o   Paid/Unpaid Internship
  - o   Paid Employment
- Each Career Experience must include the following:
  - o   Student Interview of Career Experience Host
  - o   Student Reflection of Career Experience
- Students May Have Only One Career Experience at the HSHT Host Organization During HSHT Tenure

Deadlines and Reporting Requirements
- The annual requirement for Career Experiences is 50% of total student enrollment. This equates to a minimum of seven (7) students based on the minimum student enrollment of fifteen (15) students.
- All students participating in a career experience must complete:
  - o   HSHT Career Experience Interview form (Attachment 1);
  - o   HSHT Career Experience Reflection form (Attachment 2); and
  Copies of these document should be kept on file at the HSHT host organization for review during the annual HSHT Site Visit.
- Sites will complete the HSHT Career Experience Report (Attachment 4) and submit to the Able Trust with each quarterly report (October 10th, January 10th, April 10th, and July 10th). Photos depicting each student and Career Experience should be included with the report.

HSHT Programming

Quality Program Recognition
Each year the Able Trust provides a list of criteria that signifies a HSHT site as providing a quality program. The Quality Program Recognition is a transparent way for sites and The Able Trust to assess the overall health of the site and to recognize sites for providing a good program. Achieving the Quality Program Recognition is purely a way to recognize all sites for doing good work that may not have been recognized by a Guidepost Award. The Quality Program Recognition is also a starting conversation for the annual site visit. The criteria can be found on The Able Trust's website under the resources tab on the HSHT section.

The Guideposts for Success

The Guideposts for Success are research-based practices to help young people with disabilities make the successful transition into adulthood. As stated earlier, The Guideposts are not a curriculum, but rather a framework for developing HSHT programming. Sites should be using the Guideposts, student input and available community resources to develop their programming for the year.

School Based Preparatory Experiences
In order to perform at optimal levels in all education settings, all youth need to participate in educational programs grounded in standards, clear performance expectations, and graduation exit options based upon meaningful, accurate, and relevant indicators of student learning and skills.

Examples:
- Academic Tutoring
- Guest Speakers
- Career Aptitude Testing

Career Preparation and Work-based Experiences
Career preparation and work-based learning experiences are essential in order for youth to form and develop aspirations and to make informed choices about careers. These experiences can be provided during the school day or through after-school programs, and will require collaborations with other organizations. In order to identify and attain career goals, youth need to be exposed to a range of experiences.

Examples:
- Part-Time Employment
- School-Based Entrepreneurial Activities
- Volunteering
- Job Site Visits

Youth Development and Leadership
All youth need opportunities that allow them to exercise leadership and build self-esteem. Youth Development is a process that prepares young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences which help them gain skills and competencies. Youth leadership is part of that process.

Examples:
- Service Learning Projects
- HSHT Student Leadership Positions
- Ropes and Challenge Courses

Connecting Activities
Young people need to be connected to programs, services, activities, and supports that help them gain access to chosen post-school options.

Examples:
- Guest Speakers and presentations
- Financial Literacy Workshops
- FASFA Workshops

Family Involvement and Supports
All youth need the support of parents, family members and other caring adults. Participation and involvement of parents, family members, and/or other caring adults promotes the social, emotional, physical, academic, and occupational growth of youth, leading to better post-school outcomes.

Examples:
- Parent/Family Meetings
- HSHT Newsletter or Communication Piece
- Awards/Recognition Event