

## Start on Success

Start on Success (SOS) is a highly structured school-to-work program designed to increase the readiness for college and career success among high school students with disabilities. SOS was introduced in 1994 by the National Organization on Disability and Virginia piloted this model in 2014. Currently, Virginia is implementing this program within school divisions across the state in collaboration with the Center on Transition Innovations, the Virginia Department of Education, and the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS).

SOS is a yearlong program in which students enroll in a career pathways course during the first semester and participate in a paid internship at a local business during the second semester of the school year. This model is intended for at-risk seniors who are pursuing a regular diploma, have little to no work experience, and need support in obtaining and maintaining employment. Preliminary program outcomes indicate that the overwhelming majority of Virginia students who participate in SOS continue on to postsecondary employment or education, which is significantly higher than the overall proportion of postsecondary employment for students with disabilities.

### Program Outcomes

- Improve graduation rates for students with disabilities.
- Increase positive post-school outcomes.
- Assist students in discovering abilities and interests.
- Support students in practicing self-advocacy and self-determination skills in the workplace.
- Build stronger relationships between schools, students, families, service providers, and the business community.

To learn more about Start on Success and for the SOS Replication Guide, visit [CenterOnTransition.org/SOS](http://CenterOnTransition.org/SOS)