



# COFFEE CHAT - MARCH

March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021

# Agenda

- Introduction
- E1 MN: Who we are/why we are doing this
- Engage, Plan, Find, Keep Framework
- Timeline and what to expect ahead
- Questions submitted and FAQ
- Wrap-up





# Introductions



## **E1 MN: Who we are/why we are doing this**

## E1MN: A STATE-AGENCY PARTNERSHIP ADVANCING EMPLOYMENT FIRST

---

Minnesota Department  
of Human Services (DHS)

Minnesota Department  
of Education (MDE)

Minnesota Department of  
Employment and Economic  
Development (DEED)



**Working together to  
deliver a more seamless  
and timely employment  
support system**

# E1MN Background – why are we doing this?

- Changing Federal policy – new direction, new expectations
- Stakeholder engagement – what we learned
- Moving from an "MoU" to E1MN



## Our shared vision.

**We will work together to align our systems** so that common customers who receive home and community-based service (HCBS) disability waivers and vocational rehabilitation service (VRS) from DEED-VRS or SSB get seamless and timely supports to make informed choice and meet competitive integrated employment goals.



# E1MN works to deliver a more seamless and timely employment support system for people with disabilities.



This partnership, led by DEED-VRS/SSB, MDE, and DHS-DSD:

- Plans and improves coordinated services and Employment First approaches
- Removes barriers and confusion, making it easier for people to navigate employment services.
- Works with local and culturally-specific partners to improve access and equity
- Supports each other and bringing out the best our agencies have to offer



# Shared values and principles



## **Employment First**

The values and guiding principles found in Minnesota's Employment First Policy will serve as the foundation for our work.

## **Person centeredness**

We will embed person-centered principles in our work to help people move toward meaningful work that builds on their unique interests, strengths and talents.

## **Collaboration**

We will build coordinated and consistent communication, training and support.

## **Simplicity**

We will develop a system that is easier to understand, implement and navigate.



**Engage, Plan, Find, Keep**

# Engage, Plan, Find, Keep Framework



- **What is it:** A high level framework for how people receiving waiver services access employment supports across school, VRS/SSB, and waiver programs. Broadly, “who pays for what, when”
- **What will it be used for:** This framework will be a training resource and method to introduce how our programs work together to stakeholders
- **What’s next:** We will be conducting trainings and releasing guidance that equip support professionals to more deeply understand and work within this framework

# Adult Services

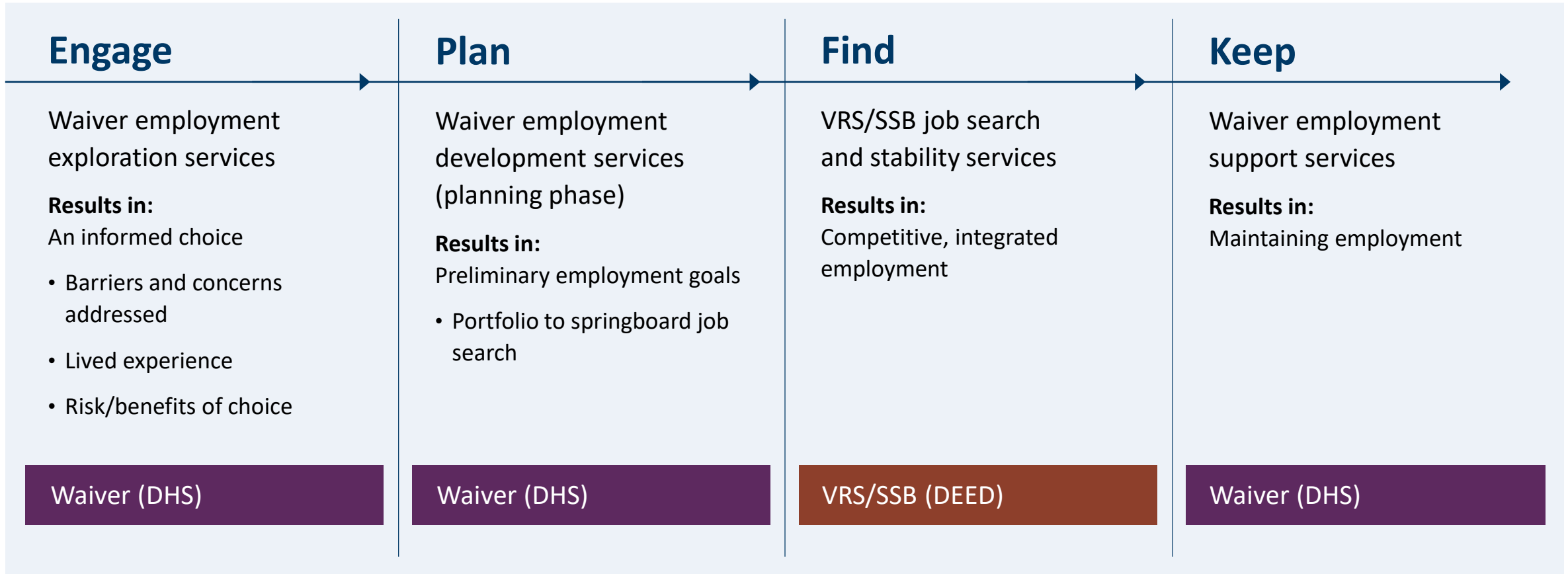
Primary funding source for adults receiving waiver services:

 Waiver (DHS)

 VRS/SSB (DEED)



ADULT



# Engage vs. Plan: Who can benefit



ADULT

## Engage

**Waiver employment exploration services** can help a person make an informed choice about pursuing competitive employment.

This service can help people who:

- are unsure about working in competitive integrated employment
- have said “yes” to a conversation about employment options during a WIOA 511 conversation
- have been working in noncompetitive employment (sheltered workshops, mobile work crews)

## Plan

**Waiver employment development services** (planning phase) can help a person discover their interests, strengths and prepare for a job search.

This service can help people who are interested in pursuing employment, but:

- are not sure what it looks like, or what they want to do
- have barriers, or conditions for employment
- have little experience in competitive employment

# Student Services

Primary funding source for students receiving waiver services:

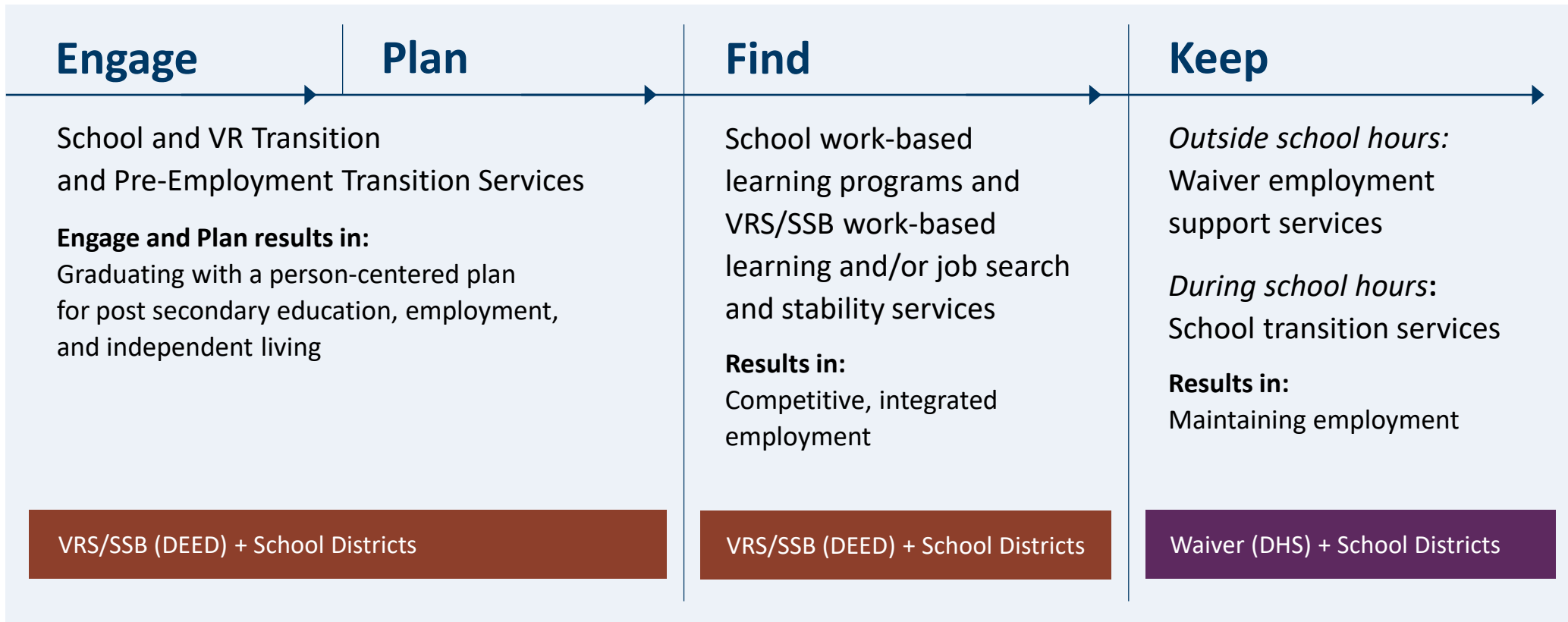
■ Waiver (DHS) + School Districts

■ VRS/SSB (DEED) + School Districts



YOUTH

Students enrolled in high school or age 18-21 transition programming





## Timeline and What to Expect Ahead

# Areas of work



1. **Service sequencing:** Clarify the sequence of services for people in school and out of school, so it is clear who pays when
2. **Provider alignment:** Build a shared network of employment service provider across waiver and VRS/SSB to improve access and support smoother transitions
3. **Referral process and customer flow:** Provide clear process for referral between programs to support a more seamless delivery of services and supports for the person.
4. **Tools and Resources:** Embed person centered tools that move with the person to support continuity of services and a common conversation about employment
5. **Training:** Provide trainings for support professionals



# Timeline

- March
  - Coffee Chats start
  - Communication to waiver employment service providers about dual enrollment
- April/May
  - VRS will launch a new Performance Based Agreement (PBA) funding structure for people who access waivers
  - Webinar to encourage dual enrollment for employment service providers
  - Trainings for waiver case managers, VRS/SSB staff and service providers will begin
  - Tools and resources start to be released



# Timeline (2)

- July
  - Publication of changes in the DHS policy manual for lead agencies. It will include replacing interim guidance on VRS, SSB, IDEA and waiver employment services, as well as separation of employment development services into two phases.
- September
  - Changes in waiver employment service authorizations to align with VRS
- Ongoing
  - Technical assistance to support implementation of agreements





## Questions and Answers

# MnCHOICES Assessors and Employment

**Question:** When MnCHOICES assessors complete the assessment they cover employment. During this long assessment it frequently occurs that the person indicates that they are not working or looking for work. What are effective strategies for the assessor to use for people in a "pre-contemplation or contemplation" stage of change? I think that it would also be helpful for assessors to have a better understanding of resources and how they would be used to assist the person with the goal of working.



How will these changes be implemented? Will everyone currently receiving Employment Development Services through the waiver need to switch to VRS/SSB on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021?



What changes are being made for students?  
How will these changes be implemented?



Do people receiving waiver services have to receive employment exploration services or employment development – planning services prior to receiving job search supports from VRS/SSB?



Will VRS/SSB only be serving people who are on a waiver?





What if someone starts VRS services but then the VRS counselor identifies that they need employment development services – plan phase?





## What to expect next:

- Preparation for July 1, 2021: MOU agreements are implemented (DHS's interim guidance is replaced)
- Training and communication over the next 6 months
- Monthly [Coffee Chats](#)
- Stakeholder feedback through [PIPEin](#)

Thank you!

