

## **Plan for Evaluating the Activities of the RSE-TASC Transition Specialists**

Transition Services Professional Development Support Center (PDSC)

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**Goal Area 3: Evaluate the effectiveness of Transitionsource.org and the Transition Specialists' intervention with school districts to improve results for students with disabilities.**

The essential questions that guide our evaluation efforts are:

- What is the current status of secondary transition in New York State, as understood through the New York State Performance Plan (SPP), indicators 1, 2, 8, 13 and 14?
- What outcomes do the Transition Specialists achieve in the short (quarterly), intermediate (1 year), and long (2-3 years) terms?
- What activities and resources will assist us in achieving improved Transition Specialist outcomes in the short, intermediate and long terms?
- Based on our ongoing measurement of progress, what changes should be made to improve outcomes?

***RSE-TASC Transition Specialist Evaluation*** -- the purposes of the RSE-TASC Transition Specialist evaluation process are to:

- Document the Transition Specialists' objectives, related activities and measures within their respective RSE-TASC regions;
- Measure the annual progress made by the network toward achieving objectives;
- Identify effective strategies provided through this network; and
- Determine the barriers to successfully carrying out their work, to identify strategies and advance solutions statewide.

### **Short Term Measures (Quarterly):**

**What and How:** Document the activities, and regional successes and challenges of the RSE-TASC Transition Specialists regarding each region, updated and summarized quarterly. In the July-September quarter, the Project Director of the PDSC will travel to each RSE-TASC region to interview Transition Specialists and Coordinators to obtain information regarding their activities and measurement strategies. During the following three quarters (after quarterly reporting to NYSED has been accomplished) telephone interviews will be conducted by the Project Director to update this information, understand progress and barriers, and to obtain regional feedback on PDSC events.

**Why:** The resulting reports will inform toolkit development, follow-up technical assistance, Albany meeting topics, and website development. The Transition PDSC will follow up each meeting with quarterly phone calls to each RSE-TASC region to understand progress toward meeting goals through activities and related measures of success. Overall this process will establish the mix of activities of the Transition Specialists, which will be combined with *Intermediate* and *Long Term Measures* to gain

an understanding of activities and patterns of services that yield annual improvements in SPP indicators 1, 2, 8, 13, and 14 on an RSE-TASC regional and statewide basis.

**Intermediate Term Measures (1 year):**

**What:** Measuring impact of Transition Specialist Technical Assistance activities on students who attend technical assistance (TA) recipient schools across one of four research-based topic areas and related New York State Transition Quality Indicators (TQI):

1. Transition Assessment:
  - 5e2** -- There is an assessment of skills in relation to employment options and job requirements.
  - 5e3** -- Vocational assessment, career plan, and experience portfolios are informative about student skills.
  - 5e4** -- Situational, functional and vocational assessments are used as appropriate.
2. Family Involvement:
  - 3a2** -- Families take an active role in the transition planning process and are responsible for specific transition steps.
  - 3b3** -- Families are encouraged to make informed choices, by being presented with options and implications.
  - 3c3** -- Families receive training regarding community services and agencies.
3. Transition Activities:
  - 4a4** -- Transition services for individual students are designed with parent and student participation.
  - 4b4** -- The educational program for each student corresponds to measurable post-secondary goals in the areas of employment, postsecondary education and training, and, as appropriate, independent living skills.
  - 4c1** -- Measurable post-secondary goals for each student are informed by transition assessment information, including individual needs, preferences, interests and strengths.
4. Transition Planning:
  - 2d1** -- Participating agencies provide services and activities to students that promote movement from school to post-school opportunities.
  - 5a3** -- Life skills, and the CDOS Learning Standards are infused throughout academic subject areas (e.g., through curriculum mapping).
  - 5f1** -- Multiple, varied community work experiences (unpaid and paid, apprenticeships and shadowing) are provided.

Selection of indicators, plan implementation and follow-up progress reporting will occur over the course of each academic year. This will be combined with a detail of the specific activities that each Transition Specialist, collected quarterly by the PDSC, under

Short Term Measures. By combining the TA activities provided by the Transition Specialists with the results of TA, the PDSC will be able to identify likely Transition Specialist activities that increase the likelihood that change will occur.

**Why:** Transition Specialists provide individual technical assistance to 20 or more schools and school districts annually. A percentage of these schools receive multiple instances of technical assistance. It is important for the Transition Specialists and these schools to understand the impact these activities have on their transition services with students.

**How:** For school districts that receive two or more TA site visits, the Transition Specialist will utilize the [Transitionsource.org](http://Transitionsource.org) online self-assessment to determine which of these indicators will be addressed via an Action Plan. A pre-intervention Action Plan will be conducted by the Transition Specialists in the fall of each academic year, and contain the following fields:

- Selected TQI and 1-5 Rating
- Current Status
- Desired Outcome
- Desired Rating
- Overall Strategy
- Major Tasks, Persons Responsible and Timelines
- Funding Sources
- How Results will be Measured and Documented

A post-intervention Progress Report will be conducted by the Transition Specialists in the spring of each academic year, and contain the following topics:

- Completed tasks from Action Plan (to determine if the plan was implemented)
- Updated TQI and 1-5 Rating
- Detailed evidence to support the team's revised rating (e.g., increased numbers of students, new curricular offerings, expanded services)
- Sustainability Plan
- Next Steps and Needed Support

Once this process has been completed, the Transition Specialists will enter the participant contact information into [Transitionsource.org](http://Transitionsource.org) and a TA impact questionnaire will be automatically emailed to the participants, collecting information regarding the quality and outcomes of the technical assistance, including such questions as:

- What changes were made in the way transition services and coursework are provided to students?
- How did the TS help to facilitate these changes?
- Overall, what was it about the work of the Transition Specialist you found most helpful?

These questions will be created in cooperation with the Transition Specialist network during Albany meetings in March and June. As appropriate to gain more detailed information, the PDSC will conduct a representative sample of phone interviews with participants. Overall, this process will yield data regarding the nature of the intervention

and the topic(s) addressed, sustainable project outcomes, customer satisfaction and next steps.

**Long Term Desired Outcomes (4 years)**

**What:** One year after high school, students with disabilities will increase participation in employment, postsecondary education, and independent living.

**Measuring Long Term Outcomes (annually, beginning December 2011):**

**What:** The PDSC will develop a summarized report that *links the contributions* of the Transition Specialist training and technical assistance activities with State Performance Plan Publicly Reported Data collected during Year 1 of the PDSC contract (Indicators 1, 2, 8, 13, and 14) by individual districts, RSE-TASC regions and statewide.

**Why:** During each academic year, Transition Specialists provide proactive training and technical assistance to school districts in preparation for their SPP 13 self-review. They also provide training and technical assistance to school districts in response to data from SPP Indicators 1, 2, 8, and 14, as determined by the RSE-TASC regional planning process. The results of the SPP assessment are shared publicly during the academic year subsequent to training. Utilizing the short and intermediate term PDSC data collection activities detailed above, the PDSC will link the activities and outputs of the Transition Specialists to the SPP data to objectively measure impact, providing an ability to reflect on productive patterns of professional development regionally and statewide.

**How:** SPP 1, 2, 8, 13 and 14 data is collected by the NYSED annually. This information will be summarized by the PDSC by school district, RSE-TASC region, and statewide. The short term data collection activities will provide information about the training and technical assistance activities provided to school personnel within each region. The intermediate term data collection activities will provide information about the nature of the technical assistance, the topic(s) addressed, outcomes, customer satisfaction and next steps.

For instance:

**Short Term Measures (collected quarterly):**

*Regional Training:* A Transition Specialist provided 4 hours of regional training on the subject of Transition Assessment during the Fall quarter of 2010. One of the school districts attending was identified by the RSE-TASC to receive technical assistance regarding transition IEP development **in preparation for a summer 2011 SPP 13 self-review.**

**Intermediate Term Measures (collected annually)**

*Technical Assistance:* The RSE-TASC-identified school district met with the Transition Specialist three times during the academic year. Utilizing Transitionsource.org, the school district team selected the following TQI for action

plan development:

**4a4** -- Transition services for individual students are designed with parent and student participation.

An Action Plan was created, indicating the tasks assigned to individual team members, including the Transition Specialist, collected within Transitionsource.org. Ongoing progress reporting, also collected within Transitionsource.org, will capture the completed tasks from Action Plan, updated TQI 1-5 rating, detailed evidence to support the team's revised rating (e.g., increased numbers of students receive transition assessment, new assessments tools provided, expanded assessment services), plans for sustaining new practices, next steps, and additional support needed.

### **Long Term Measures (collected annually)**

In the fall of 2011, SPP 13 data will indicate the percentage of IEPs from the above school district that meet all eight citations. The RSE-TASC Transition Specialist can request specific citation results from the school district to further understand the root cause, including the following that relate to transition assessment:

- Under the student's present levels of performance, the IEP includes a statement of the student's needs, taking into account the student's strengths, preferences and interests, as they relate to transition from school to post-school activities.
- The IEP includes appropriate measurable post-secondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments relating to training, education, employment and, where appropriate, independent living skills.

If provided by the school district, this information can be utilized by the Transition Specialist to structure more effective professional development activities while the school district engages in corrective action. The PDSC will aggregate this information, along with the Short and Intermediate Term data to determine which patterns of services provided by the Transition Specialists appear to yield the best results.

In summary, long term positive student outcomes in IEP development in the fall of 2011 (SPP 13) will result in longer term student outcomes that are reflected in increases in graduation rates (SPP 1), decreases in drop-out rates (SPP 2), increases in parent satisfaction (SPP 8), and increases in employment and postsecondary education participation one year beyond graduation (SPP 14). These results will be captured by school district/RSE-TASC region/statewide, and linked to schools that have received training and technical assistance from the RSE-TASC Transition Specialists.

See Illustration on page 7 for a graphic description of this process. The above process will be conducted on paper through December 2011. Once the processes and reporting

formats have received final approval by the NYSED, the data collection and reporting will be conducted online via [transitionsource.org](http://transitionsource.org). Because the website is account driven, information will only be visible by the RSE-TASC Transition Specialists, Coordinators, and statewide administrators (PDSC and NYSED).

**RSE-TASC Transition Specialists Provide Regional Events and Technical Assistance with School Districts, Resulting in Improved Student Post-School Outcomes**

