

Executive Summary of the Annual Report of the Cohort 2 TPSID Model Demonstration Projects (Year 5, 2019–2020)

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BACKGROUND ON HIGHER EDUCATION FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Between 2010 and 2020, the Office of Postsecondary Education in the U.S. Department of Education funded 52 model demonstration projects called Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSIDs). These grantees created or expanded inclusive higher education programs, enrolling 4,279 students with intellectual disability (ID) on 103 college or university campuses in 31 states. This Fast Fact provides an executive summary of the findings shared in the Annual Report of the Cohort 2 TPSID Model Demonstration Projects (Year Five 2019–2020).

In mid-March of 2020, the emergence of COVID-19 throughout the United States led to changes in the implementation of services in most institutions of higher education, including those involved in TPSID projects. Many universities and colleges closed their campuses, requiring students who lived on campus to either return home or find other living arrangements. In-person learning experiences transitioned to online or virtual instruction over a matter of weeks. Throughout this summary, we reflect on the impact the pandemic had on students attending TPSIDs.

CURRENT STATUS OF TPSIDS

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

In 2019–2020, 25 TPSID grantees implemented 58 programs at 56 colleges and university campuses in 19 states. On average, programs served 16 students per site (N = 956 total students). Ninety-six percent of enrolled students had an intellectual disability and/or autism. Seventeen percent of students were dually enrolled (n = 161), i.e., receiving special education transition services while attending the TPSID program. Most students (90%) were between the ages of 18 and 25, with more male students (61%) than female.

ACADEMICS

Students enrolled in both inclusive or typical college courses and in specialized courses designed for and offered only to students with intellectual disability. In 2019–2020, students enrolled in 6,750 courses for an average of seven courses (inclusive or specialized) per student per year. Sixty-two percent of all enrollments were in academically inclusive courses. In 28% of courses, students received standard institute of higher education (IHE) credits, and in 28% of courses, students enrolled as non-credit or auditing students.

62% of enrollments were in academically inclusive classes*

*typical college courses attended by students with intellectual disability and other college students



In the spring academic term, 31% of courses moved from in-person instruction to online instruction due to COVID-19. Two percent of courses were reported to have been canceled and 3% were reported to have had modifications made to assignments. Forty-six TPSID programs (79%) reported COVID-19 impacted at least one course enrollment.

ACADEMIC SUPPORTS

Two-thirds of students (67%) received academic supports or accommodations from the disability services office on their campus. Academic advising was provided in various combinations by the IHE's typical advising staff and by TPSID program staff. Peer mentors provided support to students in 88% of programs.


EMPLOYMENT

Employment services and work-related direct support were provided by all 58 TPSID programs. The majority of students (89%) participated in at least one employment or career development activity, such as work-based learning, job-seeking, and career awareness/exploration. Forty-four percent of students (n = 419) had at least one paid position. Twenty-nine percent of students (n = 275) had an

individual paid job earning at or above minimum wage while enrolled. Fifty-six percent of the students who were employed while enrolled in a TPSID had never held a paid job before.

TPSIDs were asked to report on the impact of COVID-19 on student employment. Of the 245 jobs for which this information was provided, 69% were impacted in some way (e.g., student being laid off, hours reduced, or job being on hold until the employer reopened). A visible reduction was seen in the number of employment positions held by students from February of 2020 (n = 287) to March of 2020 (n = 209).

44% of students had a paid position while enrolled.



VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

In 2019–2020, 300 students (31%) received services provided by vocational rehabilitation (VR). The most common services provided by VR to students were self-advocacy instruction, work-based learning, job readiness training, job coaching, and benefits counseling. Sixty-two percent of the TPSIDs partnering with VR (n = 23 of 37 programs) reported collaborating to provide pre-employment transition services as defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA, 2014).

31% of students received services from VR.



RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

In 2019–2020, 17 (29%) TPSID programs were located at commuter IHEs not offering housing for any student. Of the 41 TPSID programs located at residential schools, 27 offered housing to students in the TPSID program, and 14 did not offer housing. Most students enrolled in TPSID programs (66%) lived with their family. Two hundred fifteen students (22%) lived in IHE housing, and 111 students (12%) lived in non-IHE housing, not with family.

PROGRAM COMPLETION AND CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT

Of the 342 students who exited their program during the reporting period, 79% completed their program. Though credentialing options varied, students were able to earn credentials at all TPSID programs. Most programs (n = 42) created and offered a single TPSID-specific credential. Seven programs offered two TPSID-specific credentials, and the remaining seven programs offered three or more

TPSID-specific credentials. Thirty-three programs (57%) offered a TPSID-specific credential approved by the IHE. Eight programs offered a credential aligned with an existing labor market credential.

59% of students who completed a program between 2015 and 2019 had a paid job 1 year after exit.



ONE-YEAR OUTCOMES

Student outcomes one year after program completion are encouraging. Fifty-nine percent of students who responded to an outcome survey (n = 275 of 464 graduates) reported being engaged in paid employment. This is significantly higher than the national employment rate of adults with intellectual and developmental disability (19%; National Core Indicators, 2019). Twenty-six percent of respondents reported they were pursuing further education. Ninety-two percent of respondents reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with their social life.

92% of former students reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with their social life.



CONCLUSION

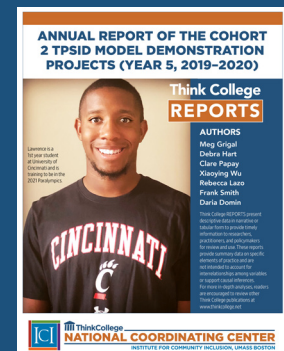
The achievements of the Cohort 2 TPSID program are significant, having created and expanded access to inclusive college courses and employment for students with ID throughout the nation. These programs have helped to improve the infrastructure of their host IHEs, ensuring they are more responsive to the learning and support needs of students with ID. They have also exposed countless faculty and staff, college students, and employers to the skills and potential of students with intellectual disability. These interactions may lead to opportunities for engagement and connection far beyond what has occurred in the TPSID programs. Additionally, in the face of the recent pandemic, the staff from these TPSID programs helped to ensure students continued their learning and, when possible, continued to retain their jobs or seek new ones. By creating viable paths to and through higher education and coupling these experiences with a continued focus on employment, the TPSID programs support increased independence as well as personal and professional growth for students with intellectual disability.

REFERENCES

National Core Indicators (2019). National Core Indicators 2018–2019 In-person survey-Work. National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services and Human Services Research Institute. Retrieved from https://www.nationalcoreindicators.org/upload/core-indicators/Employment_4_16.pdf

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, P.L. 113-128, 128 Stat. 1425, 29 U.S.C. §§3101 et seq.

To review the complete Annual Report of the Cohort 2 TPSID Model Demonstration Projects (Year 5, 2019–2020) please visit: www.thinkcollege.net/resources/think-college-publications



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