

2020-2025 ABSTRACT

Think College, at the Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts Boston, will lead the TPSID National Coordinating Center (NCC), in partnership with the Association of University Centers on Disabilities and the Association for Higher Education and Disability. Using an iterative Knowledge-To-Action Framework, key activities of the CC are: 1) increase knowledge about impact and outcomes of postsecondary education (PSE) for students with intellectual disability; 2) collect valid longitudinal data on effective practices and identify predictors of desired outcomes; 3) conduct standards-based, data-driven technical assistance (TA) to inform continuous quality improvement; and 4) develop a process to implement national Program Accreditation Standards to ensure quality and accountability of PSE programs for students with intellectual disability (ID).

Program Goals: The NCC will conduct strategic activities related to three key goals:

Goal 1: Knowledge Development and Evaluation. Activities will include refinement of the TPSID Evaluation Protocol, ensuring alignment with the national Program Accreditation Standards. The Evaluation Protocol will be used to collect, analyze, and report annual qualitative and quantitative data on TPSID program components and outcomes. These data will serve as the foundation for data-driven technical assistance provided to each TPSID site annually. TPSIDs will be supported to document and monitor progress toward accreditation standards attainment each year; and by Yr. 5, be accreditation ready. Further, the NCC will analyze TPSID-collected follow-up data on former students.

Goal 2: Technical Assistance (TA) and Dissemination. The NCC will deliver technical assistance (TA) via a system of universal and targeted TA activities and outreach tools. Universal TA will be available via on-demand website tools (Innovation Exchange, State Policy and College Search directories); community outreach and assistance tools (an online Help Desk and Affinity and social media groups); and webinars and publications (Reports, Fast Facts, Insight briefs). Tools and resources will be designed for and disseminated to K-12 transition professionals, PSE faculty and staff, Vocational Rehabilitation and Developmental Disability agency staff, and to students and families. Topics will include funding, Memoranda of Understanding, college-based transition services, college preparation, college search, credential development and development of Comprehensive Transition Program applications. The NCC will engage former TPSID staff as Mentors/Content Consultants to support new TPSID grantees based on areas of expertise. In partnership with AUCD, the NCC will support students with ID to participate in the Disability Policy Summit in Washington, DC, building and practicing self-advocacy skills.

Goal 3: Leadership and Coordination. Activities will focus on broadening engagement and building infrastructure for program accreditation. A Project Advisory Committee will be formed to guide development and dissemination of NCC resources. An Accreditation Workgroup with all required members will be established to support implementation of Program Accreditation Standards. The NCC will develop and pilot a program accreditation process including associated documentation and training. The workgroup will submit a final report on activities and outcomes to the Secretary and other required entities.