Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities Coordinating Center

FY 2010 Project Abstract

Think College: Coordinating Center for Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

Think College (TC) proposes the following major goals:

(1) Create knowledge development and implement an evaluation protocol—to ensure uniform data collection and synthesis of student outcomes and program strengths in academic enrichment, socialization, independent living, and integrated competitive employment. The CC (coordinating center) will create and implement three evaluation mechanisms: (a) **Needs Assessment and Implementation Scale**, which will categorize TPSIDs into three cohorts, reflecting their implementation status, and identify adherence to TPSID requirements and needed technical assistance; (b) **Standards and Quality Indicators Tool,** a Web-based, self-assessment tool comprised of eight standards, 18 associated quality indicators, and 77 benchmarks aligned with HEOA (Higher Education Opportunity Act), to help TPSIDs create, expand, or enhance high-quality, inclusive PSE (postsecondary education) experiences supporting positive outcomes for studens with intellectural disabilities; and (c**) Evaluation Protocol**, reflecting the tools, system, and schedule used to support online data collection from TPSIDs, that will document student academic, social, independent living, and employment activities and outcomes. The CC online data hub will serve as a comprehensive coordination system and synthesize data collected by TPSIDs, assess implementation fidelity, ensure data reliability, and foster information dissemination.

(2) Provide dissemination and training and technical assistance (TTA) for TPSIDs—to develop key components related to evidence-based practices for PSE programs, create a credentialing template for SWID upon completion of PSE programs, and evaluate for continuous improvement using multi-modal Web-based tools. CC's expanded Think College (Think College Live) Web site will serve as an E-clearinghouse on PSE for SWID and make available written products in fully accessible text, as well as in portable document format (PDF). The CC will create a 'Training and Technical Assistance on Demand' section providing access to existing evaluation materials, protocols, data tools, and to the Think College Live relational online TTA database to ensure accessibility by TPSIDS and national audiences. The CC will develop a series of universally designed Web-based learning units, called Think College Trends, related to standards, evaluation, and promising practices (e.g., universal course design, bona fide socializing, independent living, competitive employment, and policy and administrative structures).

(3) Conduct leadership and coordination activities—to promote collaboration efforts among TPSIDs and others working to support SWID in PSE, by developing a variety of accessible communication channels. For instance, in collaboration with the TPSID grantees, the CC will develop a Community of Practice (CoP) and related Special Interest Groups (SIGs), plan and/or host an annual face-to-face Project Directors' Meeting (PDM) and gather resources of cross-program interest, such as memorandums of agreement (MOAs), policy and administration infrastructure, and funding strategies (including financial aid).

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