



ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY CENTERS ON DISABILITIES

THE LEADERSHIP, EDUCATION, ADVOCACY & RESEARCH NETWORK

Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability (TPSID) Model Demonstrations & TPSID National Coordinating Center (NCC), Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE)

FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY2020	FY 2021 Requested
\$11.8 million	\$11.8 million	\$11.8 million	\$11.8 million	\$12.3 million

Recommendation: Appropriate at least \$12.3 million under the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) program for the Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) Model Demonstrations & TPSID National Coordinating Center (NCC). This program is authorized under Title VII, Part D of the Higher Education Act (P.L 110-315). This funding in FY 2021 would allow the Department of Education to fund a new competition for a minimum of 25 TPSID competitive grants and a national coordinating center that provides TPSID evaluation, technical assistance and training, and to build on the important work that has been done to develop postsecondary opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities (ID). The additional \$500,000 will be used by the national coordinating center to conduct research to identify effective strategies used by postsecondary programs for students with intellectual disabilities that lead to competitive employment and independent living outcomes. The funds will also be used to gather, synthesize, and disseminate information about state and federal policies that promote postsecondary education for students with intellectual disability and to develop capacity building partnerships within states addressing strategic planning for program development and oversight.

Background: Employment and community living outcomes for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) in our country remain bleak. Without the education and training needed to start a career, these individuals are trapped in a pattern of perpetual poverty and dependence upon state and federal benefits. 18% percent of adults with developmental disabilities in the general population had a paid job in the community in 2017–2018, the most recent year for which data are available (National Core Indicators, 2019). However, new postsecondary opportunities for students with ID are leading to employment and community living.

The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA) contained provisions to increase access to higher education for students with intellectual disabilities, including model demonstration programs via the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) and 27 grants were awarded to institutes of higher education (IHEs) to fund Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability (TPSIDs) in the first cohort. Another 25 programs and consortia were funded in 2015 in the second 5 year cohort. These models focus on academic enrichment, socialization, independent living, and employment in order to create, expand, or enhance high-quality, inclusive higher education experiences to support positive outcomes for individuals with ID. Research has shown that these postsecondary programs for students with ID have a positive impact on student rates of employment and wages, social networks, self-determination skills, and community living. OPE also awarded a TPSID National Coordinating Center (NCC) grant to the Institute for Community Inclusion at University of Massachusetts Boston. The TPSID NCC has developed and implemented a comprehensive evaluation system to capture how these higher education programs are serving youth and adults with ID.

Justification: Since its inception in 2010, the TPSID program has supported the creation or expansion of 103 replicable model programs at 100 colleges and universities serving over 4,000 students with ID in 31 states. These students are being supported to take inclusive college classes, improve their ability to live more independently, obtain career experiences through internships, and obtain integrated paid employment. Almost

all students (93%) participate in at least one employment or career development activity (employment, work-based learning, career awareness and exploration, or job seeking), though 57% of the students who were employed had never held a paid job prior to entering the TPSID. 53% of students had at least one paid position while enrolled. TPSID students demonstrated much higher employment rates than the general population of adults with ID. **64% had a paid job one year after exit as compared to 18% of adults with developmental disabilities in the general population had a paid job in the community in 2017–2018, (National Core Indicators, 2019).** And students who obtained a paid job while enrolled were almost 15 times more likely to have a paid job at exit as those that did not. **A program that shows this much potential to reduce poverty and increase employment for people with intellectual disabilities is worthy of continued investment and study.**

However, there are still far too few options available in the country. In many cases the TPSID Program is the ONLY inclusive postsecondary option in a state for students with ID, and some states have no inclusive postsecondary options. While the demand for higher education options for people with ID continues to grow, the supply of high-quality programs is limited. In order to demonstrate the long-term impact of this promising educational intervention on employment and credential attainment, and its potential reduction on benefit dependency, continued investment is needed. The TPSID programs have created a network of practice and the development of effective practices. And while the funding of the first two cohorts resulted in 103 projects at 100 colleges and universities, this is still a small percentage of higher education options compared with the 7,151 Title IV postsecondary institutions available to other college students in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015).

Funding will also be used to support a National Coordinating Center that will capture program and student data and conduct comprehensive evaluation and research on program activities and outcomes. Continued funding would allow continued development of meaningful credentials that align with current higher education certificates and build toward recognition of these credentials by employers and other IHEs. Congress directed the National Coordinating Center to develop Model Program Accreditation Standards for Inclusive Higher Education Programs. These model standards now offer new levels of guidance on program staffing, management, inclusive access to courses, and outcomes. Continued funding would also be used to implement the new model standards, build the evidence base of effective practice, and document the long-term outcomes of these efforts. Funds will also support continued technical assistance and training with institutions of higher education, k-12 local education agencies, adult and community service partners as well as with families and students about the network of inclusive higher education institutions serving students with ID. Finally, \$500,000 in expanded funding for the NCC would allow the center to address emerging needs related to research, policy, and development of capacity building within states.

The requested funding would also enable the National Coordinating Center to enhance existing program evaluation and initiate additional collaborative research, comprehensive training and technical assistance and implement accreditation standards assisting programs that support youth with intellectual disabilities to successfully transition to postsecondary education and ultimately into integrated competitive employment earning minimum wage or higher.

Recommended Report Language: Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities - The Committee provides \$12.3 million for the Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability (TPSID) Model Demonstrations & TPSID National Coordinating Center (NCC) to provide grants to institutions of higher education or consortia of institutions of higher education to enable them to create or expand high quality, inclusive model comprehensive transition and postsecondary programs for students with intellectual disabilities and to fund the National Coordinating Center. Funds will be used by the Department of Education to build on the important work that has been done to develop postsecondary opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities through model projects and the National Coordinating Center to conduct research to identify effective strategies used by postsecondary programs for students with intellectual disabilities that lead to positive employment and independent living outcomes. The funds will also be used to gather, synthesize, and disseminate information about state and federal policies that promote postsecondary education for students with intellectual disability and to develop capacity building partnerships within states addressing strategic planning for program development and oversight.