

Transition Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability (TPSID) Model Demonstrations & TPSID National Coordinating Center (NCC)

FY 2015 Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE)

FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	President's FY 2015 Request	TPSID & NCC FY 2015 Request
10,957,000	\$10,384,000	\$10,384,000	0	\$10,384,000

Recommendation: Appropriate at least \$10,384,000 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) in the Fiscal Year 2015 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill. This program is authorized under Title VII, Part D of the Higher Education Act (P.L 110-315). Continued funding in FY 15 would allow the Department of Education to hold a new competition to build on the important work that has been done to develop postsecondary opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities.

Background: Employment and community living outcomes for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) in our country are 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. A recent survey of 11,599 adults with ID in 16 states found that only 14.7% were competitively employed (Human services Research institute, 2012). However, new postsecondary opportunities for students with ID are leading to employment and community living.

The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA) contained new provisions to increase access to higher education for students with intellectual disabilities. Congress appropriated \$10.9 million in FY 2010 to fund new 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). 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 had a positive impact on student rates of employment and wages, social networks, self-determination skills, and community living. The OPE also awarded a TPSID National Coordinating Center (NCC) grant to the Institute for Community Inclusion at the 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: In just three years, the TPSID program has supported the creation or expansion of programs at 45 colleges and universities serving 1379 students with I/DD. These students, who would otherwise have been written off to a lifetime of sheltered work or day habilitation, have been supported to take inclusive college classes, obtain career experiences through internships, and, in some cases, have already obtained integrated paid employment. Over 70% of participating students were involved in career development activities and paid internships. An additional 36% of students held 424 paid jobs, of which 89% paid minimum wage or higher, and some students held two or three jobs while they were going to college. During year two, 42% of employed students had never held a paid job prior to entering the TPSID program. **Therefore, the employment rate of students in the TPSID programs is DOUBLE the employment rate of other transitioning youth. A program that shows this much**

potential to reduce poverty and build toward future jobs for people with intellectual disabilities in such a short amount of time 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 postsecondary option in a state, and many states have no postsecondary options. While the demand for higher education options for people with ID continues to grow, the supply of high quality programs are 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 (i.e., Social Security Income and Social Security Disability Income), continued investment is needed. The TPSID programs have created a network of practice and begun the development of effective practices. And while the previous funding of 27 projects resulted in 45 college and university programs, this is still a miniscule number of higher education options compared with the 6,632 Title IV postsecondary institutions available to other college students in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011).

The initial five-year grants will be completed at the end of FY 2014. Subsequent funding for FY 2015 would allow the Department of Education to hold a new competition to build on the important work that has been done to develop postsecondary opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities. Creative distribution of level funding would support the development of more than double the existing programs and allow targeted development of new programs in geographical areas in which options are limited.

Funding will also be used to support a National Coordinating Center that will capture program and student data, and conduct comprehensive evaluation of program activities and outcomes.

Continued funding would allow oversight of credential development, ensuring alignment with current higher education certificates and build toward recognition of these credentials by employers and other IHEs. The draft accreditation standards developed by the National Coordinating Center can offer new levels of guidance in terms of program staffing, management, inclusive access to courses, and outcomes. Continued funding would also be used to 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.

If additional funds are provided, greater than the \$10,384 million level funding, it would enable the National Coordinating Center to conduct a more comprehensive 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 \$10,384,000 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 hold a new competition 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.