NTACT THE COLLABORATIVE | National Technical Assistance Center on Transition

Building on a Good Thing: Leveraging Multi-Center Technical Assistance and Federal Grant Funds to Sustain Successful Practices in Nevada

Nearly 10 years ago, Nevada embarked on work to achieve ambitious goals for students with disabilities. The State planned and implemented new practices with the support of technical assistance centers, surpassed its goals, and rallied through a pandemic by following the lessons learned through intensive technical assistance.

TA Activities and Nevada's Accomplishments

- Nevada Department of Education (NDE) engaged in technical assistance from The National Post-School Outcomes center (NPSO) which supported
    - understanding and implementation of quality data collection practices
    - a request for proposals process for a survey vendor: Potsdam Institute for Applied Research (PIAR)
    - knowledge of and commitment to implementing research-based predictors of post-school success
- Focused on the necessary collaborations to best serve students with disabilities, NDE's Office of Inclusive Education (OIE) and Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Nevada Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR) applied for intensive TA from the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT) to examine their data and create a plan for improvement
- Nevada's Core Leadership Team worked through a structured process (adapted from resources originally developed by the State Implementation and Scaling-Up of Evidence-Based Practices Center [SISEP]) with NTACT and Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) staff to closely study current practices and desired outcomes and develop a strategic plan for improvement to
    - Increase students with disabilities participation in BVR Pre-Employment Transition Services
    - Increase students with disabilities enrollment in a Career and Technical Education (CTE) program of study
    - Increased postsecondary education enrollment and competitive integrated employment
- With TA Center support, the Core Leadership and Implementation Teams held bi-weekly meetings to:
    - regularly examine data
    - finalize the Interagency Agreement
    - collaboratively fund (3 primary agencies) district level transition coordinator and paraprofessionals to support students with disabilities in CTE (pilot for future CTE Paraprofessional Project)

  - finalized state to local Interagency Agreements
  - initiated Secondary Transition Cross-Agency Training (special education, CTE, VR)
  - embedded a Pre-ETS checklist within the online IEP system embedded Pre-ETS checklist was just in one LEA/school district (Lyon County's Easy IEP) – we did not reach our goal of doing this statewide as there is local control of IEP systems so not everyone uses Easy IEP nor were they willing to add something not required in IDEA
  - hosted Nevada's Capacity Building Institute for local teams
  - regularly review progress and challenges
  - increase ability to implement evidence-based practices and predictors
  - engage stakeholders in local communities
- Over time, the State gradually assumed leadership of agenda setting and activities

Beyond Intensive TA with NTACT

- NDE and BVR continue to participate in general TA offered to all or small groups of states
- NDE secured American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) funds to expand the CTE Paraprofessional Project in rural and urban settings, including
  - professional learning modules through Canvas Learning Management System for educators
  - combined Opportunity Gap Analysis trainings
  - ongoing support to review of enrollment data
- NDE and BVR signed a new Interagency Agreement in February 2023 (one year early) to return to a place of collaborative data-based decision making in our pursuit of seamless transition for youth with disabilities and their support systems
  - addressed (COVID impact) decline in urban students engaging in Pre-ETS
  - poised Nevada to pursue the Disability Innovation Fund Pathways to Partnerships Model Demonstration Project applications announced in April, 2023
- Following the strategies used with previous TA, developed six mutual priorities and collaborated to secure the Disability Innovation Fund Pathways to Partnerships Model Demonstration Project in October 2023

Lesson learned

"We learned how effective the infrastructure analysis we had done at the State level was with individual pilot school sites…We learned about the importance of having mutual goals to work toward across entities (CTE, Special Ed, VR)." – Jennifer S. Kane, Office of Inclusive Education

Outcomes by the Numbers

- Activities resulted in greater than a 30% enrollment increase in Pre-ETS until 2020. The state agencies have updated their Interagency Agreement with new PreETS enrollment targets (increases) since a dip in service delivery during the pandemic.

- Initial goal was to increase enrollment of students with disabilities in CTE to above 8% (of CTE participants). As participating pilot districts exceeded the goals, targets were adjusted to 13%. Enrollment in CTE has remained high and initiative is expanding to more communities.
- Students with disabilities also increased their enrollment in higher levels of CTE courses
- One participating district documented a nearly 10-fold decrease in the number of students with disabilities failing courses after the addition of jointly funded paraprofessional support
- To maintain these outcomes, Nevada utilized the ARP ESSER funds and the effort continues to expand
- *The data below are collected in the year indicated and reported in the APR submitted 2 years later (e.g., 2021 was reported in February 2023)*
- Graduation rate for students with disabilities:
    - 2017 64.73%
    - 2019 67.20%
    - 2021 65.66%
- Dropout rate for students with disabilities:
    - 2017 5.28%
    - 2019 3.44%
    - 2021 2.58%
- Post-School Outcomes Education
    - 2017 20.71%
    - 2019 30.24%
    - 2021 19.90%
- Post-School Outcomes Employment
    - 2017 57.32%
    - 2019 66.05%
    - 2021 61.21%
- Post-School Outcomes (combined education and employment of all types):
    - 2017 71.89%
    - 2019 76.88%
    - 2021 78.72%

What It Means for Students and Teachers in Nevada (5 min., https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=isQXwXR9E5w)

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