

	 <p>The University of North Carolina at Charlotte</p> <p>Transition Technical Assistance Center</p>	<p>A five state cooperative to improve transition services for students with disabilities</p> <hr/> <p>Fall 2001</p>
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Transition
In
Practice
Sheet

Evaluating Your Transition Program

Introduction

When you think of “best practices” in transition, most people will consider developing student employment skills, student-focused planning, family involvement, and interagency collaboration. Program evaluation is often the “forgotten” best practice. However, annual evaluations of transition services and outcomes are essential. Collecting consumer satisfaction and student outcome data allows transition programs to expand and improve services. In addition, consumer satisfaction data can also help harness the power of public opinion, which can be extremely helpful in gaining necessary attention to move forward. This TIP Sheet describes the transition program evaluation process used by the Shelby City/Cleveland County Schools.

What Data Are Collected?

Two types of data are collected: 1) consumer satisfaction data and 2) student outcome (follow-up) data. Consumer satisfaction surveys are distributed to students, parents, employers, adult service providers, and school personnel. Student outcome data are collected to determine student outcomes and satisfaction in the areas of employment, post-secondary education, living arrangements, leisure/recreation, and high school experiences.

How Are Consumer Satisfaction Data Collected?

Consumer satisfaction data are collected annually. Questionnaires are distributed each May. The **student satisfaction** questionnaire consists of seven questions answered with a “yes” or “no” response. Student satisfaction data are gathered either in a one-to-one situation with the questions read to the student or in small groups with a teacher available to help with vocabulary. Every effort is made to assure that the student’s teachers are not involved in collecting this data. At first, student satisfaction data were gathered from as many students as possible, however, now data are collected from a random sample to ease teacher workload.

A **parent satisfaction** questionnaire consisting of ten questions rated on a 4-point likert scale is distributed to parents of students enrolled in the occupational course of study. Parent satisfaction surveys are sent home with students or completed during the May IEP meeting, if the parent attends.

An **adult service provider** questionnaire consisting of six questions rated on a 4-point likert scale is mailed to each adult service agency representative on the school-level teams. Questionnaires are returned by mail.

A **school personnel satisfaction** survey consisting of five questions rated on a 4-point likert scale is distributed to each Special Education and Workforce Development (Vocational Education) teacher at each high school. Questionnaires are returned via school system mail.

Finally, an **employer survey** consisting of 15 questions rated on a 4-point likert scale is distributed to all businesses providing community-based training sites. Questionnaires are given directly to the appro-

ropriate person at each site and are returned by mail.

How Are Student Outcome (Follow-Up) Data Collected?

Student exit and follow-up data are collected from all students who leave or graduate. Data are gathered through telephone calls made by either a Transition Teacher or the Transition Coordinator. An attempt is made to interview each student three times. The first follow-up interview is conducted six months after graduation, and the next two interviews are conducted at 12-month intervals. If the student is not available, interviews are conducted with a family member. Calls are made by school staff members who are known to the student and family so that they are comfortable sharing information. The questionnaire used is a revised version of the exit and follow-up assessment from the Illinois Transition Project's Transition Planning Guide (Bates, 1989) consisting of 39 questions designed to gather data on student demographics, employment status, enrollment in post-secondary education, residential status, social interpersonal information, leisure/recreation activities, and satisfaction with high school experience.

How Do I Get The Data Collection Forms?

All consumer satisfaction and student outcome forms are available at our website. Go to www.uncc.edu/ttac, then click on "Transition Resources," then click "TASSEL Handbook," then click "Section H: Evaluation."

For further information on the Shelby City/Cleveland County transition program and evaluation process, see:

Aspel, N., Bettis, S., Test, D.W., & Wood, W. M. (1998). An evaluation of a comprehensive system of transition services. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals*, 21, 203-223.



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TTAC Project

The Transition Technical Assistance Centers Project (TTAC) is a three-year project awarded to the University of North Carolina at Charlotte by the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. Through the TTAC Project, UNC Charlotte has identified six local education agencies in five different states to become transition technical assistance centers (TTACs). The TTAC sites are:

- Alabama: Scottsboro City Schools
- Indiana: Central Special Services District
- North Carolina: Shelby City Schools
- Ohio: Dublin City Schools
- Ohio: Franklin Heights High School
- South Carolina: Lexington School District Two

Over the three years of the project, UNC Charlotte will work with the TTAC sites to improve their own transition practices and to help them offer training, technical assistance, and support to other LEAs in their home states. Each TTAC site has demonstrated an array of transition "best practices" many of which are based on the TASSEL (Teaching All Students Skills for Employment and Life) model developed by the Shelby City/Cleveland County Schools in North Carolina in the 1990s. Please visit us at www.uncc.edu/ttac.