COMPARISON OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN TRANSITION PLANNING

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ABSTRACT

COMPARISON OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN TRANSITION PLANNING

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This study used a non-experiment, ex post facto design analysis of survey responses to examine the difference between school districts that met and did not meet New York State: State performance plan Indicator 13- secondary transition; and Indicator 14 - post-school outcomes in special education providers' self-reported use of evidence-based practices (EBP). A total of 37 respondents across four school districts in Long Island participated in completing the forty-six-question survey created by Mazzotti and Plotner (2014). The survey examines the relationship between transition service providers and the utility of EBP and the relationship to the school district's compliance with Indicators 13 and 14 of the New York State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR). Descriptive statistics and Welch's t-tests were conducted to examine the hypotheses. The overall findings of this study revealed that special education providers' self-reported use of EBP did not show a statistically significant difference between school districts that met compliance to Indicators 13 and 14 and those that did not. Two subscale EBPs showed statistical significance, dropout prevention, and data-based decision-making for Indicator 13. All other subscales for Indicator 13 and all EBP subscales for Indicator 14 did not show significance when comparing schools that met SPP/APR Indicator criteria. Recommendations to foster evidence-based practices among

special education providers in schools contribute to favorable post-secondary outcomes for students with disabilities.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to those who made this journey possible.

Daniel, I am eternally grateful for your unconditional love and unwavering support throughout this journey. You are my constant cheerleader, and without you, I would not have reached this achievement.

Audriana and Samara, my beautiful nieces, you inspire me to strive for greatness and be my best. Always remember that you can achieve anything in life, and no matter what, I love you.

To my parents, thank you for constantly pushing me to reach my goals, no matter what they are, and for the sacrifices you made to help me reach this point.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Students with disabilities (SWD) graduate from high school at lower rates than their non-disabled peers. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 71% of students with disabilities graduated in the 2019-2020 school year, compared to an 87.8% overall graduation rate. New York State ranked 44th compared to all 50 states and the District of Columbia in the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (ACGR) at 61%, leaving only Alaska, the District of Columbia, Idaho, Michigan, Mississippi, Ohio, and South Carolina lower (NCSE, 2023). The alarming low graduation rate for students with disabilities (SWD) in New York State leaves many questions about how New York State supports SWD and their readiness for post-secondary life.

One cause of the disparity in graduation rates between students with and without disabilities is that SWD struggle to develop skills their non-disabled peers quickly learn. They struggle academically, and due to lower achievement, cognitive, and social skill abilities, they can also struggle to learn soft or nonacademic skills, such as work readiness, interviewing, and transition skills (Denney, 2012). Research indicates that positive post-secondary outcomes for SWD are lower when compared with non-disabled peers (Haber et al., 2016). Post-secondary outcomes include enrollment in colleges or universities, vocational schools, and entering the workforce directly after high school. The gap between SWD and their non-disabled peers regarding nonacademic skills and post-secondary outcomes needs to be closed. The concerns between SWD and post-secondary outcomes create the essential question: How are school districts preparing SWD for positive post-secondary opportunities? The passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2001 ushered education into an age of accountability (Rabren et al., 2010).

School districts faced increased academic standards, performance metrics, and statewide testing. In 2004, the federal government reauthorized the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), increasing accountability for states by moving from processes to outcome-oriented metrics (Turnbull et al., 2006, p. 193). The federal government shifted from providing essential services for SWD to monitoring outcome-oriented results through a six-year cyclical State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) (IDEA 2004). The SPP/APR set up annual mandated targets in seventeen different indicators, two specific measures for transition and secondary planning, Indicator 13 – Secondary Transition Planning, and Indicator 14 – post-school outcomes. Furthermore, IDEA (2004) mandated transitional planning and services for SWD starting at sixteen. In October 2016, New York Codes, Rules, and Regulations (NYCRR) Part 200, Regulations for Special Education, was amended to align with IDEA (2004) to include the transition mandates for SWD. Transition services were defined as activities for SWD with the explicit purpose of improving academic and functional achievement while supporting students' movement from school to post-school activities (8 NYCRR, Part 200, 2016).

Schools must develop transition plans within students' Individual Education Plans (IEP) that include measurable post-secondary goals and coordinated sets of transition activities. Indicator 13 measures whether an IEP is transition-compliant by including coordinated, measurable, annual IEP goals and transition services that will reasonably enable the child to meet the post-secondary goals (IDEA, 2004). Indicator 14 measures "percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and whether they are enrolled in higher education, employed, or in some other post-secondary education or training within one year of leaving school (IDEA,

2004). The outcome-oriented intent of Indicator 13 – secondary transition and Indicator 14 – post-school outcomes is to improve positive post-secondary results for SWD. Gaumer Erikson (2014) found that "though Indicator 13 compliance does not measurable impact rates of college enrollment and post-secondary employment, there is evidence that Indicator 13 compliance positively impacts graduates' ability to remain enrolled in -secondary education" (p. 166).

The legislative frameworks of NCLB and IDEA have profoundly shaped the education landscape, particularly for SWDs, by emphasizing inclusive practices and equitable access to education. NCLB's focus on accountability and measurable outcomes spurred schools to provide more comprehensive support for SWDs, ensuring their progress was tracked and addressed. Meanwhile, IDEA mandates IEPs for SWDs, promoting tailored approaches to learning that accommodate their unique needs. These legislative mandates have tremendously impacted SWDs' preparation for post-secondary life by fostering a more inclusive educational environment where they receive the necessary support and accommodations to develop essential skills. Through personalized education plans and increased accountability measures, SWDs are better equipped with the academic and social-emotional skills crucial for success beyond high school. Additionally, these laws have spurred a multitude of initiatives aimed at transitioning SWDs into post-secondary education, vocational training, or employment, empowering them to pursue their aspirations and contribute meaningfully to society. In 2023, New York reported the results of its SPP/APR for School Year 2021 to the federal government. The report showed that Indicator 13 – secondary transition, was not met. The federal metrics to meet Indicator 13 is 100%. New York State reported from 106

schools that 87.75% of the sample met the criteria. Indicator 14 – post-school outcomes, New York state did not meet the 3-targeted metrics included in Indicator 14: (a) enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school, (b) enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving school and met the target for Indicator 14, and (c) enrolled in higher education or some other post-secondary education or training. Consequently, the federal government issued New York State in 2021, an "in need of assistance" determination for both Indicators 13 and 14 (USDE, 2023).

Aiming for positive post-secondary success for SWD through Indicators 13 and 14, special education providers are expected to use evidence-based practices (EBP) when working on transition planning. The federal government further mandated using EBPs or "scientifically based research" practices for students as part of NCLB. EBPs are instructional strategies or educational programs that produce consistent positive student outcomes supported by empirical data (Tankersley et al., 2008). Mustian et al. (2012) explained that EBPs need to be disseminated and implemented with high fidelity to support students' goals. When special education providers are knowledgeable about and use EBPs, schools can meet the compliance targets of Indicators 13 and 14, and SWD will have positive post-school outcomes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this non-experimental ex post facto study was to compare special education providers' use of evidence-based practices (EBP) for transitioning SWD between school districts that met SPP/APR Indicators 13 and 14 accountability measures and school districts that did not meet SPP/APR Indicators 13 and 14 accountability

measures. The study explored the differences between school districts that met and did not meet New York State SPP/APR Indicators 13 and 14 and special education providers' use of EBP for SWD.

Previous studies investigated compliance with Indicator 13 (Gaumer Erikson et al., 2013) and Indicator 14 (Rabren et al., 2010). Other studies examined the use of and implementation of EBPs by providers in high schools to support secondary transition (Test, Fowler, et al., 2009; Test, Mazzotti et al., 2009). No studies have compared school districts that met Indicators 13 and 14 compliance measures and those that did not and providers' use of EBPs.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

This study examines teachers' use of EBP in transition planning for students with disabilities through the theoretical framework by Kohler (2016) that systematizes transition planning into five interconnected domains. The federal government increased its focus on transition with the passage of IDEA in 1990. Research led to the development of Kohler's Taxonomy for Transition Programming in 1996, and an updated version was released in 2016.

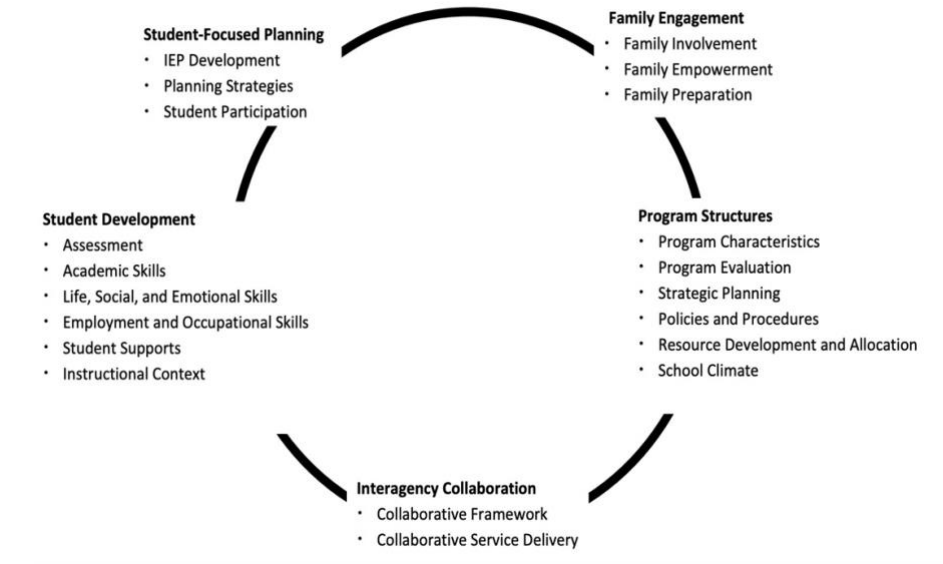
Kohler (1996) developed the transition perspective, framing educational programs and instructional activities as (a) based upon students' post-school goals and (b) driven by individual needs, interests, and preferences. Kohler's framework was developed as the Taxonomy for Transition Programming. In 2016, Kohler, Gothberg, Fowler, and Coyle (2016) released the Taxonomy for Transition Programming 2.0, improving the Taxonomy as the literature grew from its first inception compared to the second inception of this framework.

The Taxonomy for Transition Programming 2.0 (Kohler et al., 2016) categorized transition practices for SWD into five categories. The categories were student development, student-focused planning, family engagement/involvement, interagency collaboration, and program structure. Student development incorporates practices emphasizing life, employment, and occupational skill development through school-based and work-based learning experiences (Kohler et al., 2003). Student-focused planning places students at the center of the development of their IEP, planning strategies, and participation. Family engagement focuses on parental and family involvement in planning and delivering education and transition services (Kohler et al., 2003). Interagency collaboration facilitates connecting community businesses, organizations, and agencies, focusing on transition planning. Program structure focuses on schools' systemic approach through philosophy, planning, policy, evaluation, and resource development (Kohler et al., 2003, 1998, 1996). Figure 1 displays Kohler's Taxonomy for Transition Planning (2016).

This study utilizes three of the five categories Kohler et al. (2016) outlined: student-focused planning, student development, and family engagement. These three components are associated with the EBPs measured by the survey (Mazzotti et al., 2014) to determine providers' usage of the EBP. The conceptual framework in figure 2 displayed a comprehensive review of the variables in this study. The study had two independent variables: the results of the SPP/APR accountability measures, Indicators 13 and 14. There are two levels of the independent variable: (1) schools that met the accountability measures and (2) schools that did not meet the accountability measures. The dependent variable is transition providers' use of EBP.

Figure 1

Taxonomy for Transition Programming 2.0

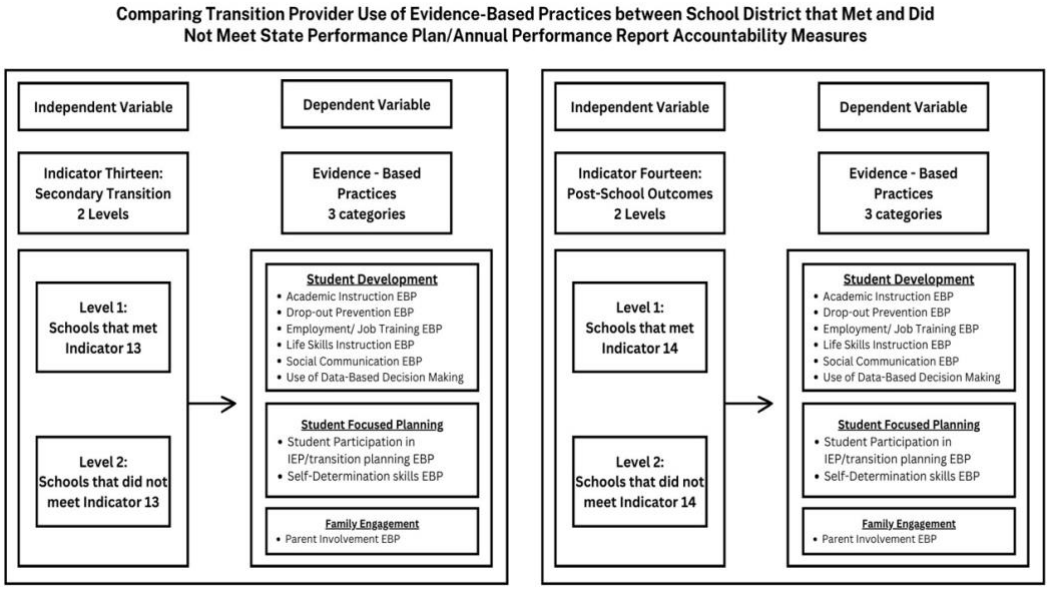


Note: This model was produced by Kohler in 2016, summarizing five primary practice categories for transition programming from "Taxonomy for transition programming 2.0: A model for planning, organizing, and evaluating transition education, services, and programs," by P. Kohler, J. Gothberg, C. Fowler, and J. Coyle, 2016, Western Michigan University. www.transitionta.org.

There are three categories of EBP: student development, student-focused planning, and family involvement from Kohler's Taxonomy (2016). The study sought to compare school districts' results on Indicators 13 and 14 and special education providers' use of EBPs. The survey developed by Mazzotti and Plotner (2014) that was used in this study identified eight EBP practices: academic instruction, self-determination skills, life-skills instruction, employment job/training, social communication, parent involvement, dropout prevention, data-based decision-making (DBDM) (Mazzotti et al., 2014). Each practice was organized into one of the three domains from Kohler's Taxonomy.

Figure 2

Conceptual Framework



Academic instruction, dropout prevention, employment/job training, life skills instruction, social communication, and DBDM EBP fell under student development. Self-determination skills, which incorporated self-determination EBP and participation in IEP/transition planning EBP, fell under student-focused planning. Lastly, the family engagement domain included parental involvement EBP. School districts should use the results of SPP/APR Indicators 13 and 14 to determine the needs of transition providers to best support post-secondary goals for SWD. Successful post-secondary success relies on transition providers' knowledge and EBP usage to influence the transition outcomes for SWD (Benitez et al., 2008).

Significance of the Study

The study intended to compare transition providers' use of EBPs on students' post-secondary outcomes through transitional planning between school districts that met and those that did not meet compliance with SPP/APR Indicators 13 and 14.

“Implementation of the EBP of post-school success will help ensure schools are implementing effective transition programs and practices linked to positive post-school outcomes for youth" (Mazzotti et al., 2016, p. 214).

The study's findings offer invaluable insights that can profoundly inform the practices of school districts as they endeavor to support SWD during the pivotal transitional stages. By delving into the influence of EBP on post-secondary outcomes, this research seeks to illuminate critical pathways for enhancing SWD's educational experiences and outcomes. By examining factors that contribute to positive post-school transitions, school districts can develop strategies and interventions to better meet the diverse needs of SWD.

A central component of effectively supporting SWD during transitional ages lies in the preparation and support of teachers in utilizing EBP within their direct instruction for transitional services. This study examines how implementing EBP would be fundamental in ensuring the efficacy of transition programs and practices. School districts can empower educators to facilitate successful transitions and improve SWD's post-school outcomes by providing the requisite knowledge and skills. Furthermore, identifying areas where teachers may require further training or resources is essential for optimizing support mechanisms within educational settings. By conducting thorough assessments of educators' needs and proficiency levels in delivering transitional services, school districts can tailor professional development initiatives to address specific areas of needed improvement. Ultimately, by investing in educators' professional growth and development, school districts can cultivate inclusive environments that prioritize the

holistic development and successful transition of students with disabilities into post-secondary life.

Connection with Social Justice in Education

There is a direct connection between the study's objectives, the principles of social justice, and the Vincentian mission. By focusing on the influence of EBP on students' post-secondary outcomes, particularly those with disabilities, the study aligns with the pursuit of equity and inclusivity within educational systems. By examining factors contributing to positive post-school transitions for SWD, the study seeks to dismantle barriers and create pathways for equal access to educational opportunities and success in post-secondary life.

Moreover, the emphasis on supporting SWD during transitional stages resonates strongly with the Vincentian mission's call to serve the marginalized or vulnerable in society. Vincentian education emphasizes empathy, compassion, and service to others, particularly those in need. By prioritizing the preparation and support of teachers in utilizing best practices for transitional services, the study reflects a commitment to SWD to receive the assistance they require to thrive academically and socially.

Research Design

This is a non-experimental study, utilizing ex post facto analysis of survey responses from special education providers examining the difference between school districts who met and did not meet New York State: SPP/APR Indicator 13 - secondary transition, and Indicator 14 - post-school outcomes and special education providers use of evidence-based practices. The study used a survey developed by Mazzotti and Plotner (2014) to investigate transition service provider factors and implementation factors that

may impact transition service providers' use of EBP with SWD (p. 13) and their use of EBP. The survey categorized EBP into eight areas: academic instruction, self-determination skills, life-skills instruction, employment/job training, social communication, parent involvement, dropout prevention, and data-based decision-making. Data analysis was conducted to compare special education providers' self-reported use of EBP from Mazzotti and Plotner's 2014 survey. School districts that met or did not meet Indicators 13 and 14 were examined through t-tests.

Hypotheses

Research Question 1: Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported use of evidence-based practices in transition planning for students with IEPs between schools that successfully supported the post-secondary transition process and those that did not?

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported use of evidence-based practices in academic instruction, self-determination skills, life-skills instruction, employment, and job training, social communication skills, parent involvement, dropout prevention, and data-based decision-making on the transition provider survey between schools that met the NYSED performance indicator on supporting the post-secondary transition for students with IEPs and the schools that did not meet the performance indicator.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported use of evidence-based practices in academic instruction, self-determination skills, life-skills instruction, employment and job training, social communication skills,

parent involvement, dropout prevention, and data-based decision-making on the transition provider survey between schools that met the NYSED performance indicator on supporting the post-secondary transition for students with IEPs and the schools that did not meet the performance indicator.

Research Question 2: Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported use of evidence-based practices in transition outcomes for students with IEPs between schools that successfully supported the post-secondary transition process and those that did not?

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported use of evidence-based practices in academic instruction, self-determination skills, life-skills instruction, employment and job training, social communication skills, parent involvement, dropout prevention and data-based decision-making on the transition provider survey between schools that met the NYSED performance indicator on post-secondary transition outcomes for students with IEPs and the schools that did not meet the performance indicator.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported use of evidence-based practices in academic instruction, self-determination skills, life-skills instruction, employment and job training, social communication skills, parent involvement, dropout prevention, and data-based decision-making on the transition provider survey between schools that met the NYSED performance indicator on post-secondary transition outcomes for students with IEPs and the schools that did not meet the performance indicator.

Definition of Terms

Academic instruction – School-based instruction that supports students' growth in content area course work such as English, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Data-based decisions – When providers use quantitative assessments about students, programs, and policies to make instructional determinations or adjustments.

Dropout prevention – Programs and strategies to prevent students from dropping out of high school before meeting graduation requirements and earning a high school diploma.

Employment/job training – Experiences and opportunities for students to engage with career training or vocational instruction that could include paid work experiences, development of job skills, and knowledge of future careers (Carter et al., 2010; Landmark et al., 2010).

Evidence-based practices - Refer to instructional strategies or educational programs that are shown to produce consistent positive student outcomes (Tankersley et al., 2008).

New York State Part B State Performance Plan Indicator 13 – "Percent of youth with IEPs aged 16 and above with an IEP that includes appropriate measurable post-secondary goals that are annually updated and based upon an age-appropriate transition assessment, transition services, including courses of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet those post-secondary goals, and annual IEP goals related to the student's transition service needs. (IDEA, 2004)

New York State Part B State Performance Plan Indicator 14 – "Percent of youth no longer in secondary school, had IEPs in effect at the time they left school, and were: A) enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school. B) Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school. C) Enrolled

in higher education or some other post-secondary education or training; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school" (IDEA, 2004)

Life Skills – Psychosocial skills or abilities enabling humans to cope effectively with life's challenges and demands. They are psychological, including behavioral processes and thinking. They are also defined as behavioral, cognitive, or interpersonal skills that enable man to succeed in various areas of life (Hodge et al., 2013)

Student with disability(SWD) – A student with a disability, as defined in section 4401(1) of the Education Law, who has not attained the age of 21 before September 1 and who is entitled to attend public schools according to section 3202 of the Education Law and who, because of mental, physical or emotional reasons, has been identified as having a disability and who requires special services and programs approved by the department.

Parental Involvement – The amount of involvement parents take in their child's decision-making process during transition planning and services.

Post-secondary education – Education that follows high school completion; this includes vocational and collegiate schools.

Self-advocacy – This is a concept and skill associated with self-determination, and research suggests that self-determined people have better post-school outcomes (Test et al., 2005).

Self-determination – "Acting as the primary causal agent in one's life and making choices and decisions regarding one's quality of life free from undue external influence or interference" (Wehmeyer, 1996a, p. 24). Self-determined behavior refers to actions that are identified by four essential characteristics: (a) the person acted autonomously, (b) the

behavior(s) are self-regulated, (c) the person initiated and responded to the event(s) in a psychologically empowered manner, and (d) the person acted in a self-realizing manner.

Social communication – How a person interacts with their environment in an academic, vocational, or work environment that is deemed to be acceptable learned behaviors that enable a person to interact effectively with others and avoid socially unacceptable responses (Gresham et al., 1990)

Transition Services – A coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability, designed within a results-oriented process that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student with a disability to facilitate the student's movement from school to post-school activities, including, but not limited to, post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

Students with disabilities are prone to challenges beyond their same-aged peers. Federal and State governments charged school districts to educate and support students with disabilities (SWD) through high school graduation with positive post-school outcomes in mind. Studies have shown that evidence-based practices (EBP) can further enhance SWD post-school outcomes (Test et al., 2015; Cook et al., 2016). This study explored the connection between the use of EBP by special education providers and school districts successfully meeting the federal mandates of the SPP/APR Indicators 13 and 14.

The focus of the literature review was to understand better and demonstrate the connection the use of EBPs has on successful post-secondary outcomes for SWD. The literature review addressed the theoretical framework and factors examined for this study. To address the needs of SWD for positive post-secondary outcomes, the literature review was organized to include the historical background of transition for SWD, the taxonomy for transition programming, and EBP. The conceptual framework for this study focused on three components: student development, student-focused planning, and parental engagement, derived from the taxonomy for transition programming that assisted with categorizing the EBP.

IDEA and State Performance Plans

The concatenation of transition planning began with the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) of 1990, which reauthorized the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (1975). IDEA included the requirement of post-secondary transition planning for students with disabilities to start at age sixteen (Prince et al., 2013). The

Federal Government went further in 1997 with amendments to IDEA, requiring transition planning to begin at age fourteen, with an inclusion of a transition statement regarding the student's course of study and, at sixteen, a statement of needed transition services with links to outside agencies was required.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) in 2004 mandated that transition planning be required at age sixteen. States were required to develop a State Performance Plan (SPP/APR) that outlined seventeen indicators to improve outcomes of children with disabilities (IDEA, 2004), including post-secondary transitions. Two of the seventeen indicators address transition planning and outcomes directly. Indicator 13 measures whether transition planning is present in a student's Individual Education Program, and Indicator 14 measures post-school outcomes for SWD and notes if they are (a) enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school, (b) enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school; and (c) enrolled in higher education or some other post-secondary education or training program; or competitively employed or in some other employment within one year of leaving high school (IDEA, 2004).

The State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report: Part B (SPP/APR) is released by the federal government in February of each year. The released report determines the results from two years prior. Each indicator is reported separately, and the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS) makes one of four determinations: meets requirements, needs assistance, needs intervention, and needs substantial intervention (2023). For the school year 2021, New York State earned an overall “need assistance” determination for

SPP/APR Part B. For Indicator 13, New York State did not meet the target of 100% of the youth aged 16 and above, with IEPs containing each required component for secondary transition. Only 87.85% of sampled IEPs met the secondary transition components requirement. For Indicator 14, New York State did not meet the targeted metrics for two of the three components: (a) Enrolled in higher education and (b) Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school. New York met the targeted metric for (c) enrolling in higher education, some other post-secondary education or training program, or competitively employed or in other employment (USDE, 2023).

Theoretical Framework

Kohler (1996) developed the Taxonomy for Transition Programming to organize theoretical practices into practical approaches. Kohler's taxonomy identified five primary domains: student development, student-focused planning, interagency collaboration, family engagement, and program structure (Kohler, 1996). This study will focus on three (student-focused planning, student development, and family engagement) of the five primary domains and outline the relevancy of these three domains in detail in this section. The framework was developed through an extensive review of literature, an analysis of exemplary transition programs, a meta-evaluation of outcomes and activities, and a concept mapping process, establishing a connection between the research and practices in transition. (FEDC, 2011). In 2016, Kohler, Gothberg, Fowler, and Coyle revised the taxonomy to incorporate additional research practices to support the transition for SWD. The practices were categorized by skill to best support special education providers with a realistic way to integrate EBPs into their teaching (Mazzotti et al., 2014).

Kohler's theoretical approach to the transition process for special education students is rooted in the principle of "self-actualization." According to Kohler, guiding these students through transition should adopt a strengths-oriented perspective, acknowledging and nurturing their inherent capabilities. By emphasizing students' strengths rather than their limitations, educators and caregivers can foster a positive self-perception and empower them to take charge of their own lives. Central to Kohler's framework is the cultivation of self-determination skills, encompassing vital abilities such as decision-making, problem-solving, goal-setting, and self-advocacy. These skills are indispensable for navigating transitions effectively.

Additionally, Kohler underscores the significance of "natural supports," encompassing familial, social, and community connections. Leveraging these supports is crucial for facilitating successful transitions and ensuring the inclusion of special education students across all spheres of society. These fundamental principles align with student-focused planning, student development, and family engagement.

Student-Focused Planning

Development of an IEP, student participation, and planning strategies outline the student-focused planning aspect of the taxonomy. Kohler (2016) implies that students are at the center of the planning, including student assessments that indicate strengths, preferences, interests, and activities that directly inform students of post-secondary educational institutions and services. Lastly, within this section, under planning, it is recommended that students begin transition-focused planning at age 14, earlier than the mandate made in IDEA 2004, where transition planning must start at age 16. Through this student-centric approach, educational decisions are tailored to individual goals and

aspirations, promoting self-awareness and self-determination skills development from an early age.

Research underscores the significance of student participation in planning and decision-making processes. Practices such as goal development based on relevant assessments, active involvement in IEP meetings, and self-reflection on progress are essential components of student-focused planning (Power et al., 2005). Effective planning strategies aim to cultivate self-advocacy skills, enabling students to express their needs and preferences to a diverse array of stakeholders involved in the educational planning process. Strategies like the Self-Directed IEP Model and the Self-Advocacy Strategy have demonstrated efficacy in enhancing student participation and goal identification during IEP meetings (Allen et al., 2001).

Moreover, interventions such as the Take Charge for the Future model emphasize student coaching, peer mentorships, and parent support to increase student involvement in transition planning activities (Powers et al., 2001). These interventions highlight the importance of providing multiple opportunities for practice and support to build students' confidence and capacity to engage in the planning process actively. Educators and stakeholders can empower students to take ownership of their educational journey by incorporating student-focused planning practices, fostering self-determination, and enhancing transition outcomes.

Student Development

The domain of student development plays a crucial role in facilitating the transition of SWD into adulthood. Kohler (1996) identified six skill clusters comprising 47 practices, including life skills instruction, employment skills instruction, vocational

curricula, work experience, vocational assessment, and accommodations and supports. The revised taxonomy has expanded this category to encompass assessment, academic skills, life and social-emotional skills, employment and occupational skills, student support, and instructional context. These practices are designed to equip students with the necessary skills and competencies for successful transition, emphasizing life, employment, and occupational skill development through various learning experiences both within school and in community-based settings (Kohler & Field, 2003).

Student development activities aim to foster self-determination skills, academic proficiency, social integration, and career awareness among students. Through targeted interventions, students are given opportunities to develop and apply these skills in diverse environments, enabling them to generalize their learning and enhance their post-school outcomes. Research highlights the effectiveness of student development practices in preparing SWD for independent adult roles (Lombardi, 2018).

Additionally, interventions such as the Steps to Self-Determination curriculum, the Next STEP curriculum, and the Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction have demonstrated significant positive outcomes in enhancing students' self-determination, autonomy, and self-regulation skills (Wehmeyer et al., 2000). These interventions, along with others, contribute to the holistic development of students and prepare them for a successful transition into adulthood. Educators and stakeholders can effectively support SWD in achieving their post-school goals and aspirations by focusing on student development within the context of transition planning.

Family Engagement

Family involvement in transition planning plays a crucial role in supporting students with disabilities (SWD) as they navigate their educational and post-school pathways. Kohler (1996, 1998) outlines practices facilitating family participation, focusing on three key aspects: participation and roles, empowerment, and training. These practices encompass a wide range of activities, from involving families in decision-making processes to empowering them with the necessary skills and knowledge to collaborate effectively with educators and service providers. Research suggests that family involvement positively impacts various aspects of student outcomes, including school attendance, academic achievement, self-esteem, and confidence (Hornby, 2011).

In addition, family involvement has been linked to the development of critical aspects of student autonomy and self-determination. Wood et al. (2005) found a positive correlation between adolescents' relatedness to parents and their autonomy, highlighting the role of family relationships in fostering self-determination. Carter et al. (2008) also emphasize family members' significant influence in shaping students' self-determination and future aspirations. Whitney-Thomas and Hanley-Maxwell (1996) underscore parents' specific concerns regarding their children's transition needs, such as economic self-sufficiency and vocational options, emphasizing the importance of school personnel in addressing these concerns.

Effective family involvement strategies include routine communication, personalized support, and collaborative planning processes. Robinson et al. (2023) demonstrate the effectiveness of providing comprehensive services and integrating family concerns into long-term educational planning focused on employment outcomes.

Flannery et al. (2000) highlight the positive impact of personal future planning strategies on parent and student satisfaction with IEP transition goals. Moreover, suggestions from families, as identified by Benz, Morningstar, et al. (2012), emphasize the importance of informational resources, joint training opportunities, and supportive networks to enhance the quality of parent involvement in transition planning. Overall, fostering meaningful partnerships between families and educators is essential for ensuring successful transitions for SWD.

The taxonomy supports transitional planning and services for SWD, leading to positive post-school outcomes. The application of Kohler's Taxonomy for Transition Programming 2.0 offers schools a framework to develop their transition practices for SWD. While the framework provides guidance, EBP provides concrete methods and practices to meet the mandates set out by the federal government and New York State.

This ex post facto study investigated how three components of Kohler's framework informed school districts' responses to Indicators 13 and 14 for SWD through special education providers' usage and knowledge of EBPs. This study considered how the domains of student-focused planning, student development, and family engagement support and assist providers working directly with SWD and how that would impact the school district's ability to meet the threshold targets for Indicators 13– secondary transition and 14 – post-school outcomes.

Review of Related Literature

Accountability Measures in Special Education

The introduction of Indicators 13 and 14 shifted the landscape for States and school districts. States needed to determine how to collect data to report on the indicators.

The federal government created the National Secondary Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NSTACT), now known as the National Technical Assistance Center for Transition (NTACT), to support states meeting IDEA transition mandates. The NTACT offers resources for states and school districts to meet Indicator 13 [checklist] and Indicator 14 [data collection protocol] requirements (add citation). State responses to the new metrics were reviewed by researchers and offered ways to improve both the indicators and ways to measure post-school outcomes for students.

Morningstar and Liss (2008) investigated how states responded to the transition assessment requirements under IDEA. The purpose of the study was to see how state education agencies interpreted the transition assessment language of IDEA and what type of policies, guidance, documents, and recommendations were being developed. The authors contacted all fifty states and the District of Columbia to compile the responses, with thirty-six states responding to the survey. This study showed that State Education Agencies "recognized the importance of addressing the new mandates but have not fully developed procedures to guide local practice" (Morningstar & Liss, 2008, p. 53). Without states providing guidance for local schools, it is challenging for schools to meet the mandates set forth by IDEA.

Gaumer Erikson et al. (2014) explored the relationship between compliance in Indicator 13 – secondary transition in an IEP, and outcomes in Indicator 14 at the local education agency (LEA) or school district. The study analyzed a sampling of IEPs from the 352 LEAs in Missouri, representing 67% of the total LEAs in the State. The independent auditors reviewed the documents using the National Secondary Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NSTACT) Indicator 13 Checklist that assessed the

presence of transition planning within the IEPs. The study reviewed 2,123 IEPs for SWDs. For Indicator 14, the study followed up with all graduates with IEPs from the class of 2011, resulting in 4,994 graduates participating in this part of the study. Indicator 14 data was broken down into seven categories: (a) total graduates with IEPs, (b) responders who completed one semester at a 2-year or 4-year college, (c) responders who began college but did not complete one semester, (d) responders who participated in noncollege employment training programs, € responders who entered the military, (f) responders who were employed for at least 20 hours a week making minimum wage or higher for 90 days or more, and (g) non-responders.

The results of this study revealed that most LEAs met Indicator 13 compliance requirements for secondary transition; however, many LEAs failed to meet the State Performance Plan target of 100%. For Indicator 14 – post-school outcomes, responders fell into a wide range of positive post-school outcomes. However, it is possible that one student could respond to more than one positive category. Therefore, the percentage of graduates with positive post-secondary outcomes could not be calculated. Overall, the results of this study revealed that Indicator 13 compliance displayed a statistically significant positive linear relationship with post-secondary education and training but not with employment (Gaumer Erikson et al., 2014). Indicator 13 compliance has a positive post-secondary education enrollment for SWD, and as a result, Indicator 14 - post-school outcomes improved,

Gerber et al. (2014) investigated the variability of the data collection instruments as part of Indicator 14. This study aimed to examine the 50 state collection protocols to find what areas were queried, find the number of items included and represented in each

area, and then analyze the scope of each State's efforts to capture post-school outcome data. The study revealed that many protocol questions could be categorized into seven areas: post-secondary school/education/training, employment, personal/social, satisfaction, high school experiences, dropout, and agency. Many protocols used to gather information for Indicator 14 went beyond the three required components: post-secondary, post-secondary school/education/training, and employment. The study showed positive and negative results, missed opportunities, and policy considerations regarding Indicator 14. Positively, how indicator 14 is collected is flexible from State to State. The collected data can support general state and LEA-level practices and be used as a program comparison baseline. Negatively, without standardization, it is impossible to identify or track trends at the national level or long term. Overall, the study found that Indicator 14 can support students' post-school outcomes. However, it can further asses positive post-school outcomes if it is expanded beyond 1-year after exiting school, aiding the transition planning for SWD (Gerber et al., 2014).

Evidence-Based Practices and Predictors

Evidence-based practices (EBP) offer special education providers instructional strategies or educational programs that can produce consistent positive student outcomes (Tankersley et al., 2008). In relation to transition for SWD, EBPs can be categorized into eight areas: academic instruction, self-determination skills, employment/job training skills, life skills instruction, social communication skills, parental involvement, dropout prevention, and data-based decision-making. This section will first explore the transitional EBPs identified by the empirical studies and then show how the categories

align to three domains: student-focused planning, student development, and family engagement in Kohler's taxonomy.

The preeminence of EBPs in education was due to the passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) when the Federal Government mandated "scientifically based research" practices (NCLB, 2001). The National Technical Assistance Center for Transition (NTACT) supports states in meeting the mandates of IDEA and offers links between predictors of positive post-secondary with proven EBPs. There has been a substantial increase in the field of EBP, which provides schools with practices that positively increase and prepare SWD post-secondary outcomes. Secondary transition researchers have collectively developed common EBPs to support SWD and school districts in developing transitional plans and services. Many EBPs were derived from the development of predictors of post-secondary success.

Test et al. (2009) reviewed the literature to identify experimental research that used EBPs in secondary transition. The researchers aimed to identify practices that led to SWD success for transition. Test et al. (2009) included in its criteria articles published between 1984 and March 2008, had at least one student with a disability and included a variable (independent or dependent) that aligned with one of the five areas of the Taxonomy for Transition Programming (Kohler, 1996). Sixty-three studies were selected for this study. The results of this study identified 32 secondary transition EBPs, with "the majority of practices represented instruction of skills within the Student Development area of the Taxonomy [for Transition Programming]" (Test et al., 2009, p. 119). Furthermore, Test et al. (2009) recommend that states and school districts utilize the Taxonomy framework to help meet the requirements of Indicator 13 as part of the

SPP/APR. A limitation of this study was that it did not allow for a correlation between student skill development and post-school outcomes.

Test, Mazzotti, et al. (2009) furthered the systemic review of secondary transition by identifying correlation literature to identify in-school predictors of improved post-school outcomes in education, employment, and independent living. The review was conducted by utilizing electronic search engines to identify all publications between 1984 and March 2009 that investigated the relationship between predictor and outcome variables to investigate secondary transition predictors of post-school success. After reviewing the articles to determine if they met the criteria for inclusion, of the 63 initially identified, 22 were included.

As a result of the systemic review, sixteen evidenced-based predictor categories correlated with improved post-school outcomes. The sixteen areas were career awareness, community experiences, exit exam requirements/high school diploma status, inclusion in general education, interagency collaboration, occupational courses, paid employment/work experience, parental involvement, the program of study, self-advocacy/self-determination, self-care/independent living skills, social skills, student support, transition program, vocational education, and work-study. Test et al. (2009) intended this study to be "a springboard for creating systems change by providing practitioners information about secondary transition program characteristics that have been empirically linked to improved post-school success for students with disabilities" p. 179. Schools can strive to use this information to align their transitional practices to meet the requirements of Indicator 13, improve their results on Indicator 14, and support teachers' use of EBP when working on transition skills with SWD.

Cook et al. (2008) discussed how providers can combine evidence-based special education and professional knowledge to support secondary transition. The study recommends that providers use their professional lens to evaluate and select the EBP to meet their student's needs and goals, assess the effects of EBP, and integrate the EBPs into their practices. As special education providers learn more about EBP, they can determine which ones will support student's needs best.

In 2016, Mazzotti et al. reviewed the literature since Test (2009) and the results of the National Longitudinal Transition Study – 2 (NLTS-2). The purpose of the study was to determine if new predictors were present and if the literature further supported the existing predictors of post-school success. Mazzotti et al. (2016) review did not add further evidence to six predictors of post-school success: interagency collaboration, self-determination, transition program, community experiences, occupational courses, and program of study. The nine predictors from Test et al. (2009) had additional evidence to support the predictor areas further and support four new predictor areas: parent expectations, youth autonomy/decision-making, goal setting, and travel skills (Mazzotti et al., 2016).

This study categorized EBPs into three of Kohler's Taxonomy for Transition (2016) domains: student development, student-focused planning, and parental engagement. Academic instruction, dropout prevention, employment/job training, life skills instruction, social communication, and data-based decision-making connect to student development. Self-determination skills and student participation in IEP meetings align with student-focused planning. Lastly, family engagement aligns with parental involvement.

Figure 3

Evidence-Based Practices by Kohler's Taxonomy for Transition.

Kohler's Taxonomy Domain	Student Development	Student-Focused Planning	Family Engagement
Evidence-Based Practices	Academic Instruction Dropout Prevention Employment/Job Training Life Skills Instruction Social Communication Data-Based Decision Making	Self-Determination Skills	Parental Involvement

Student Development and Evidence-Based Practices

Student development under Kohler's Taxonomy for Transition Planning 2.0 (2016) focuses on practices that look at assessment, academic skills, life, social and emotional skills, student support, and instructional context. Under each of these practices, Kohler et al. (2016) identify supports that will support SWD. When comparing the student development skills to EBP measured by Mazzotti et al. (2014), those aligned with student development were academic instruction, dropout prevention, employment/job training skills, and social communication instruction. Data-based decision-making falls under student development because providers need to analyze formative and summative assessments to determine instructional moves supporting SWD transition planning.

Academic Instruction

Participation in core content areas for SWDs is important for positive post-school outcomes. Halpern et al. (1995) indicated predictors of post-secondary education participation for SWD. The positive predictors incorporated academic skills, academic instruction, participation in transition planning, parental satisfaction with the instruction

received by the student, the student's satisfaction with the instruction received, and parental and the students' expectation of participation in post-secondary education (Halpern et al., 1995; Chiang et al., 2011). Baer et al. (2003) identified that after accounting for student-related variables such as gender or ethnicity, participation in general education remained the only significant predictor for post-secondary education participation, aligning with Halpern's (1995) focus on reading, writing, math, problem-solving, and getting along with other people. Joshi et al. (2017) found that participation in core content instruction was related to whether students with learning disabilities (LD) would ever attend or were currently attending post-secondary education. Additionally, students with LD participated in 2-year programs at a higher frequency than other post-secondary programs, and receiving career technical education instruction was unrelated to any post-secondary education participation.

Flexer et al. (2022) investigated the effect of inclusion on post-secondary education, career and technical education on employment, and the impact of work-study experience on post-school employment. The study showed that inclusion in regular education classes more than 80% of the time improved the odds of full-time post-secondary education. However, other barriers existed for students, including lack of money, inadequate help with applications, poor identification of needed accommodations, poor access to appropriate coursework, and low-quality transition plans for post-secondary education. Flexer et al. (2011) showed that students who engaged with Career Technical Education (CTE) and work-study experiences in high school were more likely to be employed one year out of graduation than peers who did not receive the same

opportunities. Flexer et al. (2010) recommend that when determining which EBPs to apply to students, disability types should be considered to support their needs best.

Participation in academic programs strongly connects SWD to post-secondary education. Chiang et al. (2012) explored predictors of participation in post-secondary education for high school leavers with autism. The study revealed that high school type (regular school, specialized school) and academic performance were significant predictors of post-secondary education. Furthermore, there was a significant relationship between the school's post-school outcome and the student's participation in transition planning. When students were planning to participate in post-secondary education, schools prepared the students for that pathway.

Data-Based Decision Making

Data-based decision making (DBDM) "can serve as a powerful process for districts to facilitate more informed decision making, boost overall school performance and improve student achievement" (Sagebrush Corporation 2004, p. 11). Test et al. (2018) examine the role data-based decision-making (DBDM) will have on school districts and positive post-secondary transition outcomes. The article's purpose was to summarize where the field of secondary transition has been, where the field of secondary transition is currently, and what thoughts are about where it is going. The authors identified DBDM tools that can be used to improve programs. These tools included predictor implementation self-assessment, quality indicators – 2, dropout prevention tools, state toolkit for examining post-school success, transition grade book, and transitionprogramtool.org. Each tool is tied to one of the predictors (Test, Mazzotti et al., 2009) or practices (Test, Fowler et al., 2009; Test et al., 2018).

Eaves et al. (2012) conducted an exploratory factor analysis of the Post-School Outcomes Transition Survey (PSOTS) designed to collect information on Indicator 14 – post-school outcomes. This study was used to determine if this was a tool for effective decision-making. The PSOTS contains other transition outcomes such as satisfaction, daily living skills, demographic information, and high school programs. The researchers determined that 2004 and 2005 contained 73 items in common over 16 years. The survey was used for construct validity of the PSOTS. There were 954 individuals sampled for this survey between 2004 and 2005. Variables of participants included race, primary disability, gender, education setting, and exit status. Participant data was collected through interviews, with three attempts for each participant. The results of the exploratory factor analysis on the PSOTS, in which separate factor analysis is conducted for two groups, led to highly similar results, which provided initial support for the construct validity of the PSOTS. There are some limitations of the PSOTS where some factors had low reliability and low communalities. Eight of the 16 factors served as post-school outcome dimensions: satisfaction, problems in transition, employment, leisure activities, daily living skills, transition competence, education and training, and community competence. The other eight factors were placed in the in-school program dimensions: high school preparation, career technology, general education, why not graduated, special education, job coach, other areas, and rehabilitation counselor. Decision-makers can use the results of this study to evaluate transition programs within local school districts with norm-referenced outcomes for the most reliable and valid scores.

Dropout Prevention

The National Longitudinal Transition Study of Special Education Students (NLTS, 2005) reported alarming dropout rates, with 55% of youth with emotional disturbance leaving school, compared to 36% of all students with disabilities and 24% of general education peers. Graduation rates for this group were significantly lower, particularly among African American students. Students with emotional disturbances faced higher rates of arrest, unemployment, and job loss. Attendance difficulties, mobility, and cumulative exposure to mobility were identified as significant factors contributing to dropout. There is a scarcity of experimental, evidence-based intervention studies directly investigating dropout prevention or school completion for students with disabilities, emphasizing the need for more research in this critical area to inform effective strategies for preventing dropout and promoting successful school completion.

Sinclair et al. (2005) found that the Check & Connect program has a significant positive impact on the educational outcomes of urban high school students with emotional or behavioral disabilities. Students participating in Check & Connect consistently exhibited higher levels of engagement with school compared to their peers in the control group. The intervention resulted in lower dropout rates, with a large effect size for the 5-year dropout rate. Moreover, Check & Connect students were more likely to persistently attend school, remain enrolled, and have updated Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) with articulated transition goals, reflecting student preferences. The program effectively addressed concerns about persistent ninth-grade attendance, contributing to improved graduation rates and reducing cohort dropout rates compared to the control group.

The Check & Connect program also demonstrated substantial positive effects on attendance patterns, stability, and persistence through transition periods (Sinclair et al., 2005). The intervention increased the likelihood of students remaining in one educational setting over successive years. In comparison, students in the treatment group experienced higher rates of mobility. They maintained persistent attendance, unlike the control group, indicating the effectiveness of targeted support in preventing disenfranchised students with disabilities from giving up on their education. Although the program did not impact the 4-year completion rate, it emphasized the importance of accommodating alternative routes and timelines for school completion. Monitors actively facilitated successful transitions for students, and those with extended intervention periods achieved higher completion rates, highlighting the program's adaptability and positive influence on educational outcomes.

Wilkins and Huckabee (2014) identify a notable gap in the existing literature on interventions for SWD, particularly in terms of experimental studies assessing graduation or dropout outcomes. Out of 19 studies identified, only three employed experimental designs, highlighting a need for more rigorous research methodologies to evaluate interventions' effectiveness. Experimental studies, while not inherently superior, offer advantages in estimating the impact of interventions on outcomes like graduation. The lack of experimental studies suggests a limited understanding of effective dropout interventions for students with disabilities. Moreover, 11 studies described comprehensive dropout prevention programs with multiple components, making isolating the specific factors contributing to students' graduation challenging. Future research is

recommended to identify the individual contributions of different interventions and clarify which combinations yield the strongest positive effects.

To enhance the replicability and comparability of interventions, it is suggested that future studies incorporate quantitative methods to calculate and report effect sizes. Additionally, Wilkins et al. (2014) emphasize the need for more focused research on interventions tailored to specific disability categories, particularly emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). Despite EBD students having the lowest graduation rates, only four studies specifically included this group. The review encourages further investigation into effective interventions targeting EBD students. Moreover, considering the disproportionately high dropout rates among African American students with disabilities, future studies should specifically target and report results by race/ethnicity to address this demographic disparity.

Prince et al. (2013) investigated the relationships between independent variables (student-, school-, and district-level factors) and post-school engagement outcomes specifically for youth with high-incidence disabilities using hierarchical modeling. Among student-level factors, it was found that African American youth exhibited poorer outcomes than their White peers across all levels, emphasizing the need for considering race in transition programming. Graduating with a regular high school diploma was associated with increased competitiveness in employment and enrollment in post-secondary education. Additionally, youth with learning disabilities (LD) experienced tremendous success in post-school engagement, being more likely to be competitively employed and engaged in higher education compared to those with EBD or intellectual disabilities (ID). Older youth were less likely to be engaged, indicating the importance of

tracking students' progress over time. School-level factors did not significantly impact post-school engagement, while district-level factors, including retention rates, were significant predictors. The study emphasizes the negative impact of retention on the post-school outcomes for youth with disabilities, suggesting a need for further research and policy considerations in this area.

The analysis underscores the significance of student-level factors, particularly race, graduation status, disability type, and age, in predicting post-school engagement outcomes (Prince et al., 2013). The findings emphasize the importance of tailored IEPs for students with high-incidence disabilities and the need to address the engagement of youth with intellectual disabilities, especially in higher education. Furthermore, district-level factors, particularly retention policies, were identified as crucial determinants, promoting a call for additional research on the impact of retention policies on the outcomes of youth with disabilities. Overall, Prince et al. (2013) advocate for a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing post-school engagement and highlight the necessity of targeted interventions and policies at both the student and district levels to improve outcomes of youth with high-incidence disabilities.

Dropout prevention EBPs are increasingly crucial for school districts to focus on. The alignment of race and SWD is threaded within many studies. When a targeted intervention such as Check and Connect (Sinclair et al., 2005) is put in place, it can have positive effects on SWD and post-school outcomes. However, further research into retention policies and their connection to positive post-school outcomes is needed.

Employment/Job Training

Career exploration in schools begins in elementary school and continues through graduation. High school is where these experiences become necessary in equipping students for their future careers. Adolescence is a pivotal developmental period, and the experiences during high school, encompassing curricular, jobs, and community activities, play a significant role in helping students acquire essential work skills, inform career decision-making, and shape their aspirations. Recognizing these benefits, schools focused on redesigning educational experiences to integrate rigorous academic curricula with relevant, authentic learning opportunities. Career development and vocational experiences are essential for youth with disabilities, as research consistently highlights the positive impact of early work-related experiences during high school on their post-school employment outcomes (Rabren et al., 2002).

Carter et al. (2010) discuss the challenges and opportunities of preparing youth with disabilities for the workforce through effective transition programming. Despite the availability of vocational and career-related programs in high schools, participation by youth with disabilities is uneven and limited. The study emphasizes the need to increase access to a broader range of career development experiences during high school, highlighting the importance of addressing the gap existing in transition programs. The findings suggest that while many high schools may offer diverse avenues for promoting skills and knowledge necessary for future careers, certain essential activities particularly beneficial for those with severe disabilities or emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD), are less commonly available, including school-based enterprises, job placement services, and mentorship opportunities.

In addition, Carter et al. (2010) point out the need for additional research to explore factors influencing the participation of youth with disabilities in career development activities. The study emphasizes the importance of addressing barriers such as teacher attitudes, program accessibility, and the availability of resources to expand the involvement of youth with disabilities in a broader array of career development experiences. Carter et al. (2010) suggest possible avenues for addressing career development, including service learning and extracurricular programs, emphasizing the importance of planning and adequate support.

Landmark et al. (2010) reviewed 29 documents related to transition best practices, identifying eight critical practices: paid or unpaid work experience, employment preparation, family involvement, general education inclusion, social skills training, daily living skills training, self-determination skills training, and community or agency collaboration. It is essential to note that the number of support studies does not necessarily indicate the effectiveness of practices but rather their frequency in research. The field is shifting from identifying best practices to EBPs, with recent reviews categorizing transition practices into EBPs. Employment-related experiences, such as paid work and employment preparation, consistently emerged as crucial practices with substantial supporting evidence. The challenges persist; SWDs need more work experience than their peers, underscoring the need for effective programs connecting academic and vocational education.

Also, the review identifies EBPs aligned with various transition planning categories, emphasizing the importance of student-focused planning, student development, family involvement, and program structures (Landmark et al., 2010).

Family involvement emerges as a substantiated practice critical for positive post-school outcomes, requiring schools to incorporate it into policies. While paid employment/work experience and employment preparation show consistent support, interagency collaboration remains the least substantiated practice, possibly reflecting challenges in integrating services for young adults with disabilities. Overall, the review highlights the ongoing need for research, evaluation, and the development of effective programs to enhance the transition experiences and outcomes for students with disabilities.

Both Carter et al. (2010) and Landmark et al. (2010) highlight employment/job training EBPs that support positive post-school outcomes. Increasing access to career development programs that develop job skills and knowledge for future careers, paired with paid employment and employment preparation, can increase SWD's post-school outcomes.

Life Skills Instruction

Life skills instruction can be divided into various skills, including grocery shopping, cooking, home maintenance, and purchasing (Mazzotti et al., 2014), and different strategies such as time delay, computer-assisted instruction, community-based instruction, video modeling, etc. Bouck et al. (2013) investigated the effectiveness and efficiency of accessible technology to support grocery shopping skills in students with moderate intellectual disability, focusing on identifying and locating grocery items. Research questionnaire items included whether students would increase their level of independence in completing grocery shopping following intervention consisting of an audio recorder, whether students would perform tasks more independently when using the audio recorder as compared to their typical means of maintaining grocery lists, and

what were students' perspectives of audio recorders to support them in grocery shopping. There were three male participants in this study with moderate intellectual disabilities. The setting for this study took place in two locations: the student's classroom and a local grocery store familiar to the students. The study used an ABAB or withdrawal design by collecting baseline data on grocery shopping with picture symbols grocery list, an intervention consisting of grocery shopping with grocery list recorded only on an audio recorder, and then the baseline phase was then reexamined (Bouck et al., 2013).

The study results showed that the audio recorder helped the three students obtain the ten grocery items varied by student. However, the results suggest students could use the audio recorders to correctly identify and locate ten items from a grocery list. The results support the potential use of audio recorders to assist students with moderate intellectual disabilities in independent grocery shopping (Bouck, 2013). Special education providers can apply the results of this study to support their SWD in learning how to use audio recorders or other easy-to-use/low-cost recording devices as students generalize the skills learned in the classroom to real-life scenarios.

Social Communication

Social skills are "socially acceptable learned behaviors that enable a person to interact effectively with others and avoid socially unacceptable responses" (Gresham & Elliott, 1990, p. 1). Alwell et al. (2009) systematically reviewed social and communicative interventions and transition outcomes for youth with disabilities. The researchers used an ecological model of social functioning to answer questions about what will work for social and communicative skills acquisition for SWD. The review included only studies that combined interventions designed to teach social and

communicative competence. It also measured their impact exclusively and required that every study included in the review met minimum internal and external validity standards. A total of thirty studies were included in the systemic review. The studies fell into four categories: augmentative and alternative communications (AAC), conversation skills training, social skills training (SST), and functional communication training to replace aberrant behaviors. The study supports a broad range of interventions designed to enhance social and communicative competence in youth with disabilities). SST interventions had the best evidence, which represented a variety of skills. Special Education providers are suggested to apply practices that would best support the individual student's skill deficit. These practices would promote the acquisition, performance, and generalization of prosocial behaviors, reduce competing problem behaviors, and enhance interpersonal relationships with peers and adults (Alwell et al., 2009).

Murry et al. (2013) investigated the effects of the Working at Gaining Employment Skills (WAGES) curriculum on the social and occupational skills of adolescents with disabilities. WAGES (Johnson et al., 2004) is a job-related social skills curriculum consisting of 33 comprehensive lesson plans in four domains: (a) self-regulation, (b) teamwork, (c) communication, and (d) problem-solving. The purpose of the study was to randomly assign participation into the WAGES curriculum in anticipation that SWD would demonstrate more significant gains in vocational outcome expectations, occupational skills, and social skills than those in the control classrooms. There were 222 students participating in this study from three high schools and 18 classrooms. The participants were given rating scales that evaluated perceived vocational

outcome expectations, occupational skills, and social skills. Students completed the vocational outcome expectations (VOCs) and Social Skills Rating System (SSRS), and teachers completed the occupational skills, a subscale of the Adaptive Behavior Inventory, and the SSRS teacher form. The intervention group received 3 and 4 days per week for approximately 4.5 months.

The results of this study showed that the WAGES curriculum can improve the prevocational and social skills of adolescents with disabilities. The most significant impact was that exposure to the WAGES curriculum improved students' occupational skills. Additionally, a small effect was observed on students' vocational outcome expectations. This study was the first to investigate an intervention designed to change outcome expectations among SWD. Students were observed to have greater empathy, cooperation, and assertion skills following the intervention. These findings provided new knowledge on the effectiveness of WAGES in improving the social skills of adolescents with disabilities within the context of transition (Murry et al., 2012). The researchers claimed that the findings from this study are significant because social skills can be improved through a systemic implementation of curricula to teach these skills.

Student-Focused Planning and Evidence-Based Practices

Student-focused planning under Kohler's Taxonomy for Transition Planning 2.0 (2016) focuses on IEP development, planning strategies, and student participation. Student-focused planning identifies students' abilities, preferences, interests, and needs within the transition program. It encourages students to express their opinions and actively participate in their IEP process. Self-determination plays a crucial role in successful participation in secondary transition and the overall IEP, as it empowers

students with the knowledge and skills necessary for decision-making and future planning. As teachers guide during primary and early secondary education, the expectation is for students to develop proficiency as they progress through high school. Student-focused planning prioritizes educational decisions based on students' goals, aspirations, and preferences. Thus, student-focused planning is essential to foster students' self-awareness and use it to establish both short and long-term goals. When comparing this domain to the EBP measured by Mazzotti et al. (2014), self-determination skills align with the framework. Self-determination encompasses various skills such as making choices, problem-solving, goal-setting, and taking the initiative. Developing and practicing these skills during high school can enhance student engagement in transition planning, leading to academic and post-school success for students with disabilities. Utilizing self-determination skills allows students to take control of their transition plans and be part of the decision-making process.

Self-determination skills

"Self-determination is defined as a combination of skills, knowledge, and beliefs that enable a person to engage in goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior. An understanding of one's strengths and limitations, together with a belief in oneself as capable and effective, are essential to self-determination. When acting on these skills and attitudes, individuals have a greater ability to take control of their lives and assume the role of successful adults" (Field et al., 1994; Martin et al., 1995; Ward, 1996, as cited by Denney et al., 2012). Self-determination skills are essential for students to hone for positive post-secondary success. Self-determination skills include goal setting, self-monitoring, setting high expectations, problem-solving, and creating partnerships

(Denney, 2012). Self-determination skills are woven into an IEP's development, including academic instruction, review of strengths, weaknesses, and needs, and development of transitional plans, planning strategies, and student participation.

Development of an IEP requires the participation of special education providers, parents, and the student when the student is of transition age. Cavendish and Connor (2017) investigated factors influencing meaningful student and parent involvement in IEP transition planning. The authors used a mixed-method study to answer the question: "What are the perspectives of high school students with learning disabilities, their parents, and their teachers on malleable factors in school-based practice that facilitate student and family involvement in educational planning?" (Cavendish, 2017, p. 2). Students, Teachers, and parents were surveyed using the Student Involvement Survey (SIS) measures of perceptions of school efforts to facilitate student involvement in IEP and transition planning and open-ended interviews with participants. The quantitative findings showed that students and teachers believed that the school follows procedural guidelines related to test accommodations and paperwork. However, meaningful support discussed in IEP meetings was not provided to students in practice. Qualitative findings used a grounded theory method. Four themes were revealed: facilitation of student involvement in IEP development, challenges to parent involvement in IEP development, challenges, effective support for graduation, and supports needed for career and college preparation. The overall findings of this study reveal that there needs to be more consistency between the intent of the [IDEA] policy and implementation (Cavendish et al., 2017). Participation in the development of IEPs and meetings focuses on meeting compliance with the regulation rather than making it meaningful. The researchers

recommend rethinking the purpose and manner of IEP and transition meetings and shifting from compliance with the regulations to meaningful conversations, pushing the student to the center of the conversation.

Family Engagement

Family engagement in special education is one of the first stages of any recommendation for a child's educational needs. Research by Snyder (2014) highlights the critical role of parents in the special education process, emphasizing the necessity for education authorities to keep parents informed and involved at every stage, ensuring they are aware of their rights. Moreover, Young et al. (2016) underscore the impact of parental involvement in transition programs on the post-school outcomes of young adults. They found that the active participation of parents in transition planning can contribute to more favorable career outcomes for their children. Therefore, fostering family involvement is crucial for optimizing the effectiveness of transition services and supporting the successful transition of students with disabilities into adulthood.

The practices associated with family engagement in transition planning encompass various aspects related to the planning and delivery of education, particularly transition services. Kohler (2016) identifies three key dimensions of family engagement: involvement, empowerment, and preparation. Involvement entails actively including parents and family members in decision-making and assigning them meaningful roles in their child's transition plan. Empowerment focuses on equipping families with the knowledge, skills, and confidence necessary to advocate for their children's needs and rights effectively. Preparation emphasizes the provision of resources, information, and support to empower families to navigate the complexities of the special education system and effectively support their child's transition to adulthood.

Overall, promoting family involvement in transition planning is essential for ensuring SWD's holistic development and success. By recognizing parents' and families' crucial roles and perspectives, educators can create more comprehensive and individualized transition plans that align with each student's unique needs and aspirations. In addition, fostering collaboration between families and educational professionals can facilitate smoother transitions and enhance the overall quality of services, leading to improved post-school outcomes. This study looked at the EBPs that coincided with the theoretical framework.

Parental Involvement

Active involvement of both students and parents throughout the transition planning process is vital for crafting effective, personalized, and comprehensive transition plans. Test et al.'s (2004) review of interventions aimed at enhancing student participation in IEP processes revealed that students with diverse disabilities can actively contribute to their IEPs. Research consistently demonstrates a positive correlation between student and parent engagement and successful outcomes in transition plans post-graduation. Positive results are evident when students take on more prominent and active roles in the transition planning process. The impact of specialized curricula and person-centered planning on enhancing student participation in EIP processes is well-documented (Test et al., 2004). Cameto's (2005) longitudinal study emphasizes the importance of consistent involvement and participation of relevant individuals, including parents and students, in effective transition planning.

Rehfeldt et al. (2012) offer preliminary evidence that IEP teams using the Transition Planning Inventory (TPI), which incorporates student involvement, self-

evaluation, and participation in identifying transition-related goals, along with a structured IEP meeting process based on TPI results, are likely to develop significantly more transition-related goals compared to teams that do not use the TPI. The study suggests that employing the TPI or similar transition assessment, along with collaborative planning in IEP meetings, not only ensures compliance with the IDEA provisions but also places schools in a more defensible position regarding due process risks or litigations.

Parents are assuming a more active role; students are attending and leading IEP meetings more frequently, families are directly involved in goal development, and comprehensive transition planning requirements are being addressed for most students with disabilities (Rehfeldt et al., 2012). The positive parent response to the IEP process in both groups supports earlier research, with parents in the TPI group more likely to rate items higher, possibly due to increased and thorough dialogue about the importance of transition planning based on TPI assessment information. These results underscore that active parental involvement throughout the transition assessment, planning, and IEP meeting process leads to greater satisfaction and positive outcomes.

Gothberg et al. (2018) identified various school structural inequalities affecting the transition of Culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) youth with disabilities. These included special educators' limited understanding of CLD family cultures, immigration issues, language proficiency challenges, and cultural differences influencing transition attitudes. The findings highlighted the gaps in CLD families' awareness of legal requirements for transition planning, feelings of intimidation when interacting with school personnel, and a perception of undervalued contributions to the planning process. Additionally, Gothberg (2019) pointed to a lack of cultural competence training for

school personnel, inadequate resources for CLD-specific transition assessment tools, and insufficient professional preparation for special education teachers engaged in CLD transition planning. Overall, this suggested a need for targeted professional development, training, and educational programming to address structural inequalities and enhance the effectiveness of transition planning for CLD youth with disabilities and their families.

Parental involvement is a cornerstone for positive post-school outcomes. When parents are included in the transition process, as suggested by Cameto (2004) and Rehfeldt (2012), students with disabilities can have positive outcomes and experiences as they navigate through the transition process. When parental involvement barriers include access due to cultural and linguistic differences between families and schools, as Gothberg et al. (2018) suggested, it can ostracize families and negatively contribute to successful post-school outcomes.

Summary

Students with disabilities require transition-based instruction from their special education providers. Using EBPs presents a multi-pronged approach to meeting Indicators 13 and 14 goals. The research in the categories of EBPs: academic instruction, self-determination, employment/job training, life skills instruction, social communication, parental involvement, dropout prevention, and data-based decision-making, are interwoven to support positive post-secondary outcomes best. This study explored the connection between providers' use of EBPs, positive post-secondary outcomes for SWD, and compliance with federal and State mandates.

CHAPTER 3 METHOD

Introduction

This study used a non-experiment, ex post facto design analysis of survey responses to compare the difference between school districts that met and did not meet New York State: State performance plan Indicator 13- secondary transition; and Indicator 14 - post-school outcomes and special education providers use of EBP This study used a sample of secondary transition providers in the Long Island region of New York. Chapter three contains the research questions and hypotheses, identifies the study's design and limitations, target population and sample, survey instrument, and data analysis methods.

Specific Research Questions and Hypotheses

The main research question was to determine what differences, if any, exist between transition provider's use of evidence-based practices (academic instruction, self-determination skills, life-skills instruction, employment and job training, social communication skills, parent involvement, dropout prevention, and data-based decision making) have on schools meeting New York State Education Department State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (NYSED: SPP/APR) indicators of secondary transition (indicator 13), and post-school outcomes (indicator 14).

Research Question 1

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency of evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 13 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met indicator 13 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met indicator 13 and those that did not.

Research question 1 includes eight sub-research questions that deal with each evidence-based category: 1) academic instruction, 2) self-determination skills, 3) life-skills instruction, 4) employment and job training, 5) social communication skills, 6) parent involvement, 7) dropout prevention, and 8) data-based decision making.

Research Question 1-1

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of academic instruction evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 13 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 1-1

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of academic instruction evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met indicator 13 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of academic instruction evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met indicator 13 and those that did not.

Research Question 1-2

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of self-determination skills evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 13 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 1-2

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of self-determination skills evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 13 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of self-determination skills evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 13 and those that did not.

Research Question 1-3

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of life-skills instruction evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 13 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 1-3

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of life-skills instruction evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 13 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of life-skills instruction evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 13 and those that did not.

Research Question 1-4

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of employment/job training evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 13 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 1-4

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of employment/job training evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met indicator 13 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of employment/job training evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met indicator 13 and those that did not.

Research Question 1-5

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of social communication evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 13 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 1-5

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of social communication evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met indicator 13 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of social communication evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met indicator 13 and those that did not.

Research Question 1-6

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of parental involvement evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 13 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 1-6

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of parental involvement evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 13 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of parental involvement evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 13 and those that did not.

Research Question 1-7

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of dropout prevention evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 13 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 1-7

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of dropout prevention evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 13 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of dropout prevention evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 13 and those that did not.

Research Question 1-8

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of data-based decision-making evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 13 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 1-8

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of data-based decision-making evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 13 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of data-based decision-making evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 13 and those that did not.

Research Question 2

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 14 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of evidence-based on the transition provider survey between schools that met indicator 14 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met indicator 14 and those that did not.

Research question 2 includes eight sub-research questions that deal with each evidence-based category: 1) academic instruction, 2) self-determination skills, 3) life-skills instruction, 4) employment and job training, 5) social communication skills, 6) parent involvement, 7) dropout prevention, and 8) data-based decision making.

Research Question 2-1

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of academic instruction evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 14 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 2-1

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of academic instruction evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 14 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of academic instruction evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 14 and those that did not.

Research Question 2-2

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of self-determination skills evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 14 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 2-2

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of self-determination skills evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 14 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of self-determination skills evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 14 and those that did not.

Research Question 2-3

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of life-skills instruction evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 14 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 2-3

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of life-skills instruction evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 14 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of life-skills instruction evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 14 and those that did not.

Research Question 2-4

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of employment/job training evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 14 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 2-4

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of employment/job training evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 14 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of employment/job training evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 14 and those that did not.

Research Question 2-5

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of social communication evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 14 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 2-5

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of social communication evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 14 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of social communication evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 14 and those that did not.

Research Question 2-6

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of parental involvement evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 14 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 2-6

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of parental involvement evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 14 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of parental involvement evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 14 and those that did not.

Research Question 2-7

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of dropout prevention evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 14 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 2-7

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of dropout prevention evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 14 and those that did not.

Hypothesis H_1: There is a difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of dropout prevention evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 14 and those that did not.

Research Question 2-8

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported frequency use of data-based decision-making evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 14 and those that did not?

Hypothesis 2-8

Hypothesis H_0: There is no difference in high school transition providers' self-reported frequency use of data-based decision-making evidence-based practices on the transition provider survey between schools that met Indicator 14 and those that did not.

Sample and Population

The target population for this non-experimental ex post facto study was all secondary transition providers in the Long Island region of New York. There are 125 school districts serving 414,657 students, of whom 63,768 (15.4%) receive special education services. Four of the 125 school districts canvassed for this study agreed to participate.

School A had 4,747 students enrolled, and 16.9% received special education services. School B had 5,702 students enrolled, of whom 15% received special education services. School C had 12,732 students enrolled, of whom 17.6% received special education services. School D had 6,632 enrolled, and 14.1% received special education services. Schools A, B, and C average a higher rate than compared to the region they reside in.

School districts report on per-pupil expenditures. School B had the highest expenditure per pupil at $27,451, and School C had the lowest at $19,246. School A and School C spent $25,812 and $23,184, respectively. School D has the highest percentage of students with low socio-economic status, 60%. School A has 41% of students with low socio-economic status. School B and School C have 20% and 29% respectively.

School A has a majority of African American students at 48% and Hispanic students at 32%. School B has a majority of Caucasian students at 64% and Hispanic students at 20%. School C has a majority of 70% Caucasian students and 18% Hispanic students. School D has a majority of Hispanic students, 60% and 29% Caucasian students. Asian and muti-racial students make up 11% or less for all four school districts.

Table 1 outlines the district demographic enrollment data for each district.

Table 1

Demographic Enrollment Data of Participating School Districts

Enrollment Data	School District A	School District B	School District C	School District D
Total Population	4,747	5,702	12,732	6,632
Percentage of SWD	16.9	15.0	17.6	14.1
Expenditures per pupil	$25,812	$27,451	$23,184	$19,246
Percentage of Students by Ethnicity				
Caucasian	10	64	70	28
Asian	5	11	6	1
Hispanic	32	20	18	60
African American	48	2	3	8
Multi-racial	4	3	3	2
Percentage of Economically Disadvantaged	41	20	28	60

The target population for this study was all transition providers. There was a total of 65 participants in this study: School A (n = 25), School B (n = 11), School C (n = 18), and School D (n = 11). Participant age ranges included 20-30 years old (n = 12), 31- 40 years old (n = 19), 41 – 50 years old (n=19), 51-60 (n = 13), and 61 years and older (n = 2). A total of twelve males and 53 females participated in the study. School-based positions included two categories: Special education teacher (n = 39) and support staff (n = 26). Support staff included Speech pathologists, School psychologists, and Social Workers. Ethnicity amongst participants revealed a predominance of Caucasian providers (n = 59, 90.8%). Asian, African American, and Hispanic were equal (n=2, 3.1%).

Among all school districts, 64.1% have 81-100% of their caseload within transition age. However, the training frequency among participants varied, with 20% claiming to have never been trained, 46.2% seldom trained, 30.8% occasionally trained, and only 3.1% saying they are often trained. Overall, 33.3% of the respondents have

spent one or fewer years working with SWD. The majority of the respondents have spent 2-12 years, n=30, with only four respondents spending 18 years or more servicing students with disabilities. Table 2 shows the demographic distribution of transition providers participants by school and total number for all respondents.

Adjusting Responses for Data Missingness

After scanning the participant data for missingness, the sample participants adjusted, n = 38, 58.5% of total respondents, with 27 respondents removed. School district's participation adjusted, School A (n = 21, 84.0%), School B (n = 5, 45.4%), School B (n=9, 50.0%), and School D (n = 3, 27.2%). Participant responses were reviewed to determine any considerations needed to implicate bias within the data. On average, participants spent 9 minutes and 59 seconds completing the survey. School A and B participants spent more than 12 minutes completing the survey, School C participants spent an average of 8 minutes and 23 seconds completing the survey, and School D spent an average of 5 minutes and 17 seconds completing the survey. Participants did not complete all the demographic questions; all participants (n=27) removed from the study did not answer survey questions after Question 31. Question 31 asked, "I understand the difference between evidence-based practices, research-based practices, and promising practices." This leads the researcher to two conclusions: 1 - that timing detracted respondents from completing the survey, and 2 – participants were not able to answer Question 31 and chose not to continue with the survey. After analyzing the logistical results in Survey Monkey, the researcher determined that there was no discriminatory bias due to the survey construct. Table 3 outlines the completion rate and minutes spent on the survey.

Table 2

Demographic Distribution of Transition Provider Participants by School

Demographic	School District A		School District B		School District C		School District D		Total	
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*
Age										
20 -30	4	16.0	2	18.2	3	16.7	3	27.3	12	18.5
31- 40	11	44.0	2	18.2	1	5.6	5	45.5	19	29.2
41 – 50	6	23.0	5	45.5	6	33.3	2	18.2	19	29.2
51 – 60	3	12.0	2	18.2	7	38.9	1	9.1	13	20.0
61 – and older	1	4.0	0	0.0	1	5.6	0	0.0	2	3.1
Total	25	100	11	100	18	100	11	100	65	100
Gender										
Male	3	12.0	3	27.3	4	22.2	2	18.2	12	18.5
Female	22	88.0	8	72.7	14	77.8	9	81.8	53	81.5
Total	25	100	11	100	18	100	11	100	65	100
School position										
Special education teachers	19	76.0	7	63.6	10	55.6	3	27.3	39	60.0
Support Staff	6	24.0	4	36.4	8	44.4	8	72.7	26	40.0
Total	25	100	11	100	18	100	11	100	65	100
Ethnicity										
Caucasian	22	88.0	10	90.9	17	94.4	10	90.9	59	90.8
Asian	1	4.0	0	0.0	1	5.6	0	0.0	2	3.1
Hispanic	0	0.0	1	9.1	0	0.0	1	9.1	2	3.1
African American	2	8.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	3.1
Total	25	100	11	100	18	100	11	100	65	100
Percentage of Caseload in Transition Age										
1 – 20	6	24.0	0	0.0	4	23.5	2	18.2	12	18.8
21 – 30	3	12.0	0	0.0	2	11.8	0	0.0	5	7.8
41 – 60	1	4.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	18.2	3	4.7
61 – 80	3	12.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	4.7
81 – 100	12	48.0	11	100	11	64.7	7	63.6	41	64.1
Total	25	100	11	100	17 *	100	11	100	64 *	100

Demographic	School District A		School District B		School District C		School District D		Total	
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*
Frequency of Training										
Never	3	12.0	1	9.1	5	27.8	4	36.4	13	20.0
Seldom	1	56.0	4	36.4	8	44.0	4	36.4	30	46.2
Occasionally	7	28.0	6	54.5	5	27.8	2	18.2	20	30.8
Very Often	1	4.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	9.1	2	3.1
Total	25	100	11	100	18	100	11	100	65	100
Years of Professional Experience with Students with Disabilities										
One or less	12	48.0	1	9.1	5	27.8	2	18.2	20	33.3
2 – 6	0	0.0	4	36.4	6	33.3	5	45.5	15	23.1
7 - 12 years	7	28.0	5	45.5	1	5.6	2	18.2	15	23.1
13 – 18	5	20.0	1	9.1	3	16.7	2	18.2	11	17.0
More than 18 years	1	4.0	0	0.0	3	16.7	0	0.0	4	6.1
Total	25	100	11	100	18	100	11	100	65	100

Note: * = One respondent from School C did not answer the demographic data about the percentage of the caseload in Transition Age.

Table 3

Participant Response Rate: Completion, Minutes Spent on the Survey

Survey	School District A	School District B	School District C	School District D	Total
Total participants engaged in the survey	25	11	18	11	65
Participants completed survey	21	5	9	3	38
Percentage of participant completion	84.0	45.4	50.0	27.2	58.5
Average time spent on the survey	12m 3s	12m 7s	8m 23s	5m 17s	9m 59s

Note – participants who completed the survey equaled the number of responses maintained in the final dataset by the researcher.

After the removal of missingness, the researcher re-analyzed the demographic data. The percentages of ages of participants remained the same, except for 61 and older (n=0). All other demographic categories held similar percentages after the removal of missing data. Percentage of Caseload in Transition Age had n=37 respondents. When scanning the data for this respondent, the participant had a response to all other questions; therefore, it was maintained in the data set. Table 4 outlines the demographic distribution of participants after cleaning participant data.

Data Sources

There are two sources of data for this study: the survey on evidence-based practices in transition surveys by Mazzotti and Plotner (2014) and data from the New York State Department of Education for Indicators 13 and 14 for the four participating school districts.

Table 4

Demographic Distribution of Transition Provider Participants by School After Removal for Missingness

Demographic	School District A		School District B		School District C		School District D		Total	
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*
Age										
20 -30	3	14.3	2	40.0	1	11.1	0	0.0	6	15.8
31- 40	11	52.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	66.7	13	34.2
41 – 50	5	23.8	2	40.0	4	44.4	0	0.0	11	28.9
51 – 60	2	9.5	1	10.0	4	44.4	1	33.3	8	21.1
61 – and older	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	21	100	5	100.0	9	100	3	100	38	100
Gender										

Demographic	School District A		School District B		School District C		School District D		Total	
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*
Male	3	14.3	0	0.0	3	33.3	0	0.0	6	15.8
Female	18	85.7	5	100	6	66.7	3	100	32	84.2
Total	21	100	5	100	9	100	3	100	38	100
School position										
Special education teachers	15	71.4	2	40.0	4	44.4	1	33.3	22	57.9
Support Staff	6	28.6	3	60.0	5	66.6	2	66.4	16	42.1
Total	21	100.0	5	100	9	10	3	100	38	100
Ethnicity										
Caucasian	18	85.7	4	80.0	9	10	2	66.7	33	86.8
Asian	1	4.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	2.6
Hispanic	0	0.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	2	5.3
African American	2	9.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	5.3
Total	21	100	5	100	9	100	3	100	38	100
Percentage of Caseload in Transition Age										
1 – 20	3	14.3	0	0.0	1	12.5	0	0.0	4	10.9
21 – 30	2	9.5	0	0.0	2	25.0	0	0.0	4	10.9
41 – 60	1	4.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	2	5.4
61 – 80	3	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	8.1
81 – 100	12	57.1	5	100	5	62.5	2	66.7	24	64.9
Total	21	100	5	100	8*	100	3	100	37*	100
Frequency of Training										
Never	2	9.5	1	20.0	2	22.2	1	33.3	6	15.8
Seldom	12	57.1	2	40.0	2	22.2	2	6.7	18	47.4
Occasionally	6	28.6	2	40.0	5	55.6	0	0	13	34.2
Very Often	1	4.8	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0	1	2.6
Total	21	100	5	100	9	100	3	100	38	100
Years of Professional Experience with Students with Disabilities										
One or less	10	47.6	0	0.0	1	11.1	1	33.3	12	31.6
2 – 6	0	0.0	3	60.0	5	55.6	1	33.3	9	23.7
7 - 12 years	7	18.4	2	40.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	10	26.3
13 – 18	3	14.3	0	0.0	2	22.2	0	0	5	13.2
More than 18 years	1	4.8	0	0.0	1	11.1	0	0.0	2	5.3

Demographic	School District A		School District B		School District C		School District D		Total	
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*
Total	21	100	5	100	9	100	3	100	38	100

Note: * = One respondent from School C did not answer the demographic data about the percentage of the caseload in Transition Age. The remaining data was intact, allowing the researcher to maintain the participant as part of the sample.

Instrument

Mazzotti and Plotner (2014) developed an untitled survey examining the correlation between transition service providers and the utility of evidence-based practices. The survey was based on secondary EBP literature outlined in Test, Fowler et al. (2009), and secondary EBPs found on the NSTTAC website (Mazzotti et al., 2014). The authors of the survey assessed content validity and ensured the survey questions measured the intended content areas (Gay et al., 2009) through expert feedback. Expert feedback recommended several edits, which included reordering questions related to professional development, adding developmental disabilities services to the list of transition service providers, and any questions that related to collaboration, clarification of working, and correction of spelling. Then, the survey was piloted by four transition specialists, which led to minor wording adjustments for clarity.

There were five sections of the survey consisting of a total of forty-six questions. The sections included demographics, collaborative relationships, program evaluation factors, transition service provider factors, and implementation factors related to training, access, preparation, knowledge, and use of secondary transition EBPs. For this study, the

demographic questions were adjusted to meet the intended participants, and thus, vocational rehabilitation specialists were removed from the survey options.

Transition service providers' factors included six questions assessing transition service providers' training, access, and preparedness to implement secondary transition EBPs. The survey used a 4-point Likert-type rating scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree).

Implementation factors included ten questions that assessed transition service providers' knowledge and use of secondary transition EBP. The first question in this section focused on providers' knowledge and understanding of EBP-related terms, including EBPs, research-based practices, promising practices, and unestablished practices, using a 4-point Likert rating scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree). The next seven questions focused on the use of secondary transition EBPs. A 4-point Likert (1 = never, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, 4 = always) was used for each of these questions.

The seven survey questions in this section centered on using secondary transition EBPs identified by Test et al. (2009) and the EBPs on the NSTTAC website (Mazzotti et al., 2014). The categories included academic instruction, self-determination, life skills instruction, employment/job skills training, social communication, parent involvement, and dropout prevention. The researchers organized these questions to identify specific strategies/interventions service providers use to teach transition-related skills. Therefore, the questions requested information about the specific EBP used to teach a transition-related skill. Respondents could select all the EBPs they used in each category (Appendix

E). Table 5 shows the EBP category, number of questions, and types of EBP assessed by the survey.

Table 5

Evidence-based Practice Categories and Types of Practice Assessed by Mazzotti and Plotner Survey (2014)

EBP category	Number of Survey Questions	Types of EBP Assessed by the Survey
Academic Instruction	7	• Mnemonic strategies • Self-management strategies • Computer-assisted instruction • Peer-assistance strategies. • Visual displays • Read 180 • Other
Self-Determination Skills Instruction	7	• Self-directed IEP • Self-Advocacy Strategy • Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction • Who's Future Is it Anyway? • Beyond High School • Self-management • Other
Life Skills Instruction	9	• Time delay strategies • Computer-assisted instruction • Community-based instruction • Video modeling • Prompting strategies
Employment/ Job Training Skills Instruction	6	• Mnemonic Strategies • Prompting strategies • Self-Management
Social/Communication Skills Instruction	8	• Prompting strategies • Self-management • Simulation • Community-based instruction • Modeling • Peer-training • Training Modules • Other

EBP category	Number of Survey Questions	Types of EBP Assessed by the Survey
Parent Involvement	2	• Training Models • Other
Dropout Prevention	5	• Check and Connect • The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program • The Achievement for Latinos through Academic Success (ALAS) Model • The Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) Model • Other
Data-Based Decision Making	3	• Effectiveness of the EBP • The fidelity of implementation • Both the effectiveness of the EBP for improving my student outcomes and the fidelity of my implementation of the EBP

Mazzotti et al. (2014), in their survey on transition providers' use of EBP, had several limitations. One limitation of the survey is that the survey was not psychometrically analyzed, and reliability and validity (other than content) were not reported. Another limitation of the survey was that participants were not asked to define evidenced-based practices and only their relative perceived levels of understanding (Mazzotti et al., 2014). However, this is the only survey on transition providers' use of EBP that has been published. Permission to use this survey was obtained via email from both Mazzotti and Plotner (Appendix E).

Plotner et al. (2015) utilized the same survey to determine factors associated with enhanced knowledge and use of secondary transition EBP. The purpose of the study was to identify where secondary transition teachers and direct-service transition professionals access resources and training regarding secondary transition EBPs and determine if there is a difference in teachers and direct-service transition professionals in reported

knowledge and use of EBPs. The authors sorted the seven areas of EBP into the same seven areas as Mazzotti et al. (2014) to measure their research questions. To ensure the subscales had response patterns that were internally consistent and reliable, Cronbach's alpha levels were obtained and found to be reliable, ranging from 0.79 to 0.93 (Plotner et al., 2015) for each of the six scales.

State Data

This study used self-reported school district data for New York state. New York State requires school districts to report on Indicators 13 and 14 on a 6-year cycle basis. School districts were expected to complete a self-assessment and submit the results by the deadline.

New York State collected baseline data on Indicator 13 in 2005 and again in 2009. The results of baseline data showed that 33.3 percent of youth, ages 15 and above, had IEPs that included coordinated sets of transition activities, measurable annual IEP goals, and transition services to reasonably enable them to meet their post-secondary goals (NYSED). School districts self-assess students' IEPs to determine if they meet the criteria of Indicator 13. Districts were expected to meet the target at 100% when reviewing students' IEPs (IDEA 2004).

Guidance documents are available for all school districts required to submit documentation for Indicator 13. Each district identifies a randomized sample of up to 30 students from the total number of students with disabilities who require transition services. The selected sample of IEPs is then reviewed by a committee of stakeholders within the district. Each IEP is reviewed by two assessors. The IEP is reviewed to determine whether the document includes measurable post-secondary goals updated

annually, age-appropriate transition assessment, and transition services, including course of study, that will reasonably enable the student to meet post-secondary goals.

Additionally, there must be evidence that the student was invited to the transition planning IEP team meeting, along with a representative from the participating agency, if appropriate. It is determined that the school district met Indicator 13 if all sample IEPs respond yes to the five areas assessed. If one or more sampled IEPs respond no to the checklist questions, the district does not meet the accountability measures for Indicator 13 (Appendix F).

New York State collected baseline data on Indicator 14 in 2005. The results of the baseline data collection were "out of a targeted 2,917 student exiters, 1,908 were available for interview. 92% of those interviewed reported being in post-secondary school and competitive employment at some point during the year after exiting high school in 2005-2006." The post-school status of the 1,009 former students who could not be interviewed is unknown. As a result of federal changes to the definition of Indicator 14, baseline data was collected in 2009. The response rate in 2009 was 53%, n=2,041. The respondents stated that 77% were enrolled in higher education, post-secondary education, or training programs, competitively employed, or in some other employment within one year of high school (NYSED). School district targets for Indicator 14 are determined on an annual basis by the state targets.

Indicator 14 is measured through a survey conducted via phone, online, and or paper. The number of students expected to complete the survey is based on the total number of students who exited high school during the reporting year. If a district has less than 100 students, they are expected to sample all students. Districts with more than 100

are expected to sample 95% of the existing students. Schools are expected to coordinate efforts with the PIAR or Potsdam Institute for Applied Research or PIAR. Schools must notify the students and parents about the survey and that they may be contacted for a post-school interview in the following May or June after graduating or exiting high school. It is determined that a district meets Indicator 14 if it receives the required responses to the survey. If they do not receive the targeted responses to the survey, it is determined that the school district did not meet Indicator 14.

In this study, School A met both Indicators 13 and 14. School B and D met Indicator 13 but did not meet Indicator 14, and School C did not meet Indicator 13 but did meet Indicator 14. Table 6 shows whether the district met or did not meet Indicators 13 and 14.

Table 6

School Districts Results for Indicators 13 and 14

	School District A	School District B	School District C	School District D
Met the following Indicators				
Indicator 13 (Secondary Transition)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Indicator 14 (Post-school outcomes)	Yes	No	Yes	No

Research Design and Data Analysis

The research design for this study was a non-experiment, ex post facto design because the collected data occurred before the study to determine if there is a causal relationship between the data. A non-random sampling of convenience was used for this study. As Creswell (2019) explained, "In nonprobability sampling, the researcher selects individuals because they are available and convenient and represent some characteristic

the investigator seeks to study" (p. 143). The casual-comparative method attempts to "find out the cause of certain occurrences or non-occurrences (Lord, 1973).

Reliability and Validity of Research Design

This study used an ex post facto quantitative research design, and as a result, it is vulnerable to threats to reliability and validity. Creswell (2014) states that "threats to validity refer to specific reasons for why we can be wrong when we make an inference in an experiment because of covariance, causational constructs, or whether the causal relationship holds over variations in persons, setting, treatments, and outcomes (p. 303). An ex post facto study violates both internal and external threats to validity.

Threats to external validity for this ex post facto design include interactions with selection and interaction of setting. This study used a non-randomized selection of participants. The researcher was a staff member of two of the four participating school districts. To minimize these threats, the researcher followed the same procedures with all four schools when requesting participation in the anonymous survey.

Threats to internal validity include history and maturation. This study used self-reported data for each participating school district. School districts self-report results of both Indicators 13 and 14 checklists. In an attempt to mitigate this threat to validity, New York State provides guidance for Indicator 13, which "…is recommended that at least two staff review each student's record to enhance validity and reliability of the review findings, (NYSED).

Procedures for Collecting Data

The researcher contacted all 125 school districts on Long Island via an email to the Superintendents of schools. One school responded positively to the inquiry. Follow-

up emails were sent a week later, which resulted in one additional school agreeing to participate in the study. The researcher worked at two of the four schools that participated in the study and followed the same process to request participation in the study. The researcher used the school district's internal email system. Individual links to the survey were sent to school districts requesting participation from staff members who met the criteria for the survey, such as secondary transition providers responsible for supporting SWD. Follow-up emails were sent to participants one week and two weeks later to improve the respondent rate.

The researcher accessed school data for both Indicators 13 and 14 through the New York State Data website under Special Education Data (NYSED, 2022). As part of SPP/APR, schools report data within a 6-year cycle. School A's data was from school year 2021-2022, School B: 2018-2019, School C: 2019-2020, and School D: 2020-2021.

Data Analysis

Data were imported from Survey Monkey to SPSS 29.0 software and analyzed by the researcher. The categorical independent variables for the research questions were the school district's results on Indicator 13 – secondary transition and Indicator 14 – post-school outcomes (met coded 1, or not met coded 0). The dependent variables were the EBP categories: academic instruction, self-determination skills, life-skills instruction, employment and job training, social communication skills, parent involvement, dropout prevention, and DBDM (Mazzotti et al., 2014). Table 7 outlines each research question, dependent variables, independent variables, and analysis method.

Table 7

Research Questions, Dependent Variables, Independent Variables, and Analysis Methods

Research Question	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Analysis Method
Research Question 1	Indicator 13: Secondary Transition Categorical variable: 2 levels 1. Schools that met the criteria and 2. Schools that did not meet the criteria	Survey scores regarding evidence-based practices and sub-scales (continuous variable) 1-1 Academic intervention EBP 1-2 Self-determination EBP 1-3 Life Skills Instruction EBP 1-4 Employment/job training EBP 1-5 Parental Involvement EBP 1-6 Social Communication EBP 1-7 Dropout Prevention EBP 1-8 Data-based decision EBP	Welch's t-test
Research Question 2	Indicator 14: Post-school outcomes Categorical variable: 2 levels 1. Schools that met the criteria and 2. Schools that did not meet the criteria	Survey scores regarding evidence-based practices and sub-scales (continuous variable) 1-1 Academic intervention EBP 1-2 Self-determination EBP 1-3 Life Skills Instruction EBP 1-4 Employment/job training EBP 1-5 Parental Involvement EBP 1-6 Social Communication EBP 1-7 Dropout Prevention EBP 1-8 Data-based decision EBP	Welch's t-test

Research Ethics

Data collection for this non-experimental ex-post factor study followed all guidelines set forth by the federal and institutional policies, procedures, and practices set forth by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the degree-granting institution. Before collecting data, the researcher completed training from the Office of Human Subjects Research Protections of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) (Appendix A). The degree-granting institution IRB accepted and granted approval to conduct the research (Appendix B).

The survey was distributed to participants via their work-assigned email by their direct supervisor. Survey data was collected electronically through the Survey Monkey website, which was set to protect confidentiality by not collecting emails or other personal identifying information. Participants' consent details were given on the first page of the survey link. Participants could choose not to complete the survey by closing out the webpage. Additionally, participants could stop answering questions at any point, and their survey would be discarded. State data was collected through publicly available archival records from New York State during the respective school districts' last reporting cycle for Indicators 13 and 14. The State data had no subject identifiers, ensuring confidentiality.

Conclusion

This chapter outlines the methodology for comparing special education providers' self-reported implementation of evidence-based practices (EBP) between school districts that met and did not meet the SPP/APR Indicators 13 and 14. The data collection, interpretation, and analysis methodology were explained. The ethical approach the

researcher took to maintain participants' confidentiality was presented. The analysis of the research findings is discussed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4 PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the quantitative results of the study. Data were collected anonymously from 65 special education providers on the evidence-based practices in transition services survey by Mazzotti et al. (2014) using Survey Monkey. After scanning for missingness, 38 respondents were maintained. Four school districts participated in this study, and the self-reported results on SPP/APR Indicators 13 and 14 were collected through New York state archival data available to the public.

Data were interpreted by the researcher aligned to the ex-post facto design to answer the research questions posed:

1. Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported use of evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 13 and those that did not?
2. Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported use of evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 14 and those that did not?

The Welch's t-test was used to analyze the remaining data to determine if there was a difference between transition providers' use of EBP between school districts that met Indicators 13 and 14 and those that did not. Welch's t-test is preferred when there is a small sample size, unequal sample sizes, and or violations of normality or homogeneity. Any one of the abnormalities should predispose the researcher to use Welch's t-test versus the traditional t-test. Delacre and her coauthors state: "Therefore, we argue that Welch's t-test should always be used instead of Student's t-test. When using Welch's t-

test, a very small loss in statistical power can occur, depending on the shape of the distributions. However, the Type 1 error rate is much more stable when using Welch's t-test compared to Student's t-test, and Welch's t-test is less dependent on assumptions that cannot be easily tested" (Delacre et al., 2017, p. 99). Considering multiple analyses in this study, Welch's t-test is a preferable candidate to control the Type 1 error rate. In addition, using the same analysis method will make the interpretation of the results consistent across the multiple research questions.

Results

Research Question 1

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported use of evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 13 and those that did not?

A series of Welch's t-tests were used to examine the question of whether EBP in transitioning planning for SWD between schools that successfully met Indicator 13 and those that did not. The independent variable represented schools that met Indicator 13 and those that did not meet Indicator 13. There were eight dependent variables: academic intervention EBP, self-determination EBP, life skills instruction EBPs, employment/job training EBP, social communication EBP, parental involvement EBP, dropout prevention EBP, data-based decision-making, and total EBP subscales. See Table 8 for the means and standard deviations for each group.

Table 8

Means and Standard Deviations of Transition Provider Survey Response on Evidence-Based Practices in Transition Services, Indicator 13

Indicator 13	*M* *Met Criteria (n=29)*	*SD*	*M* *Did Not Meet Criteria (n=9)*	*SD*
Academic instruction EBP	2.20	0.72	1.98	0.69
Self-Determination EBP	1.64	0.49	1.48	0.47
Life Skills Instruction EBP	1.68	0.75	1.74	0.62
Employment/Job training EBP	1.72	0.73	1.39	0.60
Parent involvement EBP	1.43	0.59	1.33	0.71
Social Communication EBP	2.11	0.50	1.90	0.72
Dropout Prevention EBP	1.20	0.34	1.02	0.07
Data-based decision making	2.74	1.05	1.89	0.80
Total EBP subscales	1.84	0.38	1.59	0.46

RQ: 1-1 Academic Intervention EBP

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if academic intervention EBP measures are different for school districts that met Indicator 13 than those that did not. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 13 were not normally distributed with a significant value of $p = 0.02$, and schools that did not meet Indicator 13 were normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of $p = 0.27$. Homogeneity of variances was not violated, as Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1, 36) = 0.02$, $p = 0.90$, ($p > .05$). Based on the test of normality and variances, in addition to a small unequal sample size between groups, a Welch's t-test was chosen. The Welch's t-test is more robust when homogeneity of variance is not met, and it allows for unequal sample sizes, which is present in this study (Delacre et al., 2017).

On the academic instruction EBP measure, there is no statistically significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 13 and school districts that did not, Welch's $F(1, 13.81) = 0.67$, $p = 0.43$, ($p > .05$).

RQ: 1-2 Self-Determination EBP

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if self-determination EBP measures are different for school districts that met Indicator 13 than those that did not meet Indicator 13. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 13 were normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of $p = 0.75$, and schools that did not meet Indicator 13 were normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of $p = 0.19$. Homogeneity of variances was not violated, as Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1, 36) = 0.11$, $p = 0.75$, ($p > .05$). However, the sample size is small and unequal between groups. Therefore, the Welch's t-test is the most appropriate statistical test. On the self-determination EBP measure, there is no statistically significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 13 and those that did not, Welch's $F(1, 14.01) = 0.86$, $p = 0.37$.

RQ: 1-3 Life Skills Instruction EBP

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if life skills instruction EBP measures are different for school districts that met Indicator 13 compared to those that did not meet Indicator 13. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 13 were not normally distributed with a significant value of $p < .001$, and schools that did not meet Indicator 13 were normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of $p = 0.22$. Homogeneity of variances was not violated, as Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1, 36) = 1.94$, $p = 0.17$, ($p > .05$). The data met the criteria for the

appropriate use of Welch's t-test. On the life skills instruction EBP measure, there is no statistically significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 13 and those that did not, Welch's $F(1, 15.97) = 0.06$, $p = 0.82$, ($p > .05$).

RQ: 1-4 Employment/Job Training EBP

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if employment/job training EBP measures differ for school districts that met Indicator 13 compared to those that did not meet Indicator 13. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 13 were not normally distributed with a significant value of $p < .001$, and schools that did not meet Indicator 13 were not normally distributed with a significant value of $p < 0.001$. Homogeneity of variances was not violated, as Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1, 36) = 0.63$, $p = 0.43$, ($p > .05$). The data met the criteria for the appropriate use of Welch's t-test. On the employment/job training EBP measure, there was no significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 13 and those that did not, Welch's $F(1, 15.39) = 1.86$, $p = 0.19$, ($p > .05$).

RQ: 1-5 Parent Involvement EBP

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if parental intervention EBP measures differ for school districts that met Indicator 13 compared to those that did not. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 13 were not normally distributed with a significant value of $p < .001$, and schools that did not meet Indicator 13 were not normally distributed with a significant value of $p < 0.001$. Homogeneity of variances was not violated, as Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1, 36) = 0.02$, $p = 0.88$, ($p > .05$). The data met the criteria for the appropriate use of Welch's t-test. On the parent involvement EBP measure, there was no significant

difference between school districts that met Indicator 13 and school districts that did not meet Indicator 13, Welch's $F(1, 11.72) = 0.14$, $p = 0.71$, ($p > .05$).

RQ: 1-6 Social Communication EBP

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if social communication EBP measures differ for school districts that met Indicator 13 compared to those that did not. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 13 were normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of $p = 0.13$, and schools that did not meet Indicator 13 were normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of $p = 0.74$. Homogeneity of variances was not violated, as Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1, 36) = 2.54$, $p = 0.12$, ($p > .05$). However, the sample size is small and unequal between groups, using the Welch's t-test is the most appropriate statistical test. On the social communication EBP measure, there was no significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 13 and those that did not meet Indicator 13, Welch's $F(1, 10.44) = 0.66$, $p = 0.44$.

RQ: 1-7 Dropout Prevention EBP

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if academic intervention EBP measures are different for school districts that met Indicator 13 compared to those that did not. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 13 were not normally distributed with a significant value of $p < 0.001$, and schools that did not meet Indicator 13 were not normally distributed with a significant value of $p < 0.001$. Homogeneity of variances was violated, as Levene's test result was significant, $F(1, 36) = 12.56$, $p = 0.001$, ($p > .05$). The data set did not meet the assumption tests to conduct the t-test. Instead, the Welch's t-test was used. On the dropout prevention EBP

measure, there was a significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 13 and school districts that did not meet Indicator 13, Welch's $F(1, 33.51) = 6.96$, $p = 0.01$, ($p < .05$), $\eta^2 = 0.06$. This indicates that dropout prevention EBP was more useful in supporting school districts in meeting the Indicator 13 criteria.

RQ: 1-8 Data-Based Decision Making

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if data-based decision-making EBP measures are different for school districts that met Indicator 13 compared to those that did not. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 13 were not normally distributed with a significant value of $p < 0.01$, and schools that did not meet Indicator 13 were normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of $p = 0.13$. Homogeneity of variances was not violated, as Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1, 36) = 0.91$, $p = 0.35$, ($p > .05$). The data set did not pass all the assumption tests to conduct the t-test. Instead, the Welch's t-test was used. On the data-based decision-making measure, there was a significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 13 and school districts that did not meet Indicator 13, Welch's $F(1, 17.48) = 6.57$, $p = 0.02$, ($p < .05$), $\eta^2 = 0.12$. This indicates that data-based decision-making EBP was more successful in supporting school districts to meet Indicator 13 criteria.

RQ: 1 Total EBP Subscale Score

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if the total EBP subscale score measures differ for school districts that met Indicator 13 compared to those that did not. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 13 were normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of $p = 0.63$, and schools that did not meet Indicator 13 were not normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of $p = 0.50$.

Homogeneity of variances was not violated, as Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1, 36) = 2.13$, $p = 0.15$, ($p > .05$). The data set met the criteria to conduct Welch's t-test. On the total EBP subscale score measure, there was no significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 13 and school districts that did not meet Indicator 13, Welch's $F(1,11.16) = 2.20$, $p = 0.17$, ($p > 0.05$).

Table 9 reports Welch's t-test results for school districts that met Indicator 13 and those that did not meet Indicator 13.

Table 9

Welch's t-test Results of School Districts that met Indicator 13 and those that did not

		df	Welch's *F*	*p*	η^2
Academic	Between Groups	1	.067	0.43	
Instruction EBP	Within Groups	13.81			
Self-Determination	Between Groups	1	0.86	0.37	
EBP	Within Groups	14.09			
Life Skills	Between Groups	1	0.06	0.82	
Instruction EBP	Within Groups	15.97			
Employment EBP	Between Groups	1			
	Within Groups	15.94	1.86	0.19	
Parent Involvement	Between Groups	1	0.14	0.71	
EBP	Within Groups	11.72			
Social	Between Groups	1	0.66	0.44	
Communication	Within Groups	10.44			
EBP					
Dropout Prevention	Between Groups	1	6.96	0.01	0.06
EBP	Within Groups	33.51			
Data-based	Between Groups	1	6.57	0.02	0.12
Decision Making	Within Groups	17.48			
Total EBP	Between Groups	1	2.20	0.17	
Subscales	Within Groups	11.16			

Research Question 2

Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported use of evidence-based practices in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 14 and those that did not?

A series of Welch t-tests were used to examine the question of whether EBP in transitioning planning for SWD between schools that successfully met Indicator 14 and those that did not. The independent variable represented schools that met Indicator 14 and those that did not meet Indicator 14. There were eight dependent variables: academic intervention EBP, self-determination EBP, life skills instruction EBPs, employment/job training EBP, social communication EBP, parental involvement EBP, dropout prevention EBP, data-based decision making, and total EBP subscales. See Table 10 for the means and standard deviations for each group.

Table 10

Means and Standard Deviations of Transition provider Survey Response on Evidence-Based Practices in Transition Services, Indicator 14

Indicator 14	*M* *Met Criteria (n=30)*	*SD*	*M* *Did Not Meet Criteria (n=8)*	*SD*
Academic instruction EBP	2.20	0.70	1.98	0.76
Self-Determination EBP	1.54	0.44	1.84	0.61
Life Skills Instruction EBP	1.63	0.65	1.94	0.93
Employment/Job training EBP	1.60	0.68	1.79	0.83
Parent involvement EBP	1.43	0.63	1.31	0.59
Social Communication EBP	2.00	0.56	2.28	0.50
Dropout Prevention EBP	1.15	0.32	1.19	0.29
Data-based decision making	2.56	1.06	2.46	1.11
Total EBP subscales	1.76	0.41	1.85	0.36

RQ: 2-1 Academic Intervention EBP

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if academic intervention EBP measures are different for school districts that met Indicator 14 compared to those that did not meet Indicator 14. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 14 were not normally distributed with a significant value of $p = 0.02$, and schools that did not meet Indicator 14 were normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of $p = 0.48$. Homogeneity of variances was not violated, as Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1, 36) = 0.03$, $p = 0.86$, ($p > .05$). The data met the criteria to conduct Welch's t-test. On the academic instruction EBP measure, there is no statistically significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 14 and school districts that did not meet Indicator 14, Welch's $F(1, 10.38) = 0.51$, $p = 0.49$, ($p > .05$).

RQ: 2-2 Self-Determination EBP

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if self-determination EBP measures are different for school districts that met Indicator 14 compared to those that did not meet Indicator 14. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 14 were not normally distributed with a significant value of $p = 0.01$, and schools that did not meet Indicator 14 were normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of $p = 0.56$. Homogeneity of variances was not violated, as Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1, 36) = 0.51$, $p = 0.48$, ($p > .05$). The data met the criteria to conduct Welch's t-test. On the self-determination EBP measure, there is no statistically significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 14 and school districts that did not meet Indicator 14, Welch's $F(1, 9.00) = 1.62$, $p = 0.24$, ($p > .05$).

RQ: 2-3 Life Skills Instruction EBP

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if life skills instruction EBP measures are different for school districts that met Indicator 14 compared to those that did not meet Indicator 14. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 14 were not normally distributed with a significant value of p <.001, and schools that did not meet Indicator 14 were not normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of p = 0.36. Homogeneity of variances was violated, as Levene's test result was significant, $F(1, 36) = 5.74$, $p = 0.02$, ($p > .05$). The data met the criteria to conduct Welch's t-test. On the life skills instruction EBP measure, there is no statistically significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 14 and school districts that did not meet Indicator 14, Welch's $F(1, 8.95) = 0.36$, $p = 0.40$, ($p > .05$).

RQ: 2-3 Employment/Job Training EBP

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if employment/job training EBP measures differ for school districts that met Indicator 14 compared to those that did not meet Indicator 14. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 14 were not normally distributed with a significant value of p <.001, and schools that did not meet Indicator 14 were normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of p = 0.07. Homogeneity of variances was not violated, as Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1, 36) = 0.15$, $p = 0.70$, ($p > .05$). The data set met the criteria to conduct Welch's t-test. On the employment/job training EBP measure, there was no significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 14 and those that did not meet Indicator 14, Welch's $F(1, 9.60) = 0.40$, $p = 0.56$, ($p > .05$).

RQ: 2-4 Parent Involvement EBP

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if parental intervention EBP measures are different for school districts that met Indicator 14 compared to those that did not meet Indicator 14. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 14 were normally distributed with a significant value of $p < .001$, and schools that did not meet Indicator 14 were not normally distributed with a significant value of $p < 0.001$. Homogeneity of variances was not violated, as Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1, 36) = 0.48$, $p = 0.49$, ($p > .05$). The data met the criteria to conduct Welch's t-test. On the parent involvement EBP measure, there was no significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 14 and school districts that did not meet Indicator 14, Welch's $F(1, 11.52) = 0.26$, $p = 0.62$, ($p > .05$).

RQ: 2-5 Social Communication EBP

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if social communication EBP measures differ for school districts that met Indicator 14 compared to those that did not meet Indicator 14. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 14 were normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of $p = 0.51$, and schools that did not meet Indicator 14 were normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of $p = 0.38$. Homogeneity of variances was not violated, as Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1, 36) = 0.00$, $p = 0.99$, ($p > .05$). However, the sample size is small and unequal between the groups. The data met the criteria for conducting the Welch's t-test. On the social communication EBP measure, there was no significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 14 and school districts that did not meet Indicator 14, Welch's $F(1, 12.28) = 1.97$, $p = 0.19$, ($p > .05$).

RQ: 2-6 Dropout Prevention EBP

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if dropout prevention EBP measures are different for school districts that met Indicator 14 compared to those that did not meet Indicator 14. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 14 were not normally distributed with a significant value of $p < 0.001$, and schools that did not meet Indicator 14 were not normally distributed with a significant value of $p = 0.04$. Homogeneity of variances was not violated, as Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1, 36) = 0.33$, $p = 0.86$, ($p > .05$). The data set did not meet the assumption tests to conduct Welch's t-test. On the dropout prevention EBP measure, there was no significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 14 and school districts that did not meet Indicator 14, Welch's $F(1, 11.99) = 15$, $p = 0.71$, ($p > .05$).

RQ: 2-7 Data-Based Decision Making

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if data-based decision-making EBP measures are different for school districts that met Indicator 14 compared to those that did not meet Indicator 14. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 14 were not normally distributed with a significant value of $p = 0.01$, and schools that did not meet Indicator 14 were normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of $p = 0.55$. Homogeneity of variances was not violated, as Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1, 36) = 0.03$, $p = 0.86$, ($p > .05$). The data met the criteria to conduct Welch's t-test. On the data-based decision-making measure, there was no significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 14 and school districts that did not meet Indicator 14, Welch's $F(1, 10.66) = 0.05$, $p = 0.83$, ($p > .05$).

RQ: 2 Total EBP Subscale Score

A Welch's t-test was selected to determine if the total EBP subscale score measures differ for school districts that met Indicator 14 compared to those that did not. The Shapiro-Wilk test of normality demonstrated that schools that met Indicator 14 were normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of $p = 0.09$, and schools that did not meet Indicator 14 were not normally distributed with a nonsignificant value of $p = 0.10$. Homogeneity of variances was not violated, as Levene's test result was not significant, $F(1, 36) = 0.57$, $p = 0.46$, ($p > .05$). However, the sample size is small and unequal between the groups. The data met the criteria for conducting the Welch's t-test. On the total EBP subscale score measure, there was no significant difference between school districts that met Indicator 14 and school districts that did not meet Indicator 14, Welch's $F(1, 12.25) = 0.36$, $p = 0.56$, ($p < 0.05$).

Table 11 reports Welch's t-test results for school districts that met Indicator 14 and those that did not meet Indicator 14.

Table 11

Welch's t-test Results of School Districts that met Indicator 14 and those that did not

		df	Welch's *F*	*p*	η^2
Academic Instruction EBP	Between Groups	1	.051	0.49	
	Within Groups	10.38			
Self-Determination EBP	Between Groups	1	1.62	0.24	
	Within Groups	9.00			
Life Skills Instruction EBP	Between Groups	1	0.82	0.39	
	Within Groups	8.95			
Employment EBP	Between Groups	1	0.36	0.56	
	Within Groups	9.59			
Parent Involvement EBP	Between Groups	1	0.26	0.62	
	Within Groups	11.52			

Social Communication EBP	Between Groups	1	1.97	0.19
	Within Groups	12.28		
Dropout Prevention EBP	Between Groups	1	0.15	0.71
	Within Groups	11.99		
Data-based Decision Making	Between Groups	1	0.05	0.83
	Within Groups	10.66		
Total EBP Subscales	Between Groups	1	0.36	0.56
	Within Groups	12.25		

Summary

The findings in this chapter determined if there was a statistical difference between schools that met Indicators 13 and 14 and special education providers' self-reported use of transition EBP for SWD. The results showed statistical significance between districts that met Indicator 13 and those that did not in the EBP subscale areas of dropout prevention and DBDM. There were no statistical differences between districts that met Indicator 14 and those that did not. Chapter 5 will synthesize the study's findings, how they relate to prior research, and provide future recommendations.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of Chapter 5 is to provide an overview of the purpose of the study, theoretical frameworks, methodological approaches, and findings. Each research question will be discussed, considering the results of the analyses, followed by the implications of the findings for policy and practice in post-secondary education. The study's limitations are addressed, recommendations for future research and findings are made, and finally, the conclusion will be provided.

The educational landscape highlights a concerning discrepancy in graduation rates between SWD and their non-disabled peers, with SWD graduating at lower rates (USDE 2010, 2011, 2012; NCES 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019). This issue is particularly pronounced in New York State, where the graduation rate for SWD is notably lower than the national average, leaving questions about the state's support systems for SWD and their preparedness for post-secondary life. Factors contributing to this gap include SWD's challenges in developing academic and non-academic skills and achieving positive post-secondary outcomes. New York State regulations subsequently expanded expectations for transition services, requiring schools to develop tangible transition plans within students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) that align with post-secondary goals and activities (8 NYCRR, Part 200, 2016).

However, despite efforts to improve transition planning and services, New York State still needs to work on meeting State Performance Indicators (SPP/APR) related to SWD's transition planning and post-secondary success (USDE, 2023). While some indicators have been met, others remain unfulfilled, impacting positive student post-

secondary outcomes. Against this backdrop, the study's purpose is to investigate the impact of utilizing evidence-based practices (EBP) for transitioning SWD on school districts' compliance with mandated SPP/APR indicators, aligning with Kohler's Taxonomy for Transition Programming (2016) and the conceptual framework of EBP to improve outcomes for SWD.

This study used a non-experiment, ex post facto design analysis of survey responses to compare the difference between school districts that met and did not meet New York State: State performance plan Indicator 13- secondary transition; and Indicator 14 - post-school outcomes and special education providers use of EBP. The two main research questions were:

Research Question 1: Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported use of EBP in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 13 and those that did not?

Research Question 2: Is there a difference in transition providers' self-reported use of EBP in transition planning for SWD between schools that successfully meet Indicator 14 and those that did not?

A total of 38 respondents across four school districts in Long Island participated in completing the forty-six-question survey created by Mazzotti and Plotner (2014) that examines the relationship between transition service providers and utility of EBP and the relationship to school districts' compliance to Indicators 13 and 14 of New York state SPP/APR. Descriptive statistics and Welch's t-tests were conducted to examine the hypotheses.

Implications of Findings

The overall findings of this study revealed that special education providers' self-reported use of EBP did not show a statistical significance between school districts that met compliance to Indicators 13 and 14 and those that did not. Two subscales of EBPs showed statistical significance: dropout prevention and data-based decision-making for Indicator 13. All other subscales for Indicator 13 and all EBP subscales for Indicator 14 did not show significance when comparing schools that met SPP/APR Indicator criteria. These results are not supportive of Kohler's theoretical framework, or the conceptual framework developed for this study.

In reviewing the results related to Research Question 1, statistically significant differences on whether schools that successfully met Indicator 13 and those that did not on the EBP total scale and its eight subscales were examined, it was found that schools that met Indicator 13 did better on the dropout prevention and data-based decision making than schools that did not meet Indicator 13. No significant differences were found on the EBP total scale or the six other subscales. This indicates that schools that successfully implemented transition services for students with disabilities are more likely to have strategies to prevent dropouts and make decisions based on data analysis. However, the absence of significant differences on the six other subscales between schools that met Indicator 13 and those that did not suggest that meeting this specific indicator does not guarantee overall success in implementing evidence-based practices across all areas assessed.

SPP/APR Indicator 13 measures whether transition planning is present in students' IEPs (IDEA, 2004). The checklist identifies five compliance areas for Indicator

13, which include statements that show appropriate measurable post-secondary goals, activities that facilitate the student's movement from school to post-school, transition services needs of the student that focus on the student's courses of study, measurable annual goals including academic and function goals, and whether the school district invites the student to the meeting, and or with consent invites a representative of any participating agency that will be responsible for providing transition services (NYSED, 2018). The answer to each of these questions is simple: yes or no. School districts do not need to rely on providers' usage of EBP to meet the compliance standard for Indicator 13. Instead, they can instruct providers to complete the IEP document to align with the indicator's questions.

This finding underscores the difficulty of implementing EBP in educational settings and highlights the need for further investigation into the factors influencing successful implementation. It also suggests that while Indicator 13 may be associated with certain aspects of effective practice, additional factors beyond compliance with this indicator may contribute to overall effectiveness in implementing EBP. Further research could explore these factors and their impact on the effectiveness of transition services for SWD.

In reviewing the results related to Research Question 2, differences between schools that successfully met Indicator 14 and those that did not on the EBP total scale and its eight subscales were examined. No significant differences were found between schools that successfully met Indicator 14 and those that did not on the EBP total scale or any of the eight subscales. This implies that compliance with Indicator 14, which measures post-school outcomes for SWD, does not necessarily correlate with superior

implementation of EBP across various domains assessed by the EBP total scale and its eight subscales.

Indicator 14 guidance documents do not provide a specific questionnaire or checklist for school districts to follow. New York State contracted with the Potsdam Institute for Applied Research (PIAR) to conduct the surveys with students 1-year after graduation. School districts are required to inform students and families that PIAR will be contacting them regarding the post-school interview, confirm and correct the list generated on who graduated, provide contact information for families, explain that the survey provides valuable information to improve post-school outcomes for other SWD, and encourage students to complete the survey to secure sufficient responses (NYSED, 2023). Indicator 14 data is outsourced from the school district, and collecting sufficient responses to meet the minimum survey requirement is challenging. It is possible that people who respond to the Indicator 14 survey may not be representative of the school. This is based on voluntary responses, so it is likely that certain types of graduates did not respond. Perhaps only successful people, meaning they got into college or got a job, were more likely to respond. Alternatively, the other way around, where people were unhappy about post-school life, and respond as a way to give feedback to schools. Also, there needs to be control over what type of students they survey. It is possible that the surveyors only got responses from individuals with mild disabilities. This further creates a barrier to measuring the impact of special education providers' use of EBP and whether school districts meet the criteria for Indicator 14.

Gaumer Erikson et al. (2014) and Gerber et al. (2014) examined how state school districts responded to Indicators 13 and 14 requirements. Gaumer Erikson et al. (2014)

found that most surveyed schools met Indicator 13, but some fell short of achieving the 100% target for IEP compliance. Indicator 14 proved unmeasurable based on student responses. Gerber et al. (2014) concluded that while states had flexibility in data collection for Indicator 14, this hindered national trend tracking. The study revealed that all four districts met at least one measure, but significant use of Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs) was only seen in two Indicator 13 subscales. No significant EBP measures were found for Indicator 14. The study echoed the inability to determine Indicator 14's effectiveness, suggesting limited pathways for districts to enhance compliance.

This finding shows the complexity of measuring the effectiveness of transition services for SWD and the multifaceted nature of implementing EBP in educational settings. While Indicator 14 may provide valuable insights into post-school outcomes for SWD, it may not directly reflect the quality or comprehensiveness of EBP implemented by the school. This underscores the need for a holistic approach to assessing the effectiveness of transition services, which may involve considering multiple indicators and factors beyond compliance with specific mandates. Additionally, it emphasizes the importance of further research to explore the factors influencing the implementation of EBP and their impact on SWD's post-school outcomes.

Four school districts participated in the survey. Only School A met both Indicators 13 and 14 accountability measures. School B and School D met the criteria for Indicator 13 but not Indicator 14, and School C met the criteria for Indicator 14 but did not meet the criteria for Indicator 13. The results of meeting versus not meeting Indicators 13 and 14 vary between the school districts surveyed. School A, a minority-majority school, met both indicators compared to more white-dominated schools with

higher per-pupil spending, which does not align with Prince et al. (2013) findings that student-level factors such as race, graduation status, disability type, and age, in predicting post-school engagement outcomes. When comparing School A to the other schools, a higher overall percentage of participants shared that they receive training in transition planning, and about 50% of School A's respondents have seven or more years of professional experience with students with disabilities, suggesting that School A has offered more professional development than the other schools surveyed for the study. While School A met both state indicators, the other three schools only met one indicator, aligning with the findings of Benitez et al. (2008) that more professional development is needed for transition providers.

Connection to the Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Kohler's theoretical framework (2016) was the foundation of this study. Kohler et al. (2016) developed the framework to organize theoretical practices into practical approaches. The five interwoven domains, student development, student-focused planning, family engagement, interagency collaboration, and program structure, presented empirical guidance to support SWD as they transition into post-secondary experiences. Three domains were the backbone of this study: student development, student-focused planning, and family engagement due to the ability to identify EBP that providers would use directly with students. Kohler's approach to the framework centered on the principle of self-actualization focuses on developing students' strengths rather than their limitations through cultivating self-determination skills. The role of natural supports through familial, social, and community connections intersects the three domains

highlighted in this study. The framework suggests areas where schools and providers can use specific EBP.

Under student-focused planning, Kohler offers the development of an IEP, student participation, and planning strategies for SWD. When synthesizing the survey results of special education providers, there was no statistical significance for Indicators 13 or 14 for self-determination EBP. When measuring on the 4-point Likert scale, the overall mean score fell below the sometimes range whether a school met or did not meet the criteria for the indicator measurements. While research underscores the power of student participation in the IEP process (Allen et al., 2001), the results disagree with the framework.

Student development incorporated the most significant number of EBP measured by the survey, academic interventions, life skills instruction, employment/job training, social communication, dropout prevention, and data-based decision-making. This domain aims to equip students with the necessary skills and competencies for successful transition, emphasizing life, employment, and occupation skill development through various learning experiences (Kohler et al., 2003). Within this domain, two EBP areas that had statistical significance for Indicator 13 were dropout prevention and DBDM. While dropout prevention was statistically significant, the average score on the 4-point Likert scale fell between the "never or sometimes" range. It was the lowest score when comparing schools that met the criteria for Indicator 13 and those that did not. The low scores for dropout prevention speak to special education providers' lack of knowledge and involvement with dropout prevention programs. Administratively, school districts run dropout prevention programs through stakeholders aside from special education

providers with direct interaction with students. This study's sample of providers included special education teachers and support staff (Speech Pathologist, School Psychologist, and Social Workers). In many schools, students at risk for dropout prevention may work with guidance counselors or staff unaffiliated with the special education process to make gains toward graduation requirements.

DBDM has the highest average Likert scale for Indicators 13 and 14 when comparing schools that met the indicator and those that did not. While DBDM aligns with student development, it cannot be solely spoken of as agreeing with Kohler's framework. DBDM emerged from the Age of Accountability that began with the passage of NCLB (2001). Special education providers are more familiar with this term as it has become the foundation for making decisions within the school district (Sagebrush Corporation, 2004).

Parental engagement positively impacts various aspects of student outcomes, including school attendance, academic achievement, self-esteem, and confidence (Hornby, 2011). Positive family relationships foster self-determination (Wood et al., 2005) and can influence how family members shape students' self-determination and future (Carter et al., 2008). The parent involvement EBP subscale aligned with Kohler's parental engagement domain and was not statistically significant for either Indicators 13 or 14. While the results do not align with Kohler's parental engagement domain, the role of the parent is not measured by the survey. The questions in the survey measuring EBPs to enhance parent involvement are vague and ask about "training modules or other. The surveyed providers may not know what that means and whether they offer it, calling into

question whether we can determine that the survey result disagrees with Kohler's framework.

This study measured whether there was a difference in special education providers' self-reported use of EBP between schools that successfully met Indicators 13 and 14. The results identified two subscale areas, dropout prevention, and DBDM, as statistically significant. Kohler's framework (2016) creates a practical approach for special education providers to support transition planning for SWD. However, the results of this study do not confirm the theoretical or conceptual framework presented by this study. Further insight into the relationship to prior research is needed.

Relationship to Prior Research

In connection with the theoretical framework that guided this study, the findings suggest that provider use of EBP may not have significance in supporting compliance with SPP/APR Indicators 13 and 14. Kohler's Taxonomy for Transition Planning 2.0 (2016) underwrites much prior research and supports transition services and planning. Three taxonomy domains, student development, student-focused planning, and family engagement, were used to formulate the conceptual framework, tying the theoretical framework to the results of the state-mandated indicators. The EBP measured in this study was categorized into one of the three domains.

Evidence-Based Practices and Predictors

Test, Mazzotti et al. (2009) and Test, Fowler et al. (2009) used a systematic approach to identify EBP and predictors to support positive transition services and post-school outcomes. Mazzotti et al. (2014) furthered the investigation to bolster additional evidence to support in-school predictors of post-school success. The EBP practices and

predicators were considered as support to school districts and for providers to use with SWD to improve compliance with SPP/APR Indicators 13 and 14. The results from analyses related to Research Question 1 showed that the use of EBP for dropout prevention and DBDM was significant and that the remaining subscale EBPs and total EBP scores were not. Results from analyses related to Research Question 2 did not show significance in any of the measured EBP subscales or the total subscale in relation to Indicator 14.

Special Education providers are expected to use EBP when supporting transition planning for SWD (IDEA, 2004). The result of this study corroborates Cook et al.'s (2008) recommendation that providers must use their professional lens to evaluate and select the EBP to meet students' needs and goals. It is essential to examine provider knowledge of EBP before determining their usage. Once providers have a robust toolbox of EBP, they can determine which practices support their students best.

Student Development

Student development underscores six of the EBP assessed in this study: academic instruction, DBDM, dropout prevention, employment and job training, life skills instruction, and social communication. The results of this study only showed significance amongst two subscales of EBP in research question 1: DBDM and dropout prevention.

Dropout rates for SWD have been reported at an alarming rate (NTLS). Factors such as race, graduation status, disability type, and age can predict post-school engagement outcomes (Prince et al., 2013). Studies that evaluated programs such as Check & Connect (Sinclair et al., 2005) showed positive effects on attendance patterns, stability, and persistence through transition periods. The Check & Connect program was

developed to prevent dropout and to promote student engagement among urban middle school SWD. The check component uses a continuous and systemic assessment of student engagement levels with school, including attendance, suspensions, grades, and credits. The connect component refers to individual interventions focused on students' educational progress, with indicators that partner program staff with school personnel, family members, and community workers. The result of the systemic program Check & Connect showed that participants were less likely to drop out of school than similar students at the end of 4 years. The combined nuances of understanding dropout risks and dropout preventions, such as Check & Connect (Sinclair et al., 2005), could have a positive significance on transition planning within a student's IEP, leading to compliance with SPP/APR Indicator 13.

Many schools offer programs supporting at-risk students. In New York, some schools offer alternative programs through their district. These programs are sponsored by the Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). The New York State legislature created BOCES to provide programs and services to school districts within the state. Many schools in Long Island use their affiliation with BOCES to support alternative programs for dropout prevention. At least two school districts participating in this study offer alternative high school programs to all students. The BOCES programs offer similar programmatic and systemic indicators to Check & Connect (Sinclair et al., 2005); however, they are not named as such. Therefore, while the results of Indicator 13 show statistical significance, the overall picture of the school districts surveyed indicates that the specific programs named in the survey may not be familiar to respondents.

Test et al. (2018) identified tools currently used in transition and can support transition within schools. Eaves et al. (2012) looked specifically at a transition tool to evaluate Indicator 14, which identified 16 factors, eight of which included post-school outcomes and eight factors for in-school dimensions. The present study shows significance for DBDM for Indicator 13, illustrating that when providers used DBDM for secondary transition, there was enhanced compliance for state mandates. This finding advances the research beyond what has previously been found.

Prior research spoke to the use of EBP to support SWD in academic intervention, employment and job training, life skills instruction, and social communication. Academic interventions include participating in core content instruction (Joshi et al., 2017) and inclusion in the career and technical education/work study (Flexer et al., 2011) strongly connect to positive post-school outcomes. The pathway students plan for in high school impacts their participation in post-secondary education (Chiang et al., 2012). This present study did not find evidence to support that the use of EBP impacted academic interventions.

SWD encounters significant barriers to the access of post-secondary education, training, and employment opportunities (Honeycutt et al., 2015). Transitioning from high school to successful post-secondary outcomes for students with disabilities requires a comprehensive approach encompassing rigorous academic instruction, technical skill-building, work-based experiences, and career counseling (Wagner et al., 2016). The present study did not support prior research on impacting employment outcomes.

Teaching social communication skills to SWD is crucial for their social integration, academic success, and daily life functioning (Fuller & Kaiser, 2020). These

skills enable individuals to express themselves effectively, understand social cues, and engage in reciprocal interactions, facilitating the development of friendships and navigation of social situations. Proficiency in social communication enhances students' ability to participate in classroom activities, collaborate with peers, and seek assistance from teachers, thus impacting their academic outcomes. EBPs show that mastering social communication promotes independence in daily living tasks, empowering individuals to advocate for themselves, make informed decisions, and navigate community settings confidently (Watkins et al., 2017). However, this study did not support prior research on social communication.

Student-Focused Planning

Kohler's theoretical framework aligned student-focused planning into three areas: IEP development, planning strategies, and student participation (Kohler et al., 2016). This domain places students at the center of transition planning. Self-determination is inherently aligned with student-focused planning, which includes goal setting, self-monitoring, setting high expectations, problem-solving, and creating partnerships at its core (Denney, 2012). Self-determination skills teach SWD how to have a voice to steer their pathway toward post-secondary outcomes. One avenue students and families can use is participation during IEP meetings.

Cavendish (2017) looked at the factors that included meaningful student and parent involvement in IEP transition planning, and the results showed a disparity between the intent of IDEA (2004) and its implementation. High-stakes testing leading to graduation requirements took priority over students' interests and strengths, forming a barrier to meaningful participation for students and parents. Meeting graduation

requirements became the focus of transition meetings. This study did not yield significant results on provider use of self-determination skills (EBP) and meeting indicators 13 or 14, which supports similar findings from Cavendish (2017). The skills needed to develop self-determination will support the non-academic skills many SWD struggle to learn (Denney, 2012). The self-determination model of learning (Wehmeyer et al., 2012) provides a structure for providers to learn these non-academic skills and improve students' post-school outcomes.

The results of student-focused planning, as it relates to prior research and the results of this study, show that special education providers may not be familiar with the terms associated with the EBP survey questions or may use these practices without understanding the empirical research that supports them.

Family Engagement

Family engagement in transition planning for SWD is crucial, with research indicating better post-school outcomes (Young et al., 2016). Parents are required to be members of the Committee on Special Education (CSE) team (IDEA, 2004). Research also suggests that SWD will have more positive outcomes when parents are included in the transition planning process (Cameto, 2005; Rehfeldt, 2012). Many times, transition planning discussions occur during the annual review of a student's IEP.

There are several challenges to parental participation during IEP meetings, including understanding the verbiage used at the meeting, access to professional interpreters, and time constraints for the meeting (Cavendish et al., 2017). During CSE meetings, professionals may find themselves lost in the content jargon that is familiar to many Special Education providers. Being aware of and adjusted to the cultural and

linguistically diverse needs of families provides a positive experience for those families, which will further support transitional needs for SWDs. Gothberg et al. (2019) identified targeted professional development, training, and education programming to support structural inequities and enhance the effectiveness of transition planning for youth with disabilities. The present study did not show significant results when evaluating provider use of EBP for Indicator 13 or 14, supporting Gothberg's et al. (2019) claims that more support for special education providers is necessary.

Kohler's framework is an interconnected domain-driven system that supports SWD post-school outcomes. Kohler et al. (2016) design linked each of the domains together through one or more EBP. The results of this study did not confirm whether Special Education providers self-reported the use of EBP or whether a school district met or did not meet SPP/APR Indicators 13 and 14. When evaluating prior research, it was challenging to align the studies to one EBP as the purpose of the studies evaluated multiple domains of the framework. This aligns with Denney (2012), where learning work readiness, interviewing, and overall transition skills are difficult for SWD.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations inherent in this study warrant consideration. Firstly, the small sample size may constrain the generalizability of the findings. The study's small number of respondents may limit the extent to which the results can be extrapolated to broader populations, potentially affecting the external validity of the research. A small sample size also raises concerns about statistical power, as smaller samples may be insufficient to detect subtle but meaningful effects or differences. Therefore, caution should be

exercised when interpreting the results, and future research with a larger and more diverse sample pool is needed to corroborate and extend the findings of this study.

Additionally, the use of data from an online survey introduces potential biases and limitations. Online surveys may suffer from self-selection biases, as participation is voluntary, and individuals who choose to respond may differ systematically from those who do not. Furthermore, relying on self-reported data in online surveys may introduce social desirability biases, as participants may provide responses they perceive as socially acceptable rather than reflecting their true attitudes or behaviors.

Lastly, the use of non-parametric statistics in the data analysis may have implications for the interpretation and generalizability of the results. Non-parametric tests are often less powerful than parametric tests, particularly when dealing with smaller sample sizes or data that do not meet the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance. While non-parametric statistics offer advantages in terms of flexibility and robustness to violations of assumptions, they may also be less sensitive to detecting subtle effects or relationships. Therefore, the use of non-parametric statistics in this study may have influenced the precision of the findings, and alternative analytic approaches or sensitivity analyses could provide additional insights into the research questions.

Recommendation for Future Practice

The findings of this research study suggest that meeting accountability measures of Indicators 13 and 14 may not impact positive post-school outcomes for SWD through provider use of EBP. The school districts sampled did not show significance in meeting SPP/APR Indicators 13 and 14 for the school districts surveyed and transition providers'

use of EBP. The study will inform New York state and school districts surveyed that using EBP by providers to meet state accountability measures requires additional support.

New York State has not met the target for either Indicator 13 or 14 since its inception by the federal government. The state needs to continue offering school districts support in the form of professional development offerings or guidance documents to improve school districts' compliance with both indicators measured in this study. The state needs to continue identifying factors preventing school districts from meeting the required metrics for Indicators 13 and 14.

School districts need to investigate whether providers understand the difference between EBP, research-based practices, and promising practices. Of the 65 respondents to the survey, 28 were eliminated because they did not go further than question 31, which asked if the responder understood the difference between the three. The responses to each EBP subscale were assessed through a Likert scale (1 – never, 2 – sometimes/seldom, 3 – often, 4 – always). Based on the low mean subscale scores on the use of EBP, it is questionable whether providers understand the difference between EBP, research practices, and promising practices.

Special education providers do not understand the difference between EBP, research-based practices, and promising practices. NCLB (2001) and IDEA (2004) required that school districts and, in turn, special education providers use EBP to support SWD. Furthermore, school districts need to prioritize EBP when providing transition planning professional development beyond compliance with the standards.

Training for special education providers is essential to ensure that EBP is being used. The participants surveyed in this study showed that they seldomly received training

related to secondary transition services (n=18) 47.4% of the participants, with only 2.6% (n=1) participants stating that they received training often. However, a majority, 64.9% (n= 24), have 81-100% of their caseload in transition age. School districts need to increase the training and professional development rate for providers to improve post-school outcomes for SWD, especially when only one of the schools met both Indicators 13 and 14 when it was previously measured.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study did not find significance in most components of special education providers' use of EBP. The researcher offers recommendations for future research to support further the hypotheses offered in this study. First, the study should be repeated beyond the Long Island Region of New York. New York state services over 731 school districts with more than 2.5 million students and more than 450,00 identified as students with disabilities. Expanding this study may offer New York State a broader outlook on the landscape between school districts that meet Indicators 13 and 14 and those that do not and how providers use EBP.

When reviewing the demographics of the four school districts participating in this study, ethnicity was not a factor for either the school pupil demographic or school providers sampled when looking at whether Indicators 13 or 14 were met. Three of the school districts (A, B, and D) met the criteria for Indicator 13, and two (A and C) met the criteria for Indicator 14. This study showed that the only school district to meet both indicators had a majority percentage of students identify as African American (32%), and the three other districts had higher rates of students identifying as Caucasian (School B – 64%, School C – 70%, and School D – 28%). Prior research showed that students of

color (African American, Hispanic, etc.) have poorer outcomes for transition and post-school outcomes (Wilkins et al., 2014; Gothberg et al., 2019). Future research should consider ethnicity's role in compliance with the SPP/APR mandates and positive post-secondary outcomes.

Special education is based on individual needs. Test et al. (2009) identified many EBP and predictors that support positive post-secondary outcomes. Prince et al. (2013) focused on the nuances influencing post-school engagement and the need for targeted interventions and policies. Future studies should incorporate qualitative analysis of targeted interventions such as Check and Connect (Sinclair et al., 2015) or WAGES (Murry et al., 2013) to strengthen the EBP components offered by the interventions.

Conclusions

The purpose of this nonexperimental ex post facto study was to compare special education provider use of EBP for transitioning SWD between school districts that met accountability measures on SPP/APR Indicator 13 for secondary transition and Indicator 14 post-school outcomes and those that did not. The EBPs explored in this study were categorized into three domains outlined in Kohler's Taxonomy for Transition Planning 2.0 (2016): student development, student-focused planning, and family engagement. Low respondent rates required the use of non-parametric statistical analysis. The study's findings revealed significance in two EBP subscale areas for Indicator 13, DBDM, and dropout prevention. The results provide an opportunity for New York state and school districts to increase professional development and resources for special education providers working with transition-age SWD related to EBP transitional services and

planning. Improving special education providers' use of EBP when working with SWD will improve students’ post-school outcomes.

APPENDIX A IRB APPROVAL

IRB-FY2020-358 - Initial: Initial - Exempt - St. John's

irbstjohns@stjohns.edu <irbstjohns@stjohns.edu>
Mon 1/13/2020 2:08 PM
To:Geri S. Weinstein <geri.weinstein16@my.stjohns.edu>;parmarr@stjohns.edu <parmarr@stjohns.edu>

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

Federal Wide Assurance: FWA00009066

Jan 13, 2020 2:08 PM EST

PI: Geri Weinstein
CO-PI: Rene Parmar
Dept: Ed Admin & Instruc Leadership

Re: Initial - IRB-FY2020-358 THE USE OF EVIDENCED-BASED PRACTICE FOR TRANSITION PLANNING FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND SCHOOL DISTRICT COMPLIANCE

Dear Geri Weinstein:

The St John's University Institutional Review Board has rendered the decision below for THE USE OF EVIDENCED-BASED PRACTICE FOR TRANSITION PLANNING FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND SCHOOL DISTRICT COMPLIANCE.

Decision: Exempt

PLEASE NOTE: If you have collected any data prior to this approval date, the data needs to be discarded.

Selected Category: Category 1. Research, conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, that specifically involves normal educational practices that are not likely to adversely impact students' opportunity to learn required educational content or the assessment of educators who provide instruction. This includes most research on regular and special education instructional strategies, and research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.

Sincerely,

Raymond DiGiuseppe, PhD, ABPP
Chair, Institutional Review Board
Professor of Psychology

Marie Nitopi, Ed.D.
IRB Coordinator

APPENDIX B RECRUITMENT LETTERS

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

Consent Form – Individual Participation

Dear Participant,

You have been invited to take part in a research study to learn more about the use of evidence-based practices for transition professionals in relationship to school districts compliance to State Performance Plan Indicator 13: Secondary Transition. This study is being conducted by Ms. Geri Weinstein, as part of her doctoral dissertation at St. John's University. Her faculty sponsor is Dr. Jenny Yang, of the Department of Administrative and Instructional Leadership, School of Education at St. John's University.

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire that contains two sections. Section one consists of questions about your background, work experience, and current employment characteristics. Section 2 consists of questions related to your understanding and utility of Evidence-based practices regarding transition services. Participation in this study will involve 10- 15 minutes of your time.

There are no known risks associated with your participation in the evaluation. Your perspectives and insights will contribute in valuable ways to this work. Your participation in this project is wholly voluntary and your choice to participate or not will not impact you in any way. Your answers are completely confidential and will be released only as summaries in which no individual's answer can be identified. This survey is voluntary. Although you will receive no direct benefits, this research may help the investigator understand the relationship between using evidence-based practices for transition services and districts compliance to Federal mandates. If for some reason you prefer not to participate, please do not fill out the survey.

For questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University's Institutional Review Board, St. John's University, Dr. Raymond DiGiuseppe, Chair digiuser@stjohns.edu 718-990-1955 or Marie Nitopi, IRB Coordinator, nitopim@stjohns.edu 718-990-1440.

If there is anything about the study or your participation that is unclear or that you do not understand, if you have questions or wish to report a research-related problem, you may contact Geri Weinstein via the contact numbers and emails below. When you have completed the survey below, please hit the submit button.

Thank you for your time,

Ms. Geri Weinstein, Doctoral Candidate
516-578-0567
geri.weinstein16@stjohns.edu,
St. John's University
508 Sullivan Hall
8000 Utopia Pkwy.
Queens, NY 11439

Jenny Yang, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Administrative &
Instructional Leadership
yangj1@stjohns.edu
School of Education
Sullivan Hall 515
St. John's University
508 Sullivan Hall
8000 Utopia Pkwy.
Queens, NY 11439

Consent Form – School District Participation

Dear School District Administrator,

You have been invited to take part in a research study to learn more about the use of evidence-based practices for transition professionals in relationship to school districts compliance to State Performance Plan Indicator 13: Secondary Transition. This study is being conducted by Ms. Geri Weinstein, as part of her doctoral dissertation at St. John's University. Her faculty sponsor is Dr. Jenny Yang, of the Department of Administrative and Instructional Leadership, School of Education at St. John's University.

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to provide your School District's completed Self-Monitoring Indicator 13 Compliance Form from the last two reporting cycles for your districts State Performance Plan Indicator 13.

There are no known risks associated with your school district's participation in this study. Your perspectives and insights will contribute in valuable ways to this work. Your District's participation in this project is wholly voluntary and your choice to participate or not will not impact you in any way. The information provide from these files will be confidential and will be released only as summaries in which no individual school district's answer can be identified. Although you will receive no direct benefits, this research may help the investigator understand the relationship between using evidence-based practices for transition services and districts compliance to Federal mandates. If for some reason you prefer not to participate, please do not fill out the survey.

For questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University's Institutional Review Board, St. John's University, Dr. Raymond DiGiuseppe, Chair digiuser@stjohns.edu 718-990-1955 or Marie Nitopi, IRB Coordinator, nitopim@stjohns.edu 718-990-1440.

If there is anything about the study or your participation that is unclear or that you do not understand, if you have questions or wish to report a research-related problem, you may contact Geri Weinstein via the contact numbers and emails below.

Thank you for your time,

Ms. Geri Weinstein, Doctoral Candidate
516-578-0567
geri.weinstein16@stjohns.edu,
St. John's University
508 Sullivan Hall
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Jenny Yang, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Administrative &
Instructional Leadership
yangj1@stjohns.edu
School of Education
Sullivan Hall 515
St. John's University
508 Sullivan Hall
8000 Utopia Pkwy.
Queens, NY 11439

APPENDIX C PERMISSION FOR USE OF SURVEY

Re: Request for survey on Transition Knowledge - EBP

Geri S. Weinstein <geri.weinstein16@my.stjohns.edu>
Sat 9/28/2019 1:16 PM
To:Val Mazzotti <vlmazzot@uncc.edu>;Rene Parmar <PARMARR@stjohns.edu>
Cc:plotner@mailbox.sc.edu <plotner@mailbox.sc.edu>

Drs. Mazzotti and Plotner,

Thank you very much for sharing the survey. I look forward to building on your research.

Geri Weinstein

From: Val Mazzotti <vlmazzot@uncc.edu>
Sent: Monday, September 16, 2019 2:39 PM
To: Rene Parmar <PARMARR@stjohns.edu>
Cc: plotner@mailbox.sc.edu <plotner@mailbox.sc.edu>; Geri S. Weinstein <geri.weinstein16@my.stjohns.edu>
Subject: Re: Request for survey on Transition Knowledge - EBP

* External Email *

We look forward to learning about your results!!

On Mon, Sep 16, 2019 at 2:38 PM Rene Parmar <PARMARR@stjohns.edu> wrote:

> Thank you!
> We look forward to building on your research.
>
> Rene
>
> Dr. Rene S. Parmar, Professor
> Department of Administrative and Instructional Leadership
> St. John's University
> 508 Sullivan Hall
> 8000 Utopia Pkwy.
> Queens, NY 11439

From: Val Mazzotti <vlmazzot@uncc.edu>
Sent: Monday, September 16, 2019 2:33 PM
To: Rene Parmar <PARMARR@stjohns.edu>
Cc: plotner@mailbox.sc.edu; Geri S. Weinstein <geri.weinstein16@my.stjohns.edu>
Subject: Re: Request for survey on Transition Knowledge - EBP

* External Email *

Hi Rene -

We are happy to share. Here you go!

Val

On Wed, Sep 11, 2019 at 11:35 AM Rene Parmar <PARMARR@stjohns.edu> wrote:

> Dear Drs. Mazzotti and Plotner,

> One of my doctoral students, Geri Weinstein, is interested in conducting research on the transition planning knowledge of professionals in her region (Long Island, NY). She has been reading your work, including:
>
> Mazzotti, V.L., Plotner, A.J. (2016) Implementing secondary transition evidenced-based practices: a multi-state survey of transition service providers. Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals. 39(1). 12-22.
>
> Do you have a formal survey for professionals that she can use? If so, we would greatly appreciate access and your permission to use it.
>
> Sincerely,
>
> Dr. Rene S. Parmar, Professor
> Department of Administrative and Instructional Leadership
> St. John's University
> 508 Sullivan Hall
> 8000 Utopia Pkwy.
> Queens, NY 11439
>
>

--
Valerie L. Mazzotti, PhD
Associate Professor
Special Education Doctoral Program Director
Department of Special Education and Child Development
University of North Carolina at Charlotte
Researcher/Technical Assistance Provider
National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT)
9201 University City Blvd
Charlotte, NC 28223-0001
Phone: 704-687-8179
Follow my research: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Valerie_Mazzotti

--
Valerie L. Mazzotti, PhD
Associate Professor
Special Education Doctoral Program Director
Department of Special Education and Child Development
University of North Carolina at Charlotte

APPENDIX D MAZZOTTI AND PLOTTER (2004) EBP SURVEY

Secondary Transition and Evidenced-Based Practices

Informed Consent

Hello,

You are invited to take part in a research study to learn more about the use of evidence-based practices for transition professionals in relationship to school districts compliance to State Performance Plan Indicator 13: Secondary Transition. This study is being conducted by Ms. Geri Weinstein, as part of her doctoral dissertation at St. John's University.

There are no known risks associated with your participation in the study. Your perspectives and insights will contribute in valuable ways to this work. But, clearly your participation in this project is wholly voluntary and your choice to participate or not will not impact you in any way. Your answers are completely confidential and will be released only as summaries in which no individual's answer can be identified. Although you will receive no direct benefits, this research may help the investigator understand the relationship between using evidence-based practices for transition services and districts compliance to Federal mandates. The survey is voluntary. If for some reason you prefer not to participate, please do not fill out the survey.

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire that contains two sections.

Section 1 consists of questions about your background, work experience, and current employment characteristics.

Section 2 consists of questions related to your understanding and utility of evidence-based practices regarding transition services.

Thank you for your time!

Secondary Transition and Evidenced-Based Practices

Section 1: Demographics

* 1. Gender

- ◯ Female
- ◯ Male

* 2. Age

- ◯ 20-30
- ◯ 31-40
- ◯ 41-50
- ◯ 51-60
- ◯ 61 and over

* 3. Job Setting

- ◯ High School
- ◯ Middle School/Junior High School

* 4. Job Title

- ◯ Special Education Teacher
- ◯ Speech Language Pathologist
- ◯ Social Worker
- ◯ School Psychologist
- ◯ Transition Coordinator/Specialist
- ◯ Other (please specify)

* 5. Ethnicity

- ◯ African-American
- ◯ Caucasian
- ◯ Hispanic
- ◯ Native American/Alaskan Native
- ◯ Asian/Pacific Islander
- ◯ Other (please specify)

* 6. Educational Degree (Check highest degree earned)

- ◯ High School diploma/GED
- ◯ Associates
- ◯ Bachelors
- ◯ Masters
- ◯ Masters+hours
- ◯ Doctoral

7. Degrees Earned

- ◯ Special Education
- ◯ Rehabilitation Counseling
- ◯ General Education
- ◯ Counselor Education

8. What is the primary disability group that you work with?

- ◯ Learning Disabilities
- ◯ Intellectual Disabilities
- ◯ Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities
- ◯ Severe/Multiple Disabilities (includes Autism)
- ◯ Visual Disabilities
- ◯ Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- ◯ Other (please specify)

9. What percentage of your caseload is transition age (ages 14-21) youth?

- ◯ 1-20%
- ◯ 21-40%
- ◯ 41-60%
- ◯ 61-80%
- ◯ 81-100%

10. How often do you currently attend training related to secondary transition services

- ◯ Never
- ◯ Seldom
- ◯ Occasionally
- ◯ Very Often

11. How much training do you get per year in regards to transition services?

- ◯ One day or less
- ◯ 2-4 days
- ◯ 5-8 days
- ◯ 9 or more days

12. How many transition-age students with disabilities do you currently serve (caseload)?

- ◯ 1-50
- ◯ 51-100
- ◯ 101-150
- ◯ 151-200
- ◯ 201+

13. How many years of professional experience do you have working with transition-age youth with disabilities?

- ◯ One year or less
- ◯ 2-6 years
- ◯ 7-12 years
- ◯ 13-18 years
- ◯ More than 18 years

14. How many years have you been involved in providing transition services

- ◯ One year of less
- ◯ 1-6 years
- ◯ 7-12 years
- ◯ 13-18 years
- ◯ More than 18 years

Secondary Transition and Evidenced-Based Practices

Community Factors (Collaborative Relationships)

* 15. Do you feel you effectively collaborate with other stakeholders in transition process?

- ◯ Strongly disagree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Strongly agree

* 16. Rate your understanding of other stakeholders roles in the transition process?

	No understanding	Weak/minimal understanding	Moderate understanding	High understanding
Special Educators	○	○	○	○
Administrators	○	○	○	○
Parents and Families	○	○	○	○
General Educators	○	○	○	○
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors	○	○	○	○
Postsecondary Education Program Personnel	○	○	○	○
Developmental Disabilitiy Services	○	○	○	○
Other	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

* 17. Please rate the level of collaboration with identified transition stakeholders

	Do not collaborate	Weak/minimal collaboration	Moderate collaboration	High level of collaboration
Special Education Teachers	○	○	○	○
Administrators	○	○	○	○
Parents and Families	○	○	○	○
General Educators	○	○	○	○
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors	○	○	○	○
Postsecondary Education Program Personnel	○	○	○	○
Developmental Disability Office	○	○	○	○
Other	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

* 18. Please rate your frequency of communication with each of the identified transition stakeholders

	No communication	Weak/minimal communication	Moderate communication	High level of communication
Special Educators	◯	◯	◯	◯
Administrators	◯	◯	◯	◯
Parents/Families	◯	◯	◯	◯
General Educators	◯	◯	◯	◯
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors	◯	◯	◯	◯
Postsecondary Education Program Personnel	◯	◯	◯	◯
Developmental Disability	◯	◯	◯	◯
Other	◯	◯	◯	◯

Other (please specify)

* 19. Please indicate all the ways you collaborate with others around secondary transition. (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Through State-wide transition team
- ☐ Through Local transition planning council
- ☐ Through Interagency agreements
- ☐ Through school-based IEP planning/meetings
- ☐ Through community-based instruction/job coaching
- ☐ None

Secondary Transition and Evidenced-Based Practices

Program Evaluation Factors

* 20. Does your school or district use a transition programming framework (e.g., Kohler's Taxonomy for Transition Programming)?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Not sure

If yes, please specify name of framework

* 21. Does your school or district have a designated person to evaluate transition services?

	Yes	No	Not sure
Transition process	◯	◯	◯
Transition outcomes	◯	◯	◯

* 22. Please rate how well you feel your school evaluates transition services

- ◯ No evaluation
- ◯ Minimal evaluation
- ◯ Moderate evaluation
- ◯ High level of evaluation
- ◯ Not Sure

* 23. Please rate how well you feel your supervisor supports professional development in the area of transition?

- ◯ Does not support
- ◯ Minimal level of support
- ◯ Moderate level of support
- ◯ High level of support

Secondary Transition and Evidenced-Based Practices

Teacher Factors

* 24. My district has provided me with training on Evidenced Based Practices (EBP) related to secondary transition.

- ◯ Never
- ◯ Seldom
- ◯ Occasionally
- ◯ Very Often

* 25. My district has provided me with resources related to evidence-based/research-based practices for secondary students with disabilities.

- ◯ Never
- ◯ Seldom
- ◯ Occasionally
- ◯ Very Often

* 26. I have participated in professional development opportunities outside of my district related to EBPs for secondary students with disabilities

	Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Very Often
State Conferences	○	○	○	○
National Conferences	○	○	○	○

* 27. My professional development opportunities related to EBPs have included training on using data-based decision making to determine effectiveness of EBPs for improving student outcomes.

- ○ Never
- ○ Seldom
- ○ Occasionally
- ○ Very Often

* 28. I gain knowledge of EBPs for secondary students with disabilities by reading professional journals

- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly agree

* 29. I gained knowledge of EBPs for secondary students with disabilities in my unversity-based teacher preparation program.

- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly agree

* 30. My professional development opportunities have fully-prepared me to implement EBPs with secondary students with disabilities.

- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly agree

Secondary Transition and Evidenced-Based Practices

Implementation Barriers

* 31. I understand the difference between evidence-based practices, research-based practices, and promising practices?

- ◯ Strongly disagree
- ◯ Disagree
- ◯ Agree
- ◯ Strongly agree

* 32. I use the following web-based resources to access EBPs related to secondary transition: (Check all that apply)

- ☐ I do not use web-based resources to access EBPs
- ☐ Best Evidence Encyclopedia (BEE)
- ☐ National Autism Center (NAC)
- ☐ National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities (NDPC-SD)
- ☐ National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders
- ☐ National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

* 33. My school/district uses the evidence-based predicators of post-school success identified by National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC) to evaluate and improve secondary transition programs and practices

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ I do not know what these are

* 34. I use the following EBPs to teach student participation in the IEP/transition planning process for secondary students with disabilities

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Self-directed IEP	◯	◯	◯	◯
Self-Advocacy Strategy	◯	◯	◯	◯
Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction	◯	◯	◯	◯
Who's Future Is It Anyway?	◯	◯	◯	◯
Beyond High School	◯	◯	◯	◯
Other	◯	◯	◯	◯

Other (please specify)

* 35. I use the following EBPs to provide academic instruction to secondary students with disabilities:

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Mnemonic strategies	○	○	○	○
Self-management	○	○	○	○
Computer-assisted instruction	○	○	○	○
Peer assistance strategies (e.g., cooperative learning, peer tutoring)	○	○	○	○
Visual displays (e.g., graphic organizers, Venn diagrams, mapping)	○	○	○	○
Read 180	○	○	○	○
Other (please specify name of instructional method in box below	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

* 36. I use the following EBPs to provide self-determination skills instruction (e.g. goal-setting/attainment, decision making, choice-making) to secondary students with disabilities:

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction	○	○	○	○
Who's Future is it Anyway?	○	○	○	○
Self-Management (e.g., self-monitoring, self-instruction)	○	○	○	○
Other (please specify name of instructional method in box below)	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

* 37. I use the following EBPs to provide life skills instruction (e.g., grocery shopping, cooking, home maintenance, purchasing) to secondary students with disabilities:

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Time delayed strategies (e.g., constant, progressive)	○	○	○	○
Computer-assisted instruction (i.e., computer-based instruction)	○	○	○	○
Community-based instruction	○	○	○	○
Video modeling	○	○	○	○
Prompting strategies (e.g., least to most, most to least, response)	○	○	○	○
Mnemonic Strategies	○	○	○	○
Self-management (e.g., self-monitoring, self-instruction)	○	○	○	○

* 38. I use the following EBPs to provide employment/job training skills instruction (e.g., job application skills, job specific tasks) to secondary students with disabilities:

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Mnemonic Strategies	○	○	○	○
Prompting strategies (e.g., least to most, most to least, response)	○	○	○	○
Self-management (e.g., self-monitoring, self-instruction)	○	○	○	○
Computer-assisted instruction (i.e., computer-based instruction)	○	○	○	○
Community-based instruction	○	○	○	○
Other (please specify name of instructional method in box below)	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

* 39. I use the following EBPs related to social/communication skills instruction for secondary students with disabilities:

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Prompting strategies (e.g., least to most, most to least, response)	○	○	○	○
Self-management (e.g., self-monitoring, self-instruction)	○	○	○	○
Simulation (e.g., role-play)	○	○	○	○
Community-based instruction	○	○	○	○
Modeling (e.g., video modeling, live modeling)	○	○	○	○
Peer-training (e.g., peer-mediated instruction, peer networks)	○	○	○	○
Other (please specify name of skills instruction in the box below)	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

* 40. I use the following EBPs related to social/communication skills instruction for secondary students"

	Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Very Often
Training Modules	○	○	○	○
Other (insert name in box below)	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

* 41. I use the following EBPs to enhance parent involvement in the transition planning process:

	Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Very Often
Training Modules	○	○	○	○
Other (insert name in box below	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

* 42. My school implements the following EBPs related to prevention of dropout for secondary students with disabilities:

	Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Very Often
Check and Connect	○	○	○	○
The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program	○	○	○	○
The Achievement for Latinos through Academic Success (ALAS) Model	○	○	○	○
The Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) Model	○	○	○	○
Other (insert name in box below)	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

* 43. I use data-based decision making to determine:

	Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Very Often
Effectiveness of the EBP for improving my students outcomes	○	○	○	○
The fidelity (i.e., implementing intervention as prescribed) of my implementation of the EBP)	○	○	○	○
Both, effectiveness of the EBP for improving my student outcomes and the fidelity of my implementation of the EBP)	○	○	○	○

* 44. I use data-based decision making to:

	Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Very Often
Evaluate student progress to determine effectiveness of EBP	○	○	○	○
Change of modify an ineffective EBP to ensure student success	○	○	○	○
Improve my implementation of the EBP (i.e., fidelity) before deciding it does not work	○	○	○	○

Secondary Transition and Evidenced-Based Practices

Thank you for participating in this research study. If you have any questions, if there is anything about the study or your participation that is unclear or that you do not understand, if you have questions or wish to report a research-related problem, you may contact Geri Weinstein via the contact numbers and emails below. When you have completed the survey below please hit the done button.

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APPENDIX E RECRUITMENT LETTERS

Individual Student Record Review Checklist[3]

Item #	Citation (8NYCRR)	Regulatory Requirement
1	§200.4(d)(2)(ix)(a)(2)	The IEP includes **appropriate measurable postsecondary goals** based upon age-appropriate transition assessments relating to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills.

1a. Are there appropriate measurable postsecondary goals in the areas of training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills? ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Yes ☐ No Can the goals be measured?
☐ Yes ☐ No Will the goals occur *after* the student graduates/exits from school?
☐ Yes ☐ No Based on the information available about this student, do the postsecondary goals seem appropriate for this student?

- If yes to all three guiding questions, then check "Yes" **OR** if a postsecondary goal is not stated, check "No."

Source of Data/Comments:

1b. Are the postsecondary goals reviewed and updated annually, as appropriate? ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Yes ☐ No Were the postsecondary goals addressed/updated in conjunction with the development of the current IEP?

- If yes, check "Yes" **OR** if the postsecondary goals were not reviewed/updated with the current IEP, check "No."

Source of Data/Comments:

1c. Is there evidence that the measurable postsecondary goals were based on age-appropriate transition assessment(s)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Yes ☐ No Is the use of transition assessment(s) for the postsecondary goals mentioned in the IEP or evident in the student's file?

- If yes, check "Yes" **OR** if the postsecondary goals were not reviewed/updated with the current IEP, check "No."

Source of Data/Comments:

[3]Adapted from the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition's (NTACT) Indicator 13 Checklist Form A (Revised September 2012) (https://transitionta.org/sites/default/files/transitionplanning/NSTTAC_ChecklistFormA.pdf)

Attachment 3

Item #	Citation (8NYCRR)	Regulatory Requirement
2	§200.4(d)(2)(ix)(a)(4)	The IEP includes **needed activities to facilitate the student's movement from school to post-school** activities, including: instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

2a. Are there transition services in the IEP that will reasonably enable the student to meet his or her postsecondary goals? ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Yes ☐ No Do the transition services listed in the student's IEP that the student needs to reach the postsecondary goals include, as needed, instruction, related service(s), community experience, development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation?

- If yes, check "Yes" **OR** if no, check "No."

Source of Data/Comments:

Item #	Citation (8NYCRR)	Regulatory Requirement
3	§200.4(d)(2)(ix)(a)(3)	The IEP includes a statement of the **transition services needs of the student that focuses on the student's courses of study**.

3a. Do the transition services include courses of study that will reasonably enable the student to meet his or her postsecondary goals? ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Yes ☐ No Do the transition services include courses of study that align with the student's postsecondary goals?

- If yes, check "Yes" **OR** if no, check "No."

Source of Data/Comments:

Item #	Citation (8NYCRR)	Regulatory Requirement
2	§200.4(d)(2)(ix)(a)(4)	The IEP includes **needed activities to facilitate the student's movement from school to post-school** activities, including: instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

2a. Are there transition services in the IEP that will reasonably enable the student to meet his or her postsecondary goals? ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Yes ☐ No Do the transition services listed in the student's IEP that the student needs to reach the postsecondary goals include, as needed, instruction, related service(s), community experience, development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation?

- If yes, check "Yes" **OR** if no, check "No."

Source of Data/Comments:

Item #	Citation (8NYCRR)	Regulatory Requirement
3	§200.4(d)(2)(ix)(a)(3)	The IEP includes a statement of the **transition services needs of the student that focuses on the student's courses of study**.

3a. Do the transition services include courses of study that will reasonably enable the student to meet his or her postsecondary goals? ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Yes ☐ No Do the transition services include courses of study that align with the student's postsecondary goals?

- If yes, check "Yes" **OR** if no, check "No."

Source of Data/Comments:

5b. If appropriate, is there evidence that a representative of any participating agency (that was or is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services) was invited to the CSE meeting with the prior consent of the parent or student who has reached the age of majority (age 18)? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ NA

☐ Yes ☐ No Is there evidence that representatives of any of the following agencies/services were invited to participate in the IEP development, including but not limited to: postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation for the postsecondary goals?

☐ Yes ☐ No Was prior consent obtained from the parent (or student who has reached the age of 18)?

- If yes to both, check "Yes."
- If no invitation is evident and a participating agency is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services and there was consent to invite them to the IEP meeting, check "No."
- If it is too early to determine if the student will need outside agency involvement, or no agency is likely to provide or pay for transition services, check "NA."
- If parent or individual student consent (when appropriate) was not provided, check "NA."

Source of Data/Comments:

Individual Student Record Review Compliance Summary

Item #	Citation (8 NYCRR)	Compliance Questions	Determination of Compliance
1	§200.4(d)(2)(ix)(a)(2)	Questions 1a – 1c to determine compliance • If "Yes" is checked for Questions 1a, 1b, and 1c, check "Compliant" • If "No" is checked for Question 1a, 1b, or 1c, check "Noncompliant"	☐ Compliant ☐ Noncompliant
2	§200.4(d)(2)(ix)(a)(4)	Question 2a to determine compliance • If "Yes" is checked for Question 2a, check "Compliant" • If "No" is checked for Question 2a, check "Noncompliant"	☐ Compliant ☐ Noncompliant
3	§200.4(d)(2)(ix)(a)(3)	Question 3a to determine compliance • If "Yes" is checked for Question 3a, check "Compliant" • If "No" is checked for Question 3a, check "Noncompliant"	☐ Compliant ☐ Noncompliant
4	§200.4(d)(2)(iii)(a)	Question 4a to determine compliance • If "Yes" is checked for Question 4a, check "Compliant" • If "No" is checked for Question 4a, check "Noncompliant"	☐ Compliant ☐ Noncompliant
5	§200.4(d)(4)(i)(c)	Questions 5a and 5b to determine compliance • If "Yes" is checked for Questions 5a and 5b (or "NA" for 5b), check "Compliant" • If "No" is checked for either Question 5a or 5b, check "Noncompliant"	☐ Compliant ☐ Noncompliant

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