



FY23 Final Traditional Report Form

Sharing the Journey 2022-2023

Approval Status

In Progress

Parent Mentor Partnership Region

Northwest

1. Did 100% of your target families complete a Pre and Post Family Survey by April 15, 2022?

Yes

2. Describe your initiative. Include what student outcomes your work aligns with. (This may be an alignment with your district or a collaborative community initiative.)

I met with the Director of Support Services during preplanning to make a course of action for the upcoming school year. This year, we selected to continue my FY'22 initiative because we still have a need for improvement in the area of post-secondary outcomes for students with disabilities and it aligned perfectly with my school system's improvement plan. For my target group initiative this year, I am focusing on gaining a positive impact on postsecondary outcomes by (1) increasing access to resources for students with disabilities following high school and (2) increasing self-determination skills in our students with disabilities.

My director and I determined how to best successfully improve student outcomes this school year after reviewing current parent survey results. My reach became broader than just my ten target families, but would also greatly benefit my target group, thereby helping me to meet my overall goal. We decided on parent meetings and webinars, which led me to include the following topics: ASPIRE, Project SEARCH, NOW/COMP Waivers, Family Support Services, Assistive Technology, Improving Communication Skills in your Child, and a collaborative meeting with our district's lead counselor to present a session on school anxiety. We also determined a need for a transition fair including resources available for our students as well as possible employers and would include our Project SEARCH students as vendors. In addition, I would work on increasing meaningful student IEP participation by remaining the ASPIRE Coordinator for my school district whose duties included being the teacher and parent trainer. Lastly, I would send transition packets with my contact information, local and state-wide resources, and information regarding high school and beyond to all 8th-grade parents of students with disabilities which would be presented at the IEP meeting where a transition plan was first developed. I would prioritize attending many of these IEP meetings, including the student-led IEP meetings of my target group.

3. The primary area of focus for my initiative is: partnerships (communication), transition, Attendance, behavior, course completion (ABC) and Literacy

Post-secondary Success

4. How many years have you focused on this initiative?

3

5. How did you and/or your partners address any concerns or needs that you identified: Listening to families, looking at survey responses, or observing the actions (Vital Behaviors) families took? (did you have to pivot?)

After meeting with each target group's family, listening to their concerns, and considering their individual

needs, it became easier to help them determine what two items on the transition activity checklist they would complete this school year. I did not pivot from my initiative but rather individualized my actions accordingly. There were no unexpected needs in regard to ASPIRE student-led IEPs.

6. Describe your Target Group Training. Include the following FORMAT, CONTENT, PARTNERS (and their role), and FAMILY LEARNING/ACTION/STUDENT SUCCESS MESSAGE. (You may answer as a narrative or give a bulleted response. This answer should provide the details needed for replication)

For target group selection, I partnered with the Project SEARCH Coordinator to target all of her families and also partnered with a Junior High School self-contained special education teacher who I have co-taught with for many years in the past. She and I are very comfortable with each other and know we work well together and thought we would be a good team to help ease parents into the “transition planning” mindset. Both teachers agreed to hold student-directed IEP meetings for the target group. I believe selecting phenomenal partners has played a large part in helping to make my parent mentor work successful.

Format/ Content/ Family Learning/ Action: For the initial self-determination and transition activity training, my target group families, partners, and I met face-to-face to discuss student-led IEP meetings, and self-determination where the families selected three items on the self-awareness checklist to complete this school year. Then my partners and I broke up individually with families to go over a transition checklist and transition manual. I used Google Meets with any families that were unable to attend. Each family was asked to select three actions from the self-determination checklist and two actions from the transition checklist to work on. Each selection was documented and shared with my partners so that they could assist with the transition goals and self-determination skills that we are focusing on by providing support and consistency to the process. I find it fun to make my training interactive, so for my initial training, I gave each family a green, red, and yellow card. The green card said, “Got it!”. The yellow card said, “I am starting to understand.” And the red card said, “HUH?” By a show of cards I was able to quickly scan the colors selected for understanding and to ensure that learning was occurring. This process made my pretest and post-test easy and more fun without putting parents on the spot. This initial contact with my target families also helped me to provide families with the “why” they should attend future meetings and reach out to me frequently for assistance.

Student Success Message: My message to the target families this year was: “Knowing how to help your child during the transition into adulthood can be daunting, so it can be extremely helpful in having a list of actions and goals in order to help you prepare your children for a more successful future. It is never too early or too late to find resources and to improve self-determination skills.”

7. List TRAINING TOOLS and RESOURCES (handouts, lists, websites, etc.) you used to train or support your target group.

I used a variety of tools and resources to train and support my target group. I personally created my initial training tools which included a Transition Activity Checklist and Self-determination Checklist, and an individualized goal worksheet in order to support my target families. Because we were focused on self-determination skills as well as transition activities, the goal worksheet allowed my target families to stay focused on both the two transition activities that they selected to complete as well as the three skills from the self-determination checklist that they planned to work on. I used Word/SmartArt/ Square Accent List to create the checklists and the goal sheet.

Other tools and resources included a pre-survey before I began training, and a post-survey after my vital behavior training. I recorded my trainings by using spotcastify and you tube studio. My district uses Google Meets for live online meetings. I found the transition page on the GADOE website to be very helpful. <https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/Transition.aspx> Besides the activities that I used to work with my target families, I also shared activities with my school partners to assist with helping the students improve their self-determination skills. I used many ideas from the website: <https://www.imdetermined.org/> as well as my past “train the trainer” workshops from Elise James at the GaDOE in order to create activities for target families and case managers to complete for both self-determination and transition. For the transition manual that I provided to families to help explain all of the items listed on my transition checklist, I used Kim Chester’s, Bartow County Schools transition manual as an example, which really helped me tackle such a big undertaking.

8. Number of Families Impacted

10

9. Number of Students Impacted

10

10. List the two Learning Targets you used this year.

I can list two actions from the transition activity checklist that I will complete with my child.

I can describe three actions from the self-awareness checklist that will increase my child's self-determination skills.

11. Did 100% of your target families learn what you intended? (This is the goal we are striving to meet so we are certain families are equipped to do the action [vital behavior])

Yes

12. If no, why?

N/A

13. How did you collect the learning target data? (This is the information you used to determine if the target families learned what you intended.)

In order to collect target data for both of my learning targets, I regularly followed up with my target families with emails, and phone calls, and met routinely with my partners to check on progress. During the face-to-face group training, I used pre-post test questions consisting of true/ false, multiple choice, and fill-in-the-blank questions. I also find it fun to make my training interactive so I gave each family a green, red, and yellow card. The green card said, "Got it!". The yellow card said, "I am starting to understand." And the red card said, "HUH?" By a show of cards I was able to quickly scan the colors selected for understanding and to ensure that learning was occurring. Throughout the year I sent activities home to complete and send back in order to check on progress toward accomplishing the actions and improving the skills they selected toward post-secondary success. This information allowed me to follow up and offer resources, and information and provided additional examples to assist with attaining their goals. I also find it very helpful that my school system allows me to greatly assist parents who are applying for things like the NOW/COMP Medicaid Waiver or Family Support Services if that is a task they selected on their transition checklist. The school system allows me to assist the parents with copies of current eligibilities, IEPs, Birth Certificates, and other needed items from the student's permanent record for submission. After assisting them with the necessary paperwork, sometimes with help from an interpreter, and copying the Medicaid card that the parent provides, I am able to mail it off for the families. This really helps the family and ensures that they are able to follow through with the task.

I also met regularly with my school partners to assist with getting data regarding my target group. The Project SEARCH Coordinator and special education teacher (case manager) served as an additional resource for parents to tap into and provided even more opportunities for measuring the success of our vital behaviors because they had frequent access to the target families and of course the students. Both of the partners I have selected have a great understanding of the "mission" we are taking on and were very excited to be an integral part of the team.

14. Describe the action (Vital Behaviors) your target families took to practice what they learned.

After the target families were introduced to the main concepts: (A) transitioning out of high school and into adulthood and (B) the importance of the development of self-determination skills in their children, I asked them to complete a (1) self-determination checklist where they listed three skills to work on with their children, and a (2) transition activities checklist where they were asked to select two activities and then used (3) the goal sheet to identify tasks to complete regularly and report back on. The checklists helped the families set a goal and allowed us to work together to identify the needed steps to meet their goals. I was able to tailor information and activities sent home to target families for completion. I was able to get frequent feedback regarding progress from my target families this year.

15. Report the number or percentage of families who successfully completed the actions. (Action Data)

I worked on (A) transitioning out of high school and into adulthood with a checklist of activities to select from and (B) the importance of the development of self-determination skills in their children with a checklist of skills to target. I was able to obtain these percentages from my data collection:
Benchmark check 1: A) 7/10 or 70% B) 8/10 or 80% completed 20% or more of what I trained them to do.
Benchmark check 2: A) 8/10 or 80% B) 9/10 or 90% completed 40% or more of what I trained them to do.
Final Benchmark Check: A) 10/10 or 100% B) 10/10 or 100% completed 100% of what I trained them to do.

16. What student achievement outcomes did you expect to see based on the information you shared (Training) with families and the actions you supported them in doing?

The goals for the students of my target families were to improve postsecondary outcomes by increasing self-determination skills and having a plan for after high school with the necessary resources in place to make it a successful transition. I looked at both groups of students separately when reviewing data because of the grade difference.

(1) Regarding transition, I wanted my Project SEARCH students to be employed or pursuing postsecondary educational opportunities with increased access to available resources in order to make the transition out of high school more successful. For self-determination skills, I wanted my Project SEARCH students to demonstrate an increase in self-determination skills at home and on the job site which would be evaluated by the Project SEARCH Coordinator and parents. This year the job coaches and parents choose to work to increase self-awareness, pride, problem-solving, and self-advocacy skills as well as participation in the IEP meeting.

(2) Transition: I wanted my Jr. High students begin high school with increased access to community and other available resources. Many of my target group students were well within 2 years of turning 18. I also wanted my Jr. High students to increase self-determination skills which would be demonstrated by an increase in participation during the IEP meeting. The Junior High School skills selected this year included increasing choice-making skills, decision-making, goal-setting, and basic self-advocacy skills which would be evaluated by the target family and case manager reporting.

17. What student achievement data do you have that documents that students were impacted by the action (Vital Behaviors) that families took (Family Engagement)?

*100% of Project SEARCH students showed an improvement in self-determination skills and have an increase in access to available resources that will positively impact their postsecondary outcomes. According to the Project SEARCH Coordinator, all of the Project SEARCH students (3/3=100%) are on track to be employed. All of these students participated in their IEP meeting and presented their strengths, challenges, and goals for the future which were incorporated into the IEP. The families and Project SEARCH Coordinator reported an increase in problem-solving skills, pride while on the job, self-advocacy skills, and increase self-awareness. All of the target families were able to complete at least two tasks on the Transition Activity Checklist and have a plan for the future. It is amazing to see how these young people have blossomed and matured during their Project SEARCH year!

*All of the target group students at the Junior High School presented during their IEP meeting and showed an increase in self-determination skills according to the case manager and family post-meeting surveys. According to a pre-assessment survey/ post-assessment survey with the case managers and target families, 7/7=100% of students showed an improvement in self-determination skills in three of the following: self-awareness, choice making, independence, problem-solving, and self-advocacy skills, and all 7/7=100% and have an increase in access to available resources that will positively impact his or her transition into high school and after high school as measured by the completed transition checklist.

18. How did you collect your student achievement data?

I used pre and post survey data from the Project SEARCH Coordinator, casemanager, and target families in order to collect the above data. I was able to collect data regarding the success of both Learning Targets this way. I also used information from completed checklists.

19. Obstacles: Describe any obstacles you met related to inputs, processes, or target group/partners.

I had one obstacle regarding processes in reaching and reminding my target families of upcoming activities. I am not allowed to promote my parent's activities through social media.

20. Solutions: Describe solutions you and your partners put in place to address the obstacles you mentioned above.

As far as not being able to use social media to reach parents, I am still disappointed, but I use Infinite Campus to email parents. I have added a parent mentor website and a transition fair website in collaboration with a neighboring school district:

Parent Mentor Website: <https://sites.google.com/carrolltoncityschools.net/parent-mentor/bitmoji-parent-hub-of-resources> Transition Fair Website:

<https://sites.google.com/carrolltoncityschools.net/transition-fair-site/home> and have added the following information to my email signature line when I email parents to help get the information out.

Parent Hub of Resources:

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1v0TG8fUQnvlAy7x5Syi4fv8IUTgO6QOzGXLdQo4_EYA/preview?rm=minimal&slide=id.p1

21. Recommendations: List suggestions you would give to another school district or parent mentor who would like to replicate your work.

Overall, taking time when you become a Parent Mentor to develop relationships throughout the school system, develop community partnerships, and improve communication with families is imperative. Gaining special education teacher support really helps with getting the word out to parents as well as helps to win parents over. I presented a Parent Mentor update at every special education department monthly meeting this year and am considered a "part of the team". I also attended SSIP meetings and submitted a report to the School Board about my monthly activities to help gain district support. My motto is, "How can I help?" I look at every task as a way to let others know how I am able to help parents within our district. Be certain to thank your co-workers when they help you to make a difference with your families and with improving student outcomes!! Lastly, FIND GREAT PARTNERS who work really hard as you do! Life experiences with my own child really have made my job easier. If you do not know about an area, ask others to share. I often reach out to other parent mentors for help. You don't have to know everything, you just need to know who to ask.

22. Building Capacity is the process of developing strength and sustainability for our work by building a strong FOUNDATION, cultivating strategic RELATIONSHIPS, and being able to measure our EFFECTIVENESS and the IMPACT we are making on families. Here are some examples of strategies for building capacity you may recognize in your work: improving communication, improving information sharing, improving engagement of volunteers and partners, shared leadership, effective use of media outlets and identifying, utilizing and sharing data outcomes. Based on the above definition, did you build capacity this year?

Yes

23. Describe what you did to build capacity and how will it lead to long-term impact.

I was the first parent mentor for my school system. I have worked hard to build a strong foundation and made certain that others see a need for the position of parent mentor in the future. One way I built capacity through cultivating strategic relationships was by agreeing to be the teacher instructor as well as the parent instructor for ASPIRE. I present about parent mentor activities at all district-wide special

education meetings which are held monthly which also allows me to continue the relationships that I have with special education teachers and administrators as well as improve information sharing. I build capacity through communication through several means. I complete a report for the Superintendent/ School Board monthly to keep them informed of the work I am doing to ensure that the people at the district level do not lose sight of the importance of the parent mentor position. I email the special education teachers about upcoming events as well as parents.

I am always looking for additional partners to work with because I believe that it helps my target families if I do so. I work with an adjoining county for our transition fair. By sharing leadership I believe together we are better. Working together with my partners and vendors for our virtual transition fair was transforming! We invited over 45 vendors to our transition fair, which is a huge increase in the number of past vendors (community partners).


24. Is there additional information that you would like to share about your family engagement work?

I organized the sixth annual Trojan Heroes Awards Night where we honored 29 students in grades PK-12 who are recognized in the areas of Academics, Technology, Athletics, Fine Arts, Home, Community, or Self-determination, as well as one Inspiration Award winner and Talent winner for the district. I purchase the medals that are given to the students, and the high school winners are allowed to wear this medallion to graduation. We also take this opportunity to recognize a community partner, a Special Education Teacher, and a Support Person of the Year. The district and school level administrators present at the awards ceremony in addition to our Director of Support Services. I added an art show of our students with disabilities' artwork and had our school mascot there for photos. We dedicated this year's awards night to one of our students who passed away earlier in the year. This night is a very special night for all of us. One thing I am very proud of is that we never mentioned the word disability throughout the evening. It is truly a celebration of excellence and hard work. We also celebrate our Project SEARCH graduates at this awards ceremony and present letterman jackets to all of our high school students who have competed in the special Olympics for two years.

Our students who are on an alternative curriculum are recognized at all of our honors nights throughout the district including this one, but I have been told by many parents of students with learning disabilities, for instance, that this is the first award their child has ever received. We need to remember that there are students who work as hard, if not harder, for a "C" than students who easily make an "A", and they should not be overlooked. I personally experienced this with my own children who are grown now.

I also provide individual transition tours for parents of students with disabilities who are moving into a new school (PK, 3rd, 6th, and 8th graders in our district). They are able to tour the school while learning about school routines, and schedules, and meet our special education in school coordinators and administrators. This helps to minimize the parents' fear of sending their child with disabilities to a new school. Lastly, this year I have been able to assist my school system in improving assistive technology for our low-incidence students by helping with the selection of the tools, coaching teachers, as well as help deliver this information and knowledge to our families for home use.

Approval Activity History

Actor	Actions	Date
 Jamila Pollard jpollard@doe.k12.ga.us	Waiting for Jamila Pollard's action.	Wednesday, April 12, 2023