Evaluating the Impact of Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities Using Quasi-Experimental Design: Challenges and Possibilities

Does one year of participation in the Think College Transition (TCT) Model lead to higher levels of job-seeking skills, career readiness, and self-determination for 18-22 year old students with intellectual disabilities and autism compared to comparison students receiving the business as usual condition?

Youth with intellectual disabilities and autism (ID/A) are less likely than students with other disabilities to go to college and get a job. Although these youth may benefit from inclusive concurrent enrollment (ICE) programs, which provide transition services on college campuses instead of in high schools, little is known about the impact of these programs

Using quantitative methods to measure impact raises methodological issues when working with youth aged 18-22 with ID/A.

This poster explores potential solutions to issues facing

on students.

evaluators of programs serving this population, using the experiences of a current evaluation of the Think College Transition (TCT) Model in Massachusetts.

The TCT model is an inclusive comprehensive college based transition model where 18-22 year old transition students are fully included on campus in all aspects of a college experience (including classes, work experience, person-centered planning, and support services).

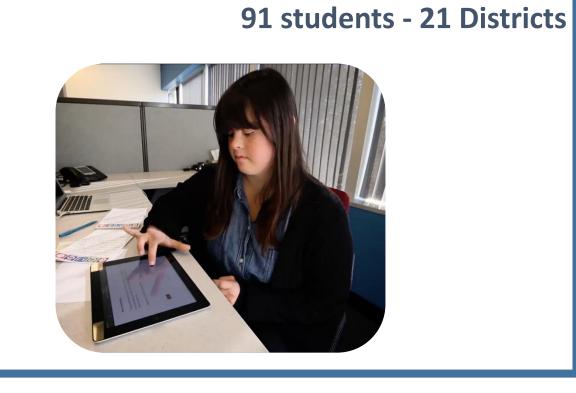
Sample

Challenges:

- Students with ID/A make up small % of all students with disabilities
- Small districts have few eligible students

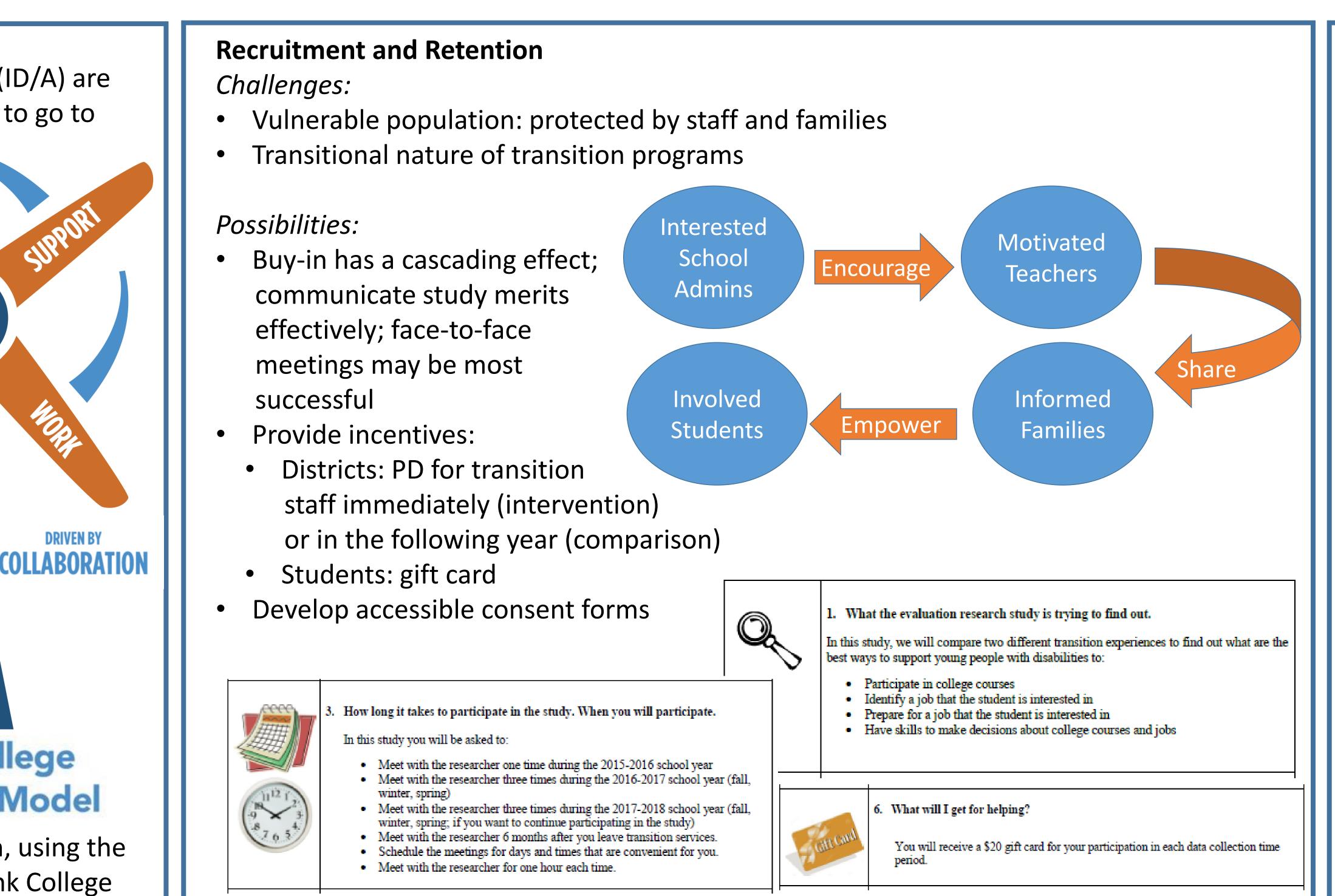
Possibilities:

- Design for large number of districts
- Communicate with districts early and often!



Think College

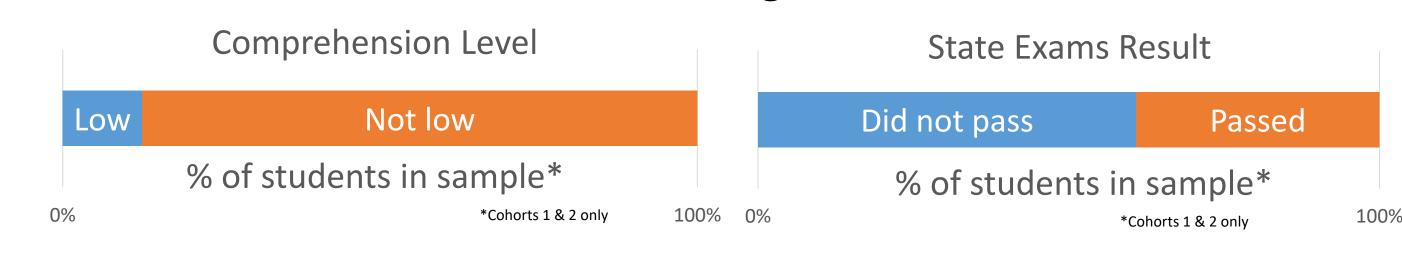
Transition Model



Instrumentation Validation

Challenge:

- Few validity or reliability studies using surveys with students with ID/A; except the Self-Determination Inventory (Shogren et al., 2015) (http://self-determination.org)
- ID/A students have diverse communicative and cognitive abilities



Pilot surveys: use "think aloud" interviews to learn how students process questions,

Possibilities:

revise accordinglySimplify text, use large font, reduce response

interpret words, and derive responses;

Collect data in person to support survey comprehension

options, use visuals as anchors

 Conduct factor analyses to determine validity and reliability with your sample.

Career Maturity Inventory (CMI): Pick the sentence that best describes you. I keep changing my mind about what job I want. I have picked what job I want. Student Career Construction Inventory (SCCI): How much thinking or planning have students done regarding their future career 4. Talking about what career I want with teachers and advisors 1 haven't thought about this yet 1 m thinking about this 1 have done this

Fidelity of Implementation (FoI)

Challenges:

- Measuring Fol when intervention is complex and personalized
- Multiple stakeholders with differing levels of understanding of, and investment in, intervention
- Contamination of intervention to comparison students

Possibilities:

- Make implementation goals transparent to all stakeholders. Create a digestible visual describing intervention and goals.
- Measure what (if any) aspects of the intervention the comparison students are exposed to.
- Do not include both intervention and comparison students from the same district; staff work with all students.

	Activity	Goal(s)	Data Source
A	FOUNDATIONS : District and institute of higher education (IHE) staff receive coaching	Each staff member receives coaching	Attendance logs
Partnerships	SYSTEMS : Agreement between district and IHE staff to collaborate on dual enrollment program	Written agreement for TCT implementation plan exists	Written document
	COLLABORATION: Establish and operate an interagency team to facilitate communication about TCT model across agencies	4 annual meetings	Meeting attendance logs and meeting notes
Student Activities	PLAN: Person-centered planning meeting	1 annual meeting	Written updated action plan at end of meeting
	SUPPORT: Career services	Attend 1 annual event	Student schedule
	WORK: Work experience	Currently working	Student schedule
	LEARN: Course selection	First choice	Student schedule

Conclusions

Research design needs to account for:

- Low-incidence population
- Personalization of intervention
- Personalization of data collection
- Diversity of communicative and cognitive abilities



Validation of instruments for the population

Quasi-experimental designs and RCTs provide valuable information about the impact of interventions that may contribute to positive post-transition outcomes, and addressing the methodological challenges is worth it!

