

## Abstract

This qualitative study intends to explore alternative high school special educators' data collection practices and examine its impact on data-based decision making strategies for executing effective postsecondary transition planning processes for students with high-incidence disabilities, as referenced through Kohler's Taxonomy of Transition Programming, used broadly as a framework for all aspects of transition services throughout the United States. For the purposes of this study, the Taxonomy will be used as a conceptual framework to analyze educators' rationale for implementing the usage of specific data collection practices and decision-making strategies during transition planning meetings, especially for unique, extenuating cases that are more frequently encountered in alternative high school settings, in terms of analyzing appropriateness of settings, configuring standard diploma graduation timelines, and/or standard diploma requirement options. Lastly, the study will also explore the special educators' perspectives of efficacy regarding their data collection practices and data-based decision-making strategies. The qualitative investigation is proposed to have a robust impact on special educators' perspectives by gaining insight into how data collection practices and data-based decision-making strategies might increase educator awareness of issues and barriers that affect postsecondary transition planning in a variety of settings/circumstances. It also may facilitate more effective alignment of standard graduation options and special education services being reflected in IEP transition planning components. The study may also promote more effective implementation of special education postsecondary transition planning services which could reflect a progressive increase in standard graduation rates for students with high-incidence disabilities, especially those attending alternative high school programs.

The time frame for the study is intended to begin the last week in August/first week in September 2017 through the end of September 2017. Participants will be interviewed individually and participate in a focus group session. The sampling of participants will be special education teachers and special education transition coordinators employed at select alternative high school programs. My intention is to complete writing the study results in December 2017.