

Office of Special Education (OSE) Educational Partnership Q&A

1. What is the OSE Educational Partnership?

The OSE Educational Partnership is a structure in which a community of practitioners will work collaboratively to support students and families. Within the OSE Educational Partnership, there are funded contracts that will provide professional development and technical assistance to a variety of stakeholders.

The funded contracts of the OSE Educational Partnership include:

- five (5) Special Education Technical Assistance Partnerships (TAPs): Data, Transition, Behavior, Academics, and Equity.
- 12 Regional Partnership Centers
- 14 Early Childhood Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Centers, and
- 14 School-age FACE Centers serving designated regions of the State.

2. How is this different from the current contracts/structure?

OSE has supported several technical assistance centers intended to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. The various centers were designed to impact a specific area of special education, but the level of impact was diminished because the centers functioned independent of one another and lacked a structure that enabled the work to intersect. The OSE Educational Partnership is designed to ensure each contract would support the others in working toward common goals, as established by OSE.

3. Why are we doing this?

The OSE Educational Partnership is designed to improve outcomes for students with disabilities and better support schools and families.

The majority of contracts funded by OSE supporting schools/districts/families end in 2019. Given this, OSE took this opportunity to streamline the funded contracts as well as rethink the best approach to providing support to our stakeholders and constituents.

Further, New York's ESSA plan aims to provide equity in education and opportunities for all students and identifies students with disabilities as a targeted group of students to improve outcomes for. By restructuring professional development and technical assistance, we hope to provide better outcomes and opportunities for all students.

In addition, USDE Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), has identified NYSED as a "State in Need of Assistance" in implementing the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for more than ten years. OSEP advised NYSED of available technical assistance resources and directed NYSED to determine the results and/or compliance indicators, and improvement strategies, on which it will focus its use of available technical assistance, in order to improve its performance.

OSEP also strongly encouraged NYSED to access technical assistance related to those results and compliance indicators. In the past two years, NYSED has significantly increased its engagement with national technical assistance partners to examine current structures and practices.

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OSE designed the Educational Partnership to promote greater efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of high-quality services to families and professionals working with students with disabilities. The coordinated and cohesive network of support will focus on the principles in the [NYSED Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities](#).

4. What is a Special Education Technical Assistance Partnership (TAP)?

A Special Education Technical Assistance Partnership, or TAP, is a funded contract located within an institute of higher education that serves two primary purposes: provide tools and resources for families and professionals, as well as provide direct support to the professionals within the OSE Educational Partnership. The five TAPs include Data, Transition, Behavior, Academics, and Equity.

5. What is the Regional Partnership Center?

There will be 12 Regional Partnership Centers established across the State. Each Regional Partnership Center may include a Systems Change Facilitator, Special Education Trainer, Behavior Specialist, Transition Specialist, Culturally Responsive Educator, Literacy Specialist, and Specially Designed Instruction Specialist. These specialists will engage in systems change work, providing a variety of supports. The work will focus on improving the infrastructure of districts/programs so they can successfully implement evidence-based practices and more meaningfully engage with their students and families.

6. How is it different from the RSE-TASC?

In the RSE-TASC, each specialist group has their own deliverables. Consequently, this created silos of support within the RSE-TASC.

The Regional Partnership Centers will use a tiered framework for the delivery of professional development to our stakeholders within the region. This will be done through the establishment of fewer contracts with deliverables aligned across specialists. Most importantly, the specialists within the Regional Partnership Centers will engage in their work using a team approach.

7. What is the Early Childhood Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Center?

The Early Childhood FACE Center will work collaboratively with the Regional Partnership Centers to provide technical assistance and professional development that will promote meaningful family involvement within the educational system, build collaborative community relationships, and provide information and training about available service options and delivery systems for children from birth- age five. Families of children from birth to five can use the resource and referral services provided by the Early Childhood FACE Centers.

8. How is it different from the Early Childhood Direction Centers (ECDCs)?

The deliverables of the Early Childhood FACE Centers will change and more directly intersect with the work of the Regional Partnership Centers. A primary role of the Early Childhood FACE Center will be to build the capacity of approved preschool programs to promote meaningful family involvement within the educational system. They will use a team approach, work closely with the Regional Partnership Centers and will have access

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to the professional development and materials developed by the TAPs. In addition to their support of approved preschool programs, the Early Childhood FACE Centers will seek out and build relationships with community partners to strengthen interagency/community connections.

9. What is the School-age FACE Center?

The School-age FACE Center will work collaboratively with the Regional Partnership Centers to provide technical assistance and professional development that will promote meaningful family involvement within the educational system, build collaborative community relationships, and provide information and training about available service options and delivery systems for school-age students. Families of school-age children can use the resource and referral services provided by the School-age FACE Centers.

10. How is it different from the Parent Centers?

The deliverables of the School-age FACE Centers will change and more directly intersect with the work of the Regional Partnership Centers. A primary role of the School-age FACE Center will be to build the capacity of approved school-age programs, public schools and districts, and community partners to promote meaningful family involvement within the educational system. They will use a team approach, work closely with the Regional Partnership Centers and will have access to the professional development and materials developed by the TAPs.

11. What is a regional team?

A regional team is comprised of specialists from a Regional Partnership Center, an Early Childhood FACE Center, and a School-age FACE Center.

12. Will NYSED continue to support and promote Response to Intervention (RtI)?

Yes. RtI will be an integral part of the TAP for Academics.

13. Will NYSED continue to support and promote Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)?

Yes. PBIS will be an integral part of the TAP for Behavior.

14. What will happen to the Technical Assistance Center for Disproportionality (TAC-D)?

TAC-D provides support to a limited number of districts across the State each year. This support is focused on making changes to practices that have resulted in disproportionate outcomes for students with disabilities of racial and ethnic groups. In the new structure, each region will receive support from a Culturally Responsive Educator, whose focus will be on issues of cultural and linguistic diversity. In addition to the Culturally Responsive Educator, the TAP for Equity will ensure the inclusion of racially, culturally and linguistically responsive information and practices across all domains of the OSE Educational Partnership consistent with NYSED's culturally responsive-sustaining education framework. This approach will increase the available support to schools, districts, programs and families.

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15. Will this structure support OSE approved private schools and preschools?

Yes. The regional teams will provide professional development and technical assistance to approved private schools and preschools, based on needs identified within a region.

16. How will this structure support families? Who can families reach out to for help?

The regional teams will work with schools, districts and programs in the region to build their capacity to promote meaningful family involvement within the educational system. In addition, families can contact the Early Childhood or School-age FACE Centers for assistance finding resources in their area. Contact information for these centers will be provided prior to implementation of the OSE Educational Partnership.

17. How will this impact schools involved in the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)?

All schools currently supported through the SSIP will continue their work under the OSE Educational Partnership.

18. Who can I contact for more information?

All questions about the OSE Educational Partnership may be submitted to the RFP mailboxes.

Special Education Technical Assistance Partnership for Equity: RFP19007@nysed.gov

Regional Partnership Center: RFP19024@nysed.gov

Family and Community Engagement Centers: RFP19025@nysed.gov