



NEW YORK STATE
PROMOTING THE READINESS OF MINORS IN
SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME

DISCOVERY AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP
GROUP CONCEPT MAPPING

2014-2015 Progress Report

Prepared for

Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations
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The NYS Office of Mental Health

&

The Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene, Inc.

by

Concept Systems, Incorporated

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This Report was prepared for NYS PROMISE by Concept Systems, Incorporated.

“Early access to employment experiences lead to improved long-term outcomes. New York is participating in the PROMISE research initiative. This research is testing the impact of early employment supports and coupled with services with significant family involvement. Results from this study will guide better post-secondary educational and employment policy and practice.”

Employment First Commission Report, March 2015

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2014, New York State received funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services to begin the NYS PROMISE (Promote the Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income) research initiative. The goal of this initiative is to coordinate the system of support surrounding these youths to better catalyze their potential to transition from Supplemental Security Income (SSI) to a sustainable future of living and earning as independent adults. This whole system approach includes focuses not only on the students themselves, but on their families, environments, and the agencies and programs that provide services to them.

To guide strategy and support PROMISE priorities over the course of the initiative, NYS PROMISE convened the NYS PROMISE Steering Committee, comprised of appointed liaisons from agencies who are connected to the NYS PROMISE initiative. The roster of Steering Committee member agencies, and their representatives at the time of these activities, is included in [Appendix I](#).

The expectations and objectives of this phase of the Steering Committee's work were:

1. Engage local and state partners in defining a broad strategic approach that starts to describe a system of person- and family-centered intervention;
2. Lead to complementary partnership development for agencies and providers to align their priorities with others in a system of person- and family-centered integration, to achieve measurably better results for SSI youth and their families;
3. Support the growth of the systems approach to integrating policy, practice and partnership between local and state entities for a cohesive transition system to support youth.

To support sustainable partnership development for greater progress and impact on the goals of NYS PROMISE, the Steering Committee engaged in a structured, time sensitive strategic planning and partnership framework development effort. To develop the elements of a prioritized strategy, the group used Group Concept Mapping (GCM), and constructed a visual framework, or concept map, that served as the basis for prioritization and strategy development throughout the process.

The GCM approach employs a group process to capture individual contributions for consensus around a given topic, using a structured approach with a specific sequence of steps that support timely and consistent engagement in the process. GCM incorporates opinions and values, and presents the results in ways that are understandable and usable. 25 individuals from 8 member agencies took part in the concept map development, contributing elements in response to the following prompt: "To yield enduring individual outcomes, a viable system to support youth with disabilities in their transition from high school to successful adult lives needs to include..." After sorting and rating on both importance and readiness scales, the Steering Committee reviewed the resulting concept map. The map's domains emerged as:

- Culture
- Work Experience Support
- Learning-to-Work

- Self Advocacy & Independence Development
- Transition Supports
- System-wide Collaboration
- System Components
- Research & Evaluation

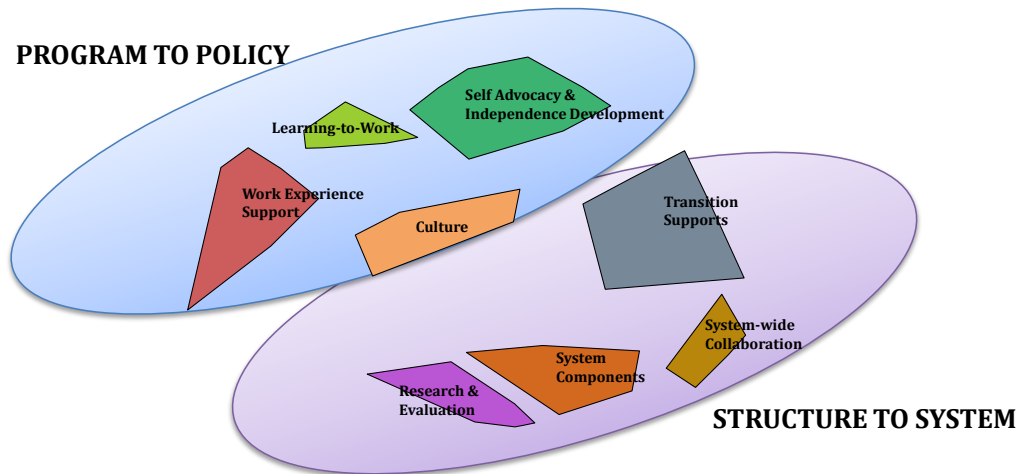


Figure 1: Regional View of PROMISE Future System Discovery Cluster Map

As seen in Figure 1 above, the domains were interpreted as representing two distinct areas: “Program to Policy”, and “Structure and System”. The Steering Committee referred to the relationship between the ratings on importance and the ratings on current presence of each item in the system of transition using Figure 2 below.

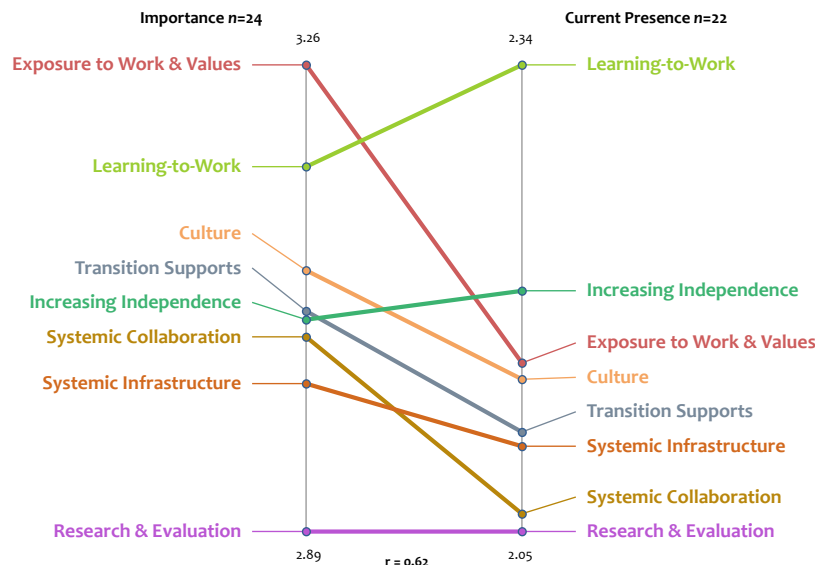


Figure 2: Relative Pattern Match Comparing Importance and Current Presence: All Participants

The clusters in the “Program to Policy” region were more highly rated (with one exception), while the “Structure and Systems” clusters are found in the lower part of the importance Pattern Match.

The group recognized that program-related priorities are traditionally their agencies' strengths; whereas, building a structure to support a sustainable system is not yet as active. This realization allowed the group to concentrate on Structure and Systems in subsequent steps in the process.

Using the [Go-Zone results \(Page 16\)](#), the group agreed on high value specific items in each domain, to support short term action planning. ([Appendix III](#) contains all Go Zones.)

Following the map's development, and the priority identification, the Steering Committee assessed current viability and their agency's mission-relatedness to the major themes or domains that the map represents. This was to provide a "current state" assessment of capacity to address priorities in both the program-to-practice area of the concept map, and, importantly for strategy, the structure-and-systems part of the map. The group connected these assessments to the items in each domain or cluster that were thought to be important but were not currently active, in order to support the development of actions by addressing those elements that required attention in the short term. Actions for the priority items in each cluster are in Table 1 below. The Steering Committee developed a timeline of these actions, which is in process at the time of this writing.

CLUSTER	ACTION
ALL CLUSTERS	Identify and integrate all essential components of case management across agencies into one adaptable structure.
Cluster 3 - Increasing Independence	Develop purpose-specific collaborations among Partnership members for specific purposes driven by their missions and program: e.g., between DOL and agencies providing training on self-advocacy, between DOL and ACCES-VR for service linkage.
Cluster 4 - Transition Supports	Systematically measure to ensure fidelity adherence in existing programs.
	Prioritize partnership on support for sustainable funding in schools and agencies focused on transition.
	Identify policy barriers that would prevent services extension at a younger age and obstruct collaboration.
	Develop a systematic integrated way to inform our own agency staff about existing programs and resources.
	Develop a listserv.
Cluster 5 - Systemic Collaboration	Model collaboration at the state level to influence and encourage local level collaboration.
	Appoint a transition policy workgroup or interagency work group with clear directives and measures. (State Transition Coordinating Council)
	Lead strategy development with Employment First Commission Report and WIOA Assessment.
	Collaborate regionally, with a strong central coordinator providing linkage structure.
	Continually participate in cross-organizational strategic planning.
	Co-develop policies that will support ongoing capacity of partner agencies to achieve outcomes.
	Develop new MOU's across all agencies.

Cluster 6 - Systemic Infrastructure	Evaluate the effectiveness of existing programs across the transition area to support program decisions.
	Look for and adopt effective practices, looking at NYS data.
	Plan for better communication; deciding best practices, considering centralizing or regionalizing when appropriate.
	Adopt a system for sharing promising and best practices across agencies.
	Develop plan to engage business community as partners in employment. Look for best practices for collaborations with businesses.
	Integrate research on potential funding sources and requirements, and assess what current obstacles exist in agency practice that reduce funding access.
	Use research methods to identify best/promising strategies for evaluating project results.
	Determine how to implement CQI or other system assessment approaches to support and sustain PROMISE.
Cluster 7 - Research and Evaluation	Conduct a thorough evaluation of the programs in each agency, then share data with all partners.
	Develop a system that uses program evaluation results to design corrective strategies for increasing program performance, and spreading good program practices.
Cluster 8 - Culture	Build training for the partnership that takes advantage of OPWDD cultural training.
	Build training and professional development into the partnership, for sustainability and leadership succession planning.
	Routinely conduct labor market research and educate the field with market knowledge to help target programs better. Use DOL Res/Stats Division at all levels.
	Assess what training members of the partnership require, and provide as a system of support.

Table 1: Structure to System Action Items

Steering Committee members also constructed a list of related agencies not yet associated with PROMISE, and conducted a self-assessment of collaboration readiness.

In its collaboration assessment ([Appendix V](#)), the Committee rated its strengths as Adopt a Responsive Structure, Engage Diverse Partners, Activate Partner Resources. Lower rated qualities or elements included Assess and Monitor, Plan Purposefully, and Build Sustainable Political Support. The Committee identified over 15 transition-related agencies not yet linked to PROMISE, and 25 programs that serve or are related to the PROMISE priorities ([Appendix VI](#)).

At this point in the strategic partnership development to support PROMISE, the following progress has been made:

Over the course of eleven months, the Steering Committee:

- Formed the stakeholder committee with those who agreed to contribute to the objectives of NYS PROMISE and unique Steering Committee Objectives;
- Co-authored a group concept map to illustrate the group's shared thinking;

- Assessed current presence, viability and relevance of key attributes of a successful transition strategy, to recognize priorities and identify gaps;
- Defined specific priorities and articulated specific actions for priorities;
- Assessed readiness to collaborate and describing the desired and expected benefits of the partnership;
- Developed the Mission Statement;
- Considered additional potential members of the partner network;
- Continued to develop the strategy-to-action timeline document; and,
- Is establishing the NYS PROMISE Steering Committee as a permanent sub-committee within the Governor's Employment First Commission.

At the end of the Steering Committee's second year, in late 2015, the Steering Committee was invited to align with the Employment First Commission as a permanent Sub-Committee of the EFC. The work that the Steering Committee has achieved through the process we are summarizing, and the strong relationship among its members, will enhance its ongoing work as the Transition Sub-committee.

We recommend point-in-time assessments on the priorities identified through this process, and an expansion of Transition Sub-Committee engagement with other providers, agencies and advocates to enrich transition as a system in New York State.

INTRODUCTION

In 2014, New York State received funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services to begin the NYS PROMISE (Promote the Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income) research initiative. The goal of this initiative is to coordinate the system of support surrounding these youths to better catalyze their potential to transition from Supplemental Security Income (SSI) to a sustainable future of living and earning as independent adults. This whole system approach includes focuses not only on the students themselves, but on their families, environments, and the agencies and programs that provide services to them.

As part of this whole system approach, NYS PROMISE convened the NYS PROMISE Steering Committee, comprised of appointed liaisons from agencies who are connected to the NYS PROMISE initiative. The roster of Steering Committee member agencies, and their representatives at the time of these activities, is included in [Appendix I](#). The Steering Committee meets regularly to develop strategies and guide progress related to successful intervention in New York State. The NYS PROMISE Core Team manages the Steering Committee; its members are staff from the Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan Employment and Disability Institute, the NYS Office of Mental Health, and The Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene, Inc.

To support sustainable partnership development for greater progress and impact on the goals of NYS PROMISE, the Steering Committee engaged in a structured planning process, using Group Concept Mapping (GCM). GCM is a mixed-methods approach that integrates qualitative group processes with multivariate statistical analyses to allow a group of individuals to describe its ideas on any topic of interest and represent these ideas through a series of related maps (Kane & Trochim, 2007). Since the mid-1980s GCM has supported investigations and planning in a range of fields, including community and public health, social work, health care, human services, and evaluation (Petrucci & Quinlan, 2007).

The GCM approach employs a group process to capture individual contributions for consensus around a given topic, using a structured approach with a specific sequence of steps that support timely and consistent engagement in the process. GCM incorporates opinions and values, and presents the results in ways that are understandable and usable. The methodology is well-regarded as a mixed methods approach with statistical rigor and context-appropriate facilitation.

GCM follows simple rules for articulating the characteristics of an issue or desired outcome:

1. The research team identifies the desired outcomes and potential uses of the results, with the planners.
2. The planners and researchers craft a “focus prompt”, which is the catalyst for developing individual contributions of knowledge or opinion.
3. The participants contribute their knowledge and opinions prompted by the question.
4. The participants give further insight by organizing and rating the resulting set of statements on some value scales relative to the purpose of the project.

5. The research team analyzes the captured input via the Concept System[®] and produces visual and report results, which illustrate the related meaning of the ideas, and their relative values.
6. The planners and participants interpret the results for utilization.

Responding to the prompt “To yield enduring individual outcomes, a viable system to support youth with disabilities in their transition from high school to successful adult lives needs to include...” the Steering Committee members produced a unique and relevant set of statements through live meetings and web based brainstorming over the period of November 2014 to January 2015. Sorting and rating followed, and the results were produced after analysis, yielding the concept map results shown in the subsequent sections. Further analyses gave the Steering Committee a strong foundational framework for sustainable partnership planning, and action priorities to serve the NYS PROMISE initiative. The Core Team and the Concept Systems staff have facilitated the cohesive strategy development process, with active input from the entire Steering Committee at each step. The Steering Committee met on the dates noted in Table 2 below:

November 3, 2014	May 19, 2015
December 1, 2014	June 24, 2015
March 17, 2015	August 18, 2015
April 13, 2015	October 5, 2015

Table 2: PROMISE Steering Committee Meeting Dates

This report summarizes the activity of the Discovery and Strategic Partnership Development process and the resulting foundation for a sustainable system to improve outcomes for youth receiving SSI benefits.

PROJECT PLANNING AND PROCESS

The NYS PROMISE Steering Committee held their inaugural meeting on November 3, 2014. The Core Team and Concept Systems facilitated an overview of plans to activate a strategic approach that would:

- i Engage local and state partners in defining a broad strategic approach that starts to describe a system of person- and family-centered intervention;
- ii Lead to complementary partnership development for agencies and providers to align their priorities with others in a system of person- and family-centered integration, to achieve measurably better results for SSI youth and their families; and,
- iii Support the growth of the systems approach to integrating policy, practice and partnership between local and state entities for a cohesive transition system to support youth.

With these objectives in mind, the Steering Committee members developed the following focus prompt: **To yield enduring individual outcomes, a viable system to support youth with disability in their transition from high school to successful adult lives needs to include...**

Contributing Content: Idea Generation and Synthesis

The Steering Committee members contributed statements to complete the focus prompt during the inaugural meeting. Idea generation continued through January, resulting in a set of 124 items. After a final review, a final list of 80 unique statements was confirmed by the Core Team and Steering Committee for use in the structuring phase of the project. [Appendix II](#) contains the final set of statements.

Structuring Content: Sorting and Rating

In preparation for the second phase of participation, the Steering Committee members chose the rating scales of Importance and Current Presence.

Steering Committee members sorted and rated the 80 statements between January 27 and March 9, 2015. They were also asked to invite colleagues to complete the rating activities. 17 participants completed the conceptual sorting of ideas for the analysis. While this is under the benchmark of 25-35 sorts for producing a reliable map determined by an analysis of pooled GCM studies (Rosas & Kane, 2012), only Steering Committee and Core Team members were invited to complete sorts. 24 participants completed the Importance rating and 22 participants completed the Current Presence rating.

Sorting. Participants sorted the final list of 80 ideas into groups or themes based on their perceived similarity.

Rating. Participants rated each of the final 80 ideas on two dimensions: Importance and Current Presence.

- *Importance* as part of a viable system to improve outcomes for youth transition to successful adulthood, where: 1= Relatively Unimportant, 2= Somewhat Important, 3= Important, and 4=Extremely Important.

- *Current Presence* as the degree to which each idea is present in their agency's context of transition from school to adult life in New York, where: 1= Not Present, 2= I see this idea in practice or evidence of this idea occasionally, 3= I see this idea in practice or evidence of this idea often, and 4= I see this idea in practice or evidence of this idea very often.

Participant Demographics

Participants in this GCM study also answered participant questions when they completed the sorting and rating activities.

Agency	# of Participants
NYS OMH/RMFH	9
NYSED – ACCES-VR	5
NYSED/OSE	3
CORNELL	3
OPWDD/DDPC	2
NYS DOL	1
OCFS/NYSCB	1
OTDA	1
NYS DOH	0
Total	25

Table 3: Agency Participation in the GCM Activities

As seen in Table 3, the largest number of participants represented the New York State Office of Mental Health / the Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene, Inc. Almost all Steering Committee member agencies participated.

Most of the participants in the GCM activities also noted that their positions within their agencies were either Executive/Administration or Middle Management, as noted in Figure 3 below.

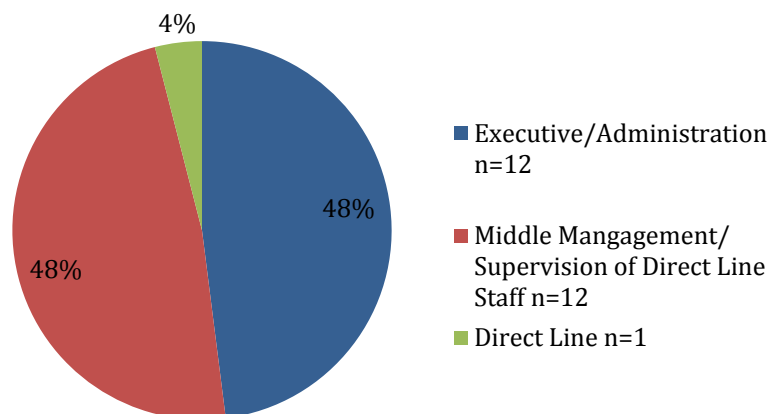


Figure 3: Participant Role within their Agency

The role of the participants' agencies within PROMISE show a range of answers, as seen in Figure 4 below, with the majority (40%) being part of PROMISE Administration and Oversight. Policy Development and Service Delivery were also highly represented at 28% and 24%, respectively.

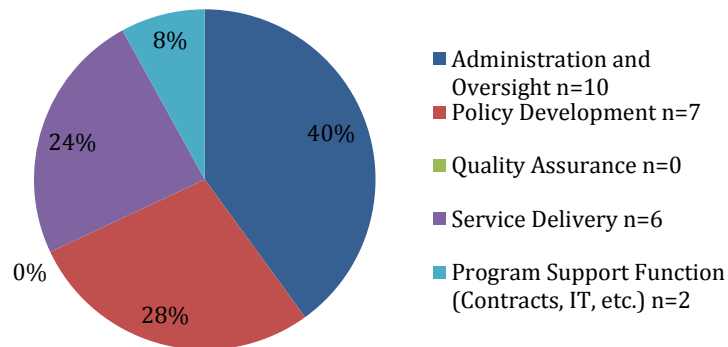


Figure 4: Role of Agency within NYS PROMISE

Figure 5 shows that over half of the participants stated that their agency had a lot of focus on services aimed at supporting the successful transitions of youth with disabilities aged 14 to 21 years.

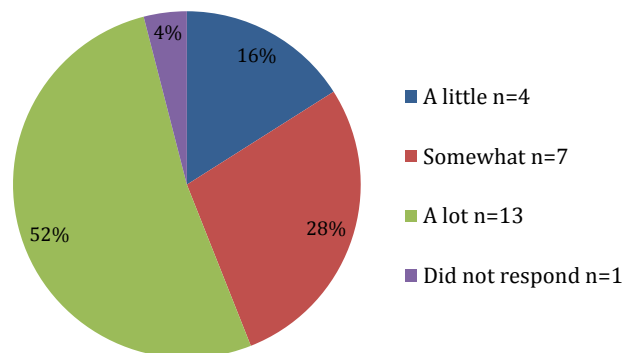


Figure 5: Level of Agency Focus on Supporting Transition

GROUP CONCEPT MAPPING RESULTS

In this section, we describe the output of GCM activities (brainstorming, sorting, and rating). The analysis results of that data are shown in maps, Pattern Matches, and Go-Zones.

Results of the Sorting Process: Point and Cluster Maps

Maps were generated using the sorting data from all participants who took part in the sorting activity (n=17), describing the relationship among all 80 statements. The point map is the foundation for all of the other maps and is shown in Figure 6 below. Point maps are relational maps such that the spatial relationship of one statement to each other indicates meaning relationship. Statements that appear closer together were sorted together more frequently by participants and statements that are further apart were sorted together less frequently or not at all.

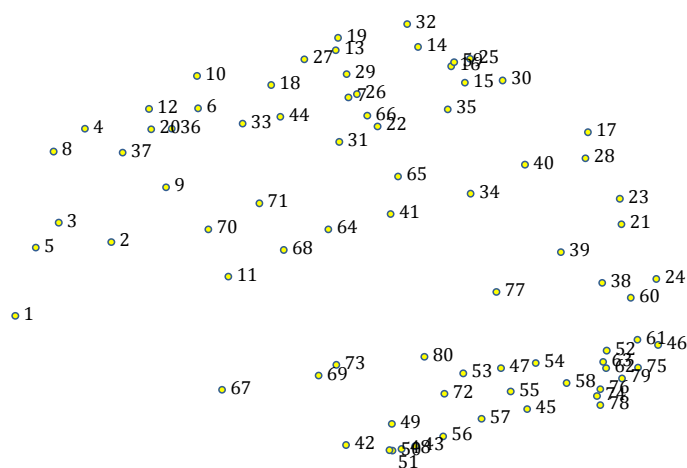


Figure 6: Point Map, indicating the array of statements and their relationship to each other

Figure 7 is the cluster point map generated by applying hierarchical cluster analysis to the point map. The cluster point map reveals how the statements are related to each other within emergent higher-level concepts. The eight cluster solution was selected after iterative analysis and Core Team review.

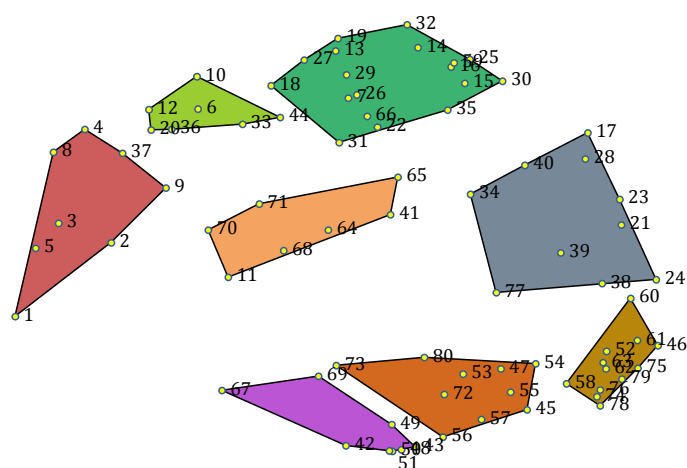


Figure 7: Point Cluster Map, showing points within clusters

The sorting data from the Steering Committee members suggested that eight categories or themes make up the framework for a future system of sustainable support for youth receiving SSI benefits in New York State, as seen in Figure 8 below.

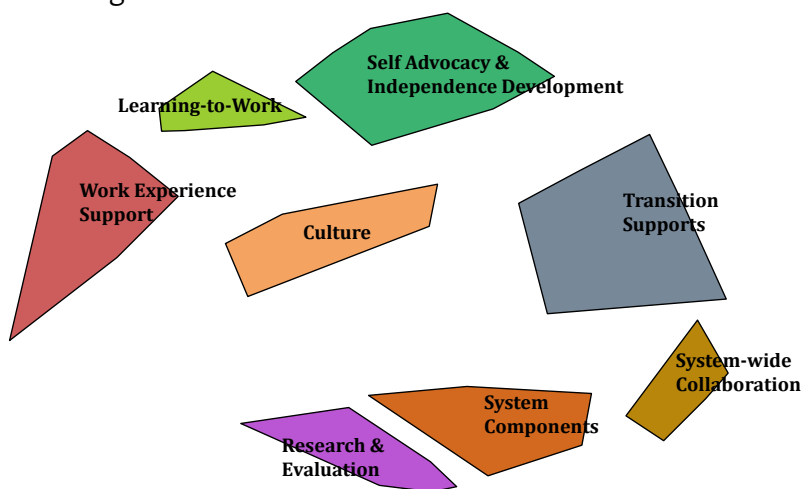


Figure 8: Labeled PROMISE Future System Discovery Cluster Map

Further review of the map also allowed for a “regional” view of the cluster map. This higher level view allowed the group to see Program to Policy viewpoints and Structure to System viewpoints of the NYS PROMISE work within the same framework, as illustrated in Figure 9 below.

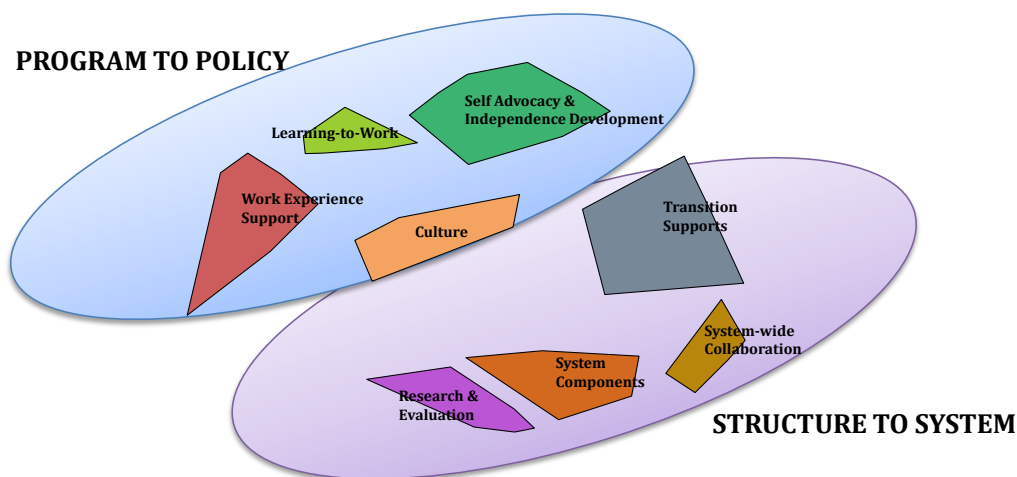


Figure 9: Regional View of PROMISE Future System Discovery Cluster Map

As a rubric for the Steering Committee, the above regional frameworks allowed the group to consider the areas for which the Steering Committee has unique responsibility (the Structure to System area) and the areas for which they share responsibility with the Learning Community and other delivery and advocacy players. The group used this in considering priorities for action.

Using the Ratings Results: Pattern Matches

Ratings data from participants allows for additional analysis of the cluster map. The rating details overlaid onto the concept map cluster structure produce values data on each area of the map. The project added a third rating dimension of viability after a preliminary review of the map data.

The first review of ratings data uses a Pattern Match. A Pattern Match displays an average of the rated items by all rating participants in each conceptual grouping. Relative Pattern Matches describe distinctions between the two variables by showing the degree of “slope” between one rating and another on a particular cluster’s contents. The Pattern Match in Figure 10 shows the Relative Pattern Match for participants comparing average *Importance* ratings and average *Current Presence* ratings.

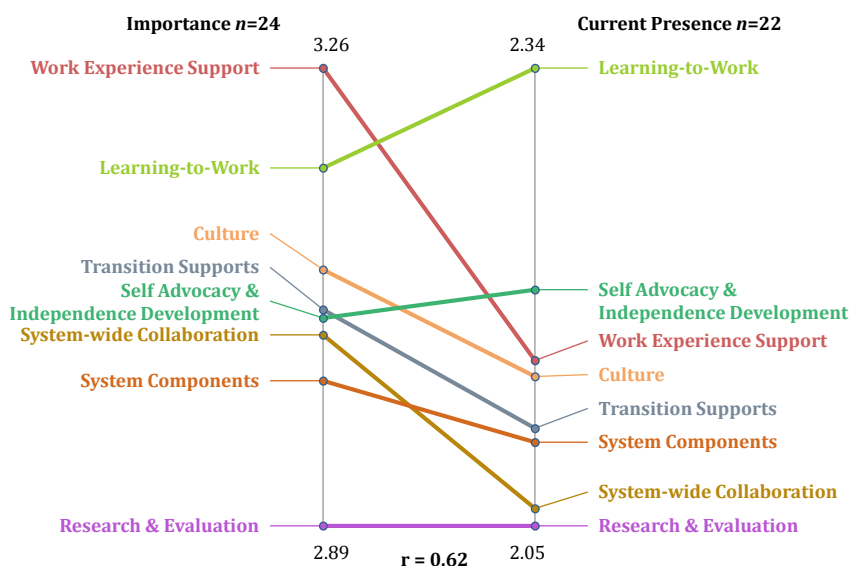


Figure 10: Relative Pattern Match Comparing Importance and Current Presence: All Participants

Observations that a group may make using a Pattern Match may include the degree of congruity, or fit, between the cluster level items overall for Rating 1 (Importance, in this case) and Rating 2 (Current Presence). Noting the relative congruence for some of the clusters in this Pattern Match, the cluster “Work Experience Support” shows a “disconnect” between overall importance and overall Current Presence ratings. This may suggest that, in general, members believe that the highest rated cluster of ideas should be more present in the PROMISE context. There is also a similar decrease in relative presence for “System-wide Collaboration.” During the interpretation, the group thought of collaboration as a topic and target for improvement, rather than only as a means to accomplish improvement, to help emphasize the importance of how the work takes place as a measurable part of the plan.

Review of the Regional Cluster Map and the Pattern Match also highlighted the importance of increasing the Steering Committee’s focus on structural and system-based items. The Core Team noted that the clusters in the “Program to Policy” region were more highly rated (with one exception), while the “Structure and Systems” clusters are found in the lower part of the importance Pattern Match. The group recognized that program-related priorities are traditionally their agencies’

strengths, whereas building a structure to support a sustainable system is not yet as active. This realization allowed the group to concentrate on Structure and Systems in subsequent steps in the process.

After the Steering Committee had engaged in preliminary interpretation of the map and the initial ratings, additional data was collected from Steering Committee members on *Relevance* to their agency (n=12) and *Viability* in NYS PROMISE (n=13). Using the Viability data, we get an overarching view of the future system needs based on members of the current system data contributions.

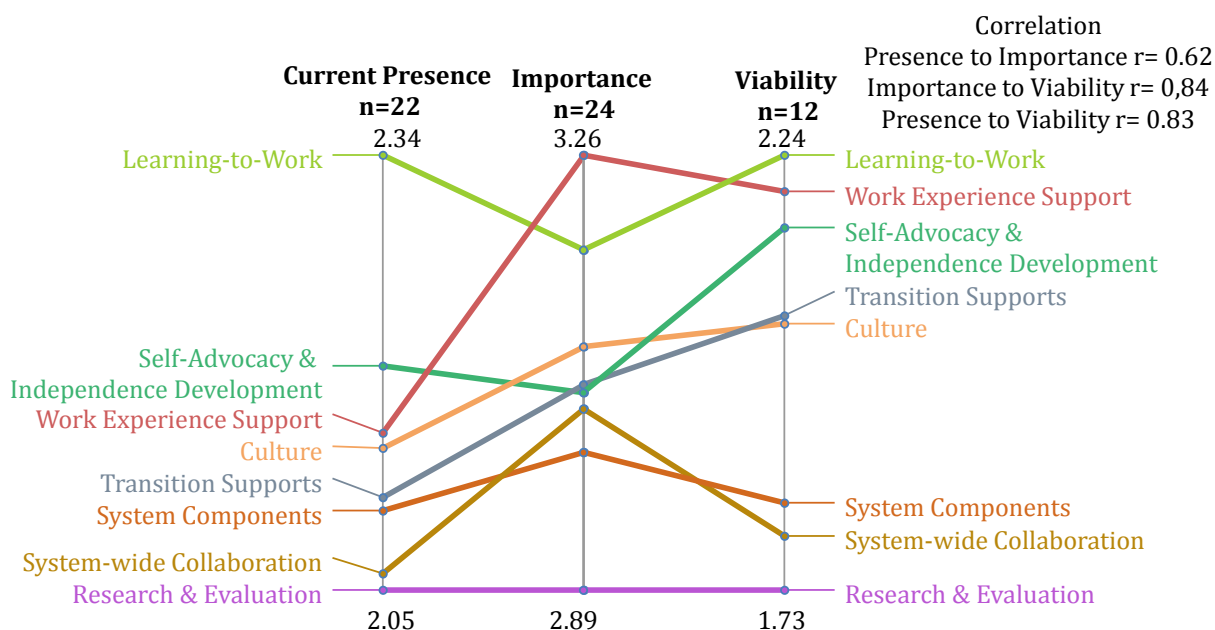


Figure 11: Current Presence, Importance and Viability Rating Data Comparison

Multiple Pattern Matches, such as in Figure 11, are graphic arrays of each rating on the cluster level. These figures allow for visual comparison across the population of participants and represented interests. Keeping in mind that the Viability rating used a 1-3 likert scale while the Importance and Current Presence ratings used 1-4 likert scale, this is Multiple Pattern Match allows us to view differences in order from scale to scale. We note that, except ratings on “Transition Supports” the clusters in the Structure to Systems region were rated lowest in Current Presence, Importance and Viability. In discussion, the Core Team observed that mission-oriented systems have a traditional perception of systems issues as lowest due to competing resource demands, including time. However, these items will support the PROMISE system and lead to sustainability. The Core Team and Steering Committee determined these items would require more attention during future meetings.

Using the Ratings Results: Go-Zones

After producing Pattern Matches, GCM analysis reviews the ratings at the statement level using figures called Go-Zones. Go-Zones are bivariate X-Y plots that show the average ratings of each statement on two of the rating scales by dividing above and below the mean for each scale (Kane & Trochim, 2007). Go-Zones show stakeholder values by statement, which allows for a more targeted

understanding of the issue at hand. GCM results include Go-Zone analyses for each cluster represented on the map. The high and low numbers that anchor the Go-Zones for each cluster stay the same, while the differences in the means from cluster to cluster are illustrated by the relocation of the dividing lines.

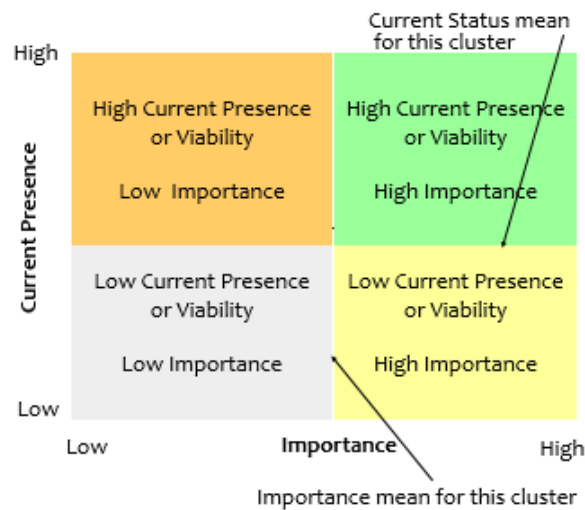


Figure 12: Go-Zone Explanation

To explain Figure 12 above, in a Go-Zone analysis, statements in the **upper right quadrant (in green)** were rated higher than the mean for that grouping on both ratings. In some initiatives, the items located in this area are items that may be the easiest to accomplish first. The opposite quadrant, the **bottom left (in grey)**, contains items thought of as relatively low on both ratings, which are the lesser “value” items in a particular conceptual area. These items may connect with items in other areas of the map and should be reviewed to determine whether other pieces need to be completed first. The **lower right quadrant (in yellow)** and the **upper left quadrant (in orange)** are “gap” areas for which a value imbalance exists. In an initiative intended to support meaningful change, the “gap” areas may have the greatest potential and are valuable for strategic decision making.

For this project, we created one set of Go-Zones that compares Importance to Current Presence and another that compares Importance to Viability.

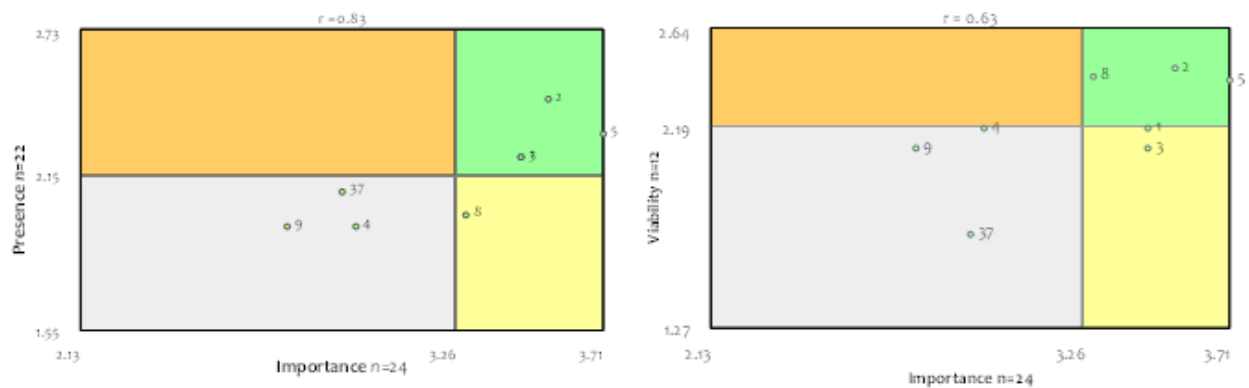


Figure 13: “Work Experience Support” Go-Zones Comparing Presence to Importance (left) and Viability to Importance (right)

As an example: Figure 13 above shows the Go-Zones for the cluster “Work Experience Support” and allows visualization of the difference in rating for Presence vs. Viability.

Table 4 below shows the average ratings for the statements in this cluster while also accounting for location in each Go-Zone by color.

#	Cluster Title / Statement: “To yield enduring individual outcomes, a viable system to support youth with disabilities in their transition from high school to successful adult lives needs to include...”	Importance n=24 Scale 1-4	Presence in NYS n=22 Scale 1-4	Viability in NYS n=12 Scale 1-3
Work Experience Support				
1	Similar access to jobs as non-disabled high school students have.	3.46	2.23	2.18
2	Job coaching as a phased support to aid in the transition to the work environment.	3.54	2.45	2.45
3	Longer-term support to facilitate job retention and encourage job advancement.	3.46	2.23	2.09
4	A focus on the emotional and social benefits one receives from work.	2.96	1.95	2.18
5	Real work experiences that reinforce the student's abilities.	3.71	2.32	2.4
8	A focus on economic benefits of earning a salary, leading to financial independence.	3.29	2	2.42
9	Discussing the benefits to society when a person becomes a contributing member of that society.	2.75	1.95	2.09
37	Working within the school environment so that youth experiences realistic consequences and opportunities.	2.92	2.09	1.7

Table 4: Average Ratings by Statement for the 3 Ratings Scales

Table 4 illustrates the placement of priorities, depending on the group’s perspective on current presence, and viability to take action on a particular item. For example, statement 1 (Similar access to jobs as non-disabled high school students have) and statement 3 (Longer-term support to facilitate job retention and encourage job advancement) were rated both highly important and relatively present, but also relatively less viable. Such feedback allowed the Committee to discuss actions to increase either presence or viability to act, based on the context and the potential main actors on each item. Statement 8 (A focus on economic benefits of earning a salary, leading to financial independence) was seen as relatively less present, but relatively viable and important. Statements with lower relative presence but higher importance may be good first steps for the future system to focus on. [Appendix III](#) contains all Go-Zones, with a table listing each statement and related ratings for importance, presence and viability. Table 5 on the following page shows the statements within each cluster who viability and current presence ratings vary:

#	Cluster Title / Statement:	Importance n=24 Scale 1-4	Presence in NYS n=22 Scale 1-4	Viability in NYS n=12 Scale 1-3
Work Experience Support				
1	Similar access to jobs as non-disabled high school students have.	3.46	2.23	2.18
3	Longer-term support to facilitate job retention and encourage job advancement.	3.46	2.23	2.09
8	A focus on economic benefits of earning a salary, leading to financial independence.	3.29	2	2.42
Learning-to-Work				
10	Exploring career options, through job shadowing, mentoring, and work experience.	3.5	2.27	2.42
20	Providing access early in their education careers to students and families about benefits, work incentives information, and planning.	3.46	1.86	2.33
33	Individual job counseling based on each person's characteristics.	3.13	2.45	2.17
Self-Advocacy & Independence Development				
22	Access to strong peer role models and mentors who demonstrate high quality skills in living, learning and earning.	3.04	1.77	2.18
26	Aligning vocational counseling and training to strengthen the match between a young person's skills and interests on the way to reaching employment goals.	3.25	2.18	2.17
66	Identifying what services an individual should have to allow for a natural long term career trajectory.	3.00	2.23	1.75
Transition Supports				
23	Dedicated staff at the school level and agency level focused on transition.	3.33	2.09	2
40	An availability of services at a younger age.	3.04	2.14	1.92
77	More/earlier coordination between school staff and outside agencies to ensure that youth will be able to exit school with a comprehensive plan.	3.38	1.95	2.25
System-wide Collaboration				
61	Active and timely cross system communication.	3.29	2.05	2

74	Practical, up to date MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding) between state agencies pertaining to interagency collaboration.	2.88	2.14	1.67
System Components				
45	Comprehensive statewide data integration around case management issues.	2.67	1.82	1.9
53	Strategies for making the connection from practice to policy.	2.88	2.18	1.82
54	Adopting and integrating promising or best practices from agency to agency.	3.17	2.09	2
57	Identifying and agreeing on priorities to create successful outcome as a system.	3.17	2.36	1.78
73	Structured collaboration with the business community as potential employers.	3.33	2	2
Research & Evaluation				
43	A system evaluation of what is working and what is not effective, with actionable results.	3.13	1.86	2
50	Using program evaluation results to inform decisions about what to stop in order to do better overall.	3.25	2.36	1.7

Table 5: Statements with Go-Zone changes

PRIORITY AND ACTION DEVELOPMENT

The Steering Committee used the detailed Pattern Matches and Go-Zones to identify barriers to systemic progress, and discussed how the agencies might collaborate to develop a high-level systemic, ongoing framework that would improve transition outcomes. Using the results of the framework, the Core Team began to lay the groundwork for strategy. The Steering Committee took the following steps to frame and prioritize aspects of a draft strategic plan.

Agency Relevance Rating

With the development of the common framework authored by Steering Committee members, the next step was to visualize where the Steering Committee members see their own agency fitting in the system. The Steering Committee provided feedback on two rating scales—here, on Relevance to their specific agency, and on each item’s viability within the NYS PROMISE as a system, as discussed in the previous Go-Zone section. The rating scales were 1=Not Relevant/Viable, 2=Somewhat Relevant/Viable, and 3=Relevant/Viable. The goal of these additional ratings was to better identify action priorities, as well as which agencies can partner to move the priority items forward. The data in [Appendix IV](#) shows the Relevance rating information by agency. The Core Team led the group to keep both the system development and program expansion as priorities in order to better implement the policies developed.

Action Development

To develop the next step in strategy development using the built data from the Group Concept Map and subsequent ratings and interpretation, the Steering Committee shared actions that they perceive are necessary for realization of each priority, with particular focus on statements in the Structure to System Region (Clusters: System Components, System-wide Collaboration, and Research and Evaluation). The Core Team noted the Steering Committee’s goal to look toward actions that will ensure longevity, benefit and sustainability.

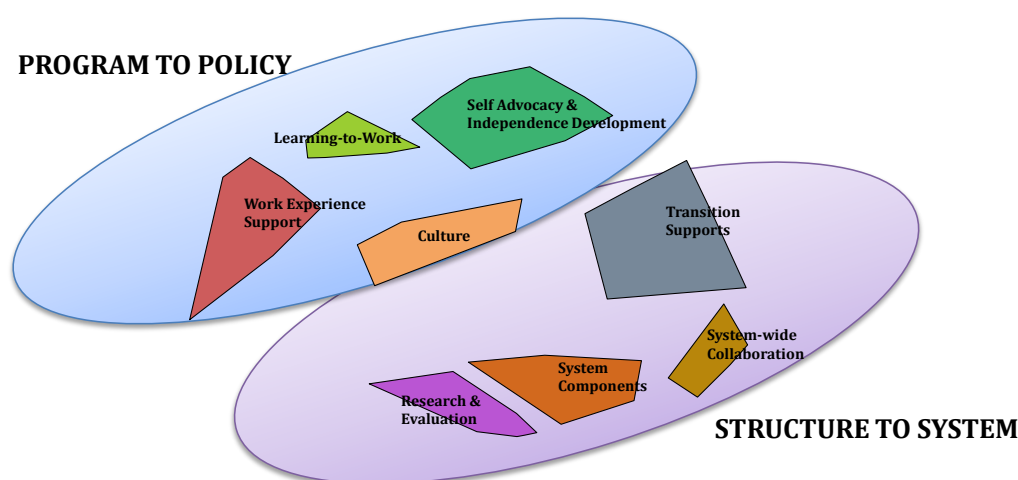


Figure 14: Regional View of PROMISE Future System Discovery Cluster Map

The regional frameworks illustrated in Figure 14 allowed the group to consider the areas for which the Steering Committee has unique responsibility (the Structure to System area) and the areas for which they share responsibility with the Learning Community and other delivery and advocacy players. The group used this in considering priorities for action.

The process yielded 28 items in the Structure to System Region and 21 actions in the Program to Policy Region. They are provided here in Table 6 and Table 7, respectively:

CLUSTER	ACTION
ALL CLUSTERS	Identify and integrate all essential components of case management across agencies into one adaptable structure.
Cluster 3 - Increasing Independence	Develop purpose-specific collaborations among Partnership members for specific purposes driven by their missions and program: e.g., between DOL and agencies providing training on self-advocacy, between DOL and ACCES-VR for service linkage.
Cluster 4 - Transition Supports	Systematically measure to ensure fidelity adherence in existing programs.
	Prioritize partnership on support for sustainable funding in schools and agencies focused on transition.
	Identify policy barriers that would prevent services extension at a younger age and obstruct collaboration.
	Develop a systematic integrated way to inform our own agency staff about existing programs and resources.
	Develop a listserv.
Cluster 5 - Systemic Collaboration	Model collaboration at the state level to influence and encourage local level collaboration.
	Appoint a transition policy workgroup or interagency work group with clear directives and measures. (State Transition Coordinating Council)
	Lead strategy development with Employment First Commission Report and WIOA Assessment.
	Collaborate regionally, with a strong central coordinator providing linkage structure.
	Continually participate in cross-organizational strategic planning.
	Co-develop policies that will support ongoing capacity of partner agencies to achieve outcomes.
	Develop new MOU's across all agencies.
Cluster 6 - Systemic Infrastructure	Evaluate the effectiveness of existing programs across the transition area to support program decisions.
	Look for and adopt effective practices, looking at NYS data.
	Plan for better communication; deciding best practices, considering centralizing or regionalizing when appropriate.
	Adopt a system for sharing promising and best practices across agencies.
	Develop plan to engage business community as partners in employment. Look for best practices for collaborations with businesses.
	Integrate research on potential funding sources and requirements, and assess what current obstacles exist in agency practice that reduce funding access.

	Use research methods to identify best/promising strategies for evaluating project results.
	Determine how to implement CQI or other system assessment approaches to support and sustain PROMISE.
Cluster 7 - Research and Evaluation	Conduct a thorough evaluation of the programs in each agency, then share data with all partners.
	Develop a system that uses program evaluation results to design corrective strategies for increasing program performance, and spreading good program practices.
Cluster 8 - Culture	Build training for the partnership that takes advantage of OPWDD cultural training.
	Build training and professional development into the partnership, for sustainability and leadership succession planning.
	Routinely conduct labor market research and educate the field with market knowledge to help target programs better. Use DOL Res/Stats Division at all levels.
	Assess what training members of the partnership require, and provide as a system of support.

Table 6: Structure to System Action Items

CLUSTER	ACTION
Cluster 1 - Exposure to Work and Values	Develop and share new, better, more available job coaching.
	Shift resources training and incentives to develop more competitive employment options.
	Make financial literacy and strong benefits advisement an early priority.
	Emphasize and act on starting this process at a younger age.
	Highlight social and personal benefits of work through all campaigns and related program literature.
	Develop and support interagency transition team (school, families, communities and adult agencies) with clear objectives.
Cluster 2 - Learning-to-Work	Focus on career development planning and experiences earlier in a child's education. Begin assessments and counseling as early as possible.
	Systematically encourage students to use all options to increase work experience.
	Focus on employers, and educate them on allowable activities, insurance, and incentives for them.
	Lower age limits for services, and integrate younger students sooner.
	Complete career assessment (1) for all children by age 12.
	Collaboratively develop messages and means to communicate to all audiences the importance and benefits of work for young people who have disabilities.
	Develop an integrated collaboration for job counseling that begins in school, goes through the transition process and continues in higher ed and adult work and services.
Cluster 3 - Increasing Independence	Integrate guidance and mentorship for higher effectiveness, like peer mentoring, community mentoring, Career Zone and other tools.

	Develop guidance program beginning early in schools that links to adult community resources guidance.
	Encourage early involvement of parents in the processes of transition. Educate families and parents about all services and how to access them.
	Highlight and use Career Centers and Career Pathways (WIOA) more to get post-secondary education and training to young people for occupational/further education support.
Cluster 4 - Transition Supports	Train educators to build transition planning and integrate classroom activity.
	Develop a new way to support collaboration between schools and agencies to demonstrate how they can work together toward a unified outcome.
	Connect adult agencies and schools for earlier and greater involvement.
	Link participants to local self help programs, encouraging stronger local linkages.

Table 7: Program to Policy Action Items

Action to Strategy Timeline

The Steering Committee aligned the above actions within a 2015-2018 timeline. Members considered the following:

- Current actions at each agency that support the NYS PROMISE short term or long term
- Current challenges that may interfere with partnership progress
- Linking to other agencies and providers to strengthen PROMISE

The suggested completion times were aggregated and placed onto a timeline for Steering Committee review.

In developing a Strategic Action Plan, it is important to be aware not only of the agencies in the room, but also other partnerships that may be tapped. Discussions showed increased interest in working with the NYS Employment First Commission (EFC). In October of 2015, the Core Team received approval and began working with the leadership of the EFC to have the PROMISE Steering Committee transition to a sub-committee of the EFC, to be identified as the Transition Sub-Committee. Due to this connection, the Core Team will be providing additional review of the action statements to better align the Steering Committee's Strategic Action Plan with the NYS Employment First agenda with the following considerations:

- How do the program and the structure timelines affect one another?
- How does the EFC recommendation and mission affect the timelines?
- How does the everyday work and priorities of the agencies tie in and affect the timelines?

STRENGTHENING THE TRANSITION PARTNERSHIP

Partnership of all stakeholders is an essential part of action planning. NYS PROMISE is located within a complex structure of state agencies, various programs, and policies. Examples include the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the NYS Governor's Employment First Commission. The sustainability of the PROMISE partnership requires collaboration and connection with these programs and policies.

The PROMISE system can be viewed as a system model showing a series of embedded circles: at the center is the youth receiving services, surrounded by his or her family and community. The structure (informal or formal) of services that youth and families receive influences and is influenced by the inner levels. This is shown in Figure 15 below. When a viable system exists, the service agencies align with the overall intervention goals and policies developed through the PROMISE initiative.

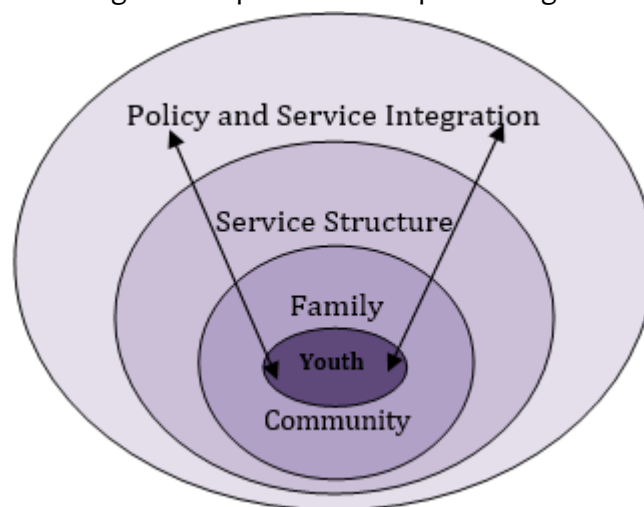


Figure 15: A System Model for Strategic Alignment

The partnership built as part of the PROMISE initiative seeks to improve outcomes by connecting all stakeholders. Partnership is an essential component of taking PROMISE to scale after the initial five-year period and making the new integrated system sustainable.

Benefits of Partnership

A focus on the benefits of the partnership between the PROMISE Steering Committee agencies was the foundation for each meeting. The Steering Committee first focused on short-term benefits such as laying the groundwork for long-term collaboration, facilitating initial implementation, building momentum to drive the PROMISE initiative forward, and providing more youth with essential services. The Steering Committee members then looked to the long-term benefits of stakeholder partnership such as creating a culture for shared accountability, risks, and rewards; developing seamless policy, practice, and services; building an infrastructure for long-term change; and gathering evidence of effectiveness to lead to the main goal of improved outcomes for transition-aged youth. These benefits articulate a succinct summary of the Steering Committee's goals, provide focus for next steps, and were reviewed by members at the beginning of each meeting.

These benefits can also be viewed from the regional perspective of the conceptual framework in order to align the benefits with the work being completed by the Steering Committee, as seen in Figure 16 below.

	Program to Policy	Structure to System
Short Term Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve services • Operationalize collaboration for service coordination • Move kids through PROMISE • More kids receive services • Begin to close/bridge gaps using feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lay the groundwork for long-term collaboration/foundation • Increase collaboration • Build momentum and strategic thinking
Long Term Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building to a measurable impact • Improved outcomes for TA youth beyond PROMISE • Improved family supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture of shared accountability, risks and rewards • Seamless policy/practice/services • Infrastructure for long-term change

Figure 16: Conceptual View of Short- and Long-term Goals

Collaboration Readiness Assessment

The Steering Committee and Core Team members completed an abbreviated Collaboration Readiness Survey¹ when the Steering Committee was just under a year old. The survey asked for members' perception of the presence of common partnership features on a scale of one to four: 1=not present, 2=somewhat present, 3=often present, and 4=always present. The thirty question survey covered nine overarching ideals of partnership:

- Build Sustainable Political Support
- Agree on Principles
- Plan Purposefully
- Adopt a Responsive Structure
- Identify Partner Risks and Rewards
- Employ Effective Work Strategies
- Engage Diverse Partners
- Activate Partner Resources
- Assess and Monitor

Survey review led members to discuss their thoughts on emerging partnerships and member buy-in. Several members described decision hierarchies within their organizations and capacity to encourage use of agency resources for PROMISE needs. Discussing strategies for communication, members also discussed the difference between being an advocate, advocating to their agency and being an avid supporter of the PROMISE initiative. The members also suggested that the Steering

¹ Complementary Action Partnership Collaboration Readiness Survey © Concept Systems, Inc. 2015

Committee may need to support a member when weight needs to be added to their voice in their own agency.

Analysis of rating results showed that members felt that a responsive structure was being developed. The most challenging item was building sustainable political support. (It should be noted that the survey was completed prior to discussions with Employment First Commission, which we discuss below.)

The group observed that as a new team, partnership and responsive structure is at a good starting point. The full results of the Collaboration Assessment are available in [Appendix V](#). The average overall results are in Table 8 below.

#	Category/Item	Average	Rank
Adopt a Responsive Structure		3.15	1
10	The partnership demonstrates respect for member commitment by working efficiently.	3.15	
11	A flexible structure allows for appropriate change and responsive action.	3.00	
12	The partnerships sets goals, expectations, and reasonable time frames for achieving them.	2.92	
13	The group recognizes and value the “core” group of partners, while supporting their added commitment.	3.54	
Engage Diverse Partners		3.00	2
21	Members present innovations and problem-solving approaches that add value to the partnership.	2.85	
22	Partners can act as advocates for the program.	3.08	
23	The partnership has an updated profile of partner organizations and others representatives to ensure engagement.	3.08	
Activate Partner Resources		2.94	3
24	Strategies to involve partners who have participation constraints (limited funding, staff) are in place.	2.54	
25	Members demonstrate effective leadership skills in meeting facilitation, negotiation and networking.	3.29	
26	Knowledge and capabilities of specific members are regularly used for action that benefits the partnership.	2.93	
Identify Partner Risks and Rewards		2.77	4
14	The partnership acknowledges and openly addresses competing demands of the partner institutions.	2.93	

15	Focus of the partnership is kept on the larger issue; each partnership activity is designed to serve that focus.	2.71	
16	Each partners' stake and interest in the project or problem is clearly identified and considered.	2.14	
17	The partnership demonstrates respect for each partner's unique contribution.	3.29	
Agree on Principles		2.76	5
4	Members actively work on earning and maintaining a high level of trust among the partners.	3.07	
5	Members know the issues and have a common vocabulary to support effective communication within and outside the partnership.	2.86	
6	The partnership seeks ways to broaden capacity and build sustainability for partners' organizations.	2.36	
Employ Effective Work Strategies		2.64	6
18	An effective model for communicating among and through the partners is in use.	2.64	
19	Members take into account natural power differentials in the collaboration, and work to balance appropriately.	2.36	
20	Members understand the need for negotiating within the partnership, for planning and problem solving.	2.93	
Assess and Monitor		2.59	7
27	The partnership ensures accountability by ongoing assessment of its effectiveness.	2.14	
28	Activities and outcomes are documented to provide feedback to partners about what is working.	3.00	
29	Members keep abreast of social and political changes that may affect the work of the partnership.	2.64	
30	The partnership measures, reports, and uses data to inform partnership progress and adjust actions as needed.	2.57	
Plan Purposefully		2.21	8
7	The partnership demonstrates shared governance, responsibility and ownership of planning, implementation and outcomes.		
8	The partnership realizes the need for various types of resources while working to balance each member's contribution and risk as a partner.		
9	The partnership has a clearly articulated agreement as to the vision and purposes of the partnership.		
Build Sustainable Political Support		2.07	9
1	Funding for the partnership's work is in place to support partnership action.	2.00	

2	Funding and support agencies for each active partner are also supportive of the activities of the partnership.	2.00	
3	The partnership is recognized as a respected entity that can speak to the issue at hand.	2.21	

Table 8: Initial PROMISE Collaboration Readiness Assessment Results

Agency Linkages

As part of partnership development, the committee members considered existing committees to which they contribute, and state and federal programs that support transition outcomes. The members want to learn more about what these other structures are and whether partnerships with them would assist the PROMISE initiative. The Steering Committee members completed a linkage survey during the June 2015 meeting to better illuminate these connections; results are in [Appendix VI](#). This is a tool that is meant to grow with the committee.

Partnership Mission Development

Practical, up-to-date Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to support partnership were identified as a gap during the GCM activities. The MOUs that focus on transition were not current, and were typically program-to-program to support a specific initiative. No MOUs to support operationalizing partnerships like NYS PROMISE were available. Noting that agreements ensure better partnership and policy development the Steering Committee used statements from the GCM data help to provide a framework for the types of agreements needed. They reviewed the language and finalized the draft.

Having used the MOU approach to define the elements of partnership, the group felt that a framework that reflects the values of purposeful collaboration would suit the needs or growth of the PROMISE stakeholder partnership. The group initially proposed the term “Collaboration Agreement” and sought to describe a networked, interactive relationship rather than a contractor/contractee relationship. The document transitioned into a Mission Statement for the Sub-Committee, as a more appropriate guidance document. The current final draft of the Mission Statement can be found in [Appendix VII](#). Its essential statement of purpose is included here:

“The NYS PROMISE Steering Committee will operate as the Employment First Transition Sub-Committee, upon approval of this Mission Statement by the Employment First Commission, in order to bring the goals of the Steering Committee into alignment with the overall goals of New York State. The purposes of the Transition Sub-Committee are to construct and maintain a comprehensive, collaborative system to prepare youth with disabilities ages 10 through 24 in New York State to live, learn and earn as adults, to support the families of youth with disabilities in transition, and to increase integrated planning surrounding transition of youth from schools into the community as adults. To realize this vision, the Transition Sub-Committee seeks to have in place a system to assist all youth with disabilities and their families, at the local and state levels, through a cross-agency partnership that will support innovation and improved outcomes for students in the future.”

OBSERVATIONS OF PROGRESS

From November 2014 to April 2015, the PROMISE Steering Committee members participated in Group Concept Mapping activities. From May of 2015 through October of 2015, the members used the products and results of their efforts to catalyze discussion, action and progress toward their goals of action and partnership development.

The expectations and objectives of this phase of the Steering Committee's work were:

1. Engage local and state partners in defining a broad strategic approach that starts to describe a system of person- and family-centered intervention;
2. Lead to complementary partnership development for agencies and providers to align their priorities with others in a system of person- and family-centered integration, to achieve measurably better results for SSI youth and their families; and,
3. Support the growth of the systems approach to integrating policy, practice and partnership between local and state entities for a cohesive transition system to support youth.

Over the course of eleven months, the Steering Committee:

- Formed the stakeholder committee with those who agreed to contribute to the objectives of NYS PROMISE and unique Steering Committee Objectives;
- Co-authored a group concept map to illustrate the group's shared thinking;
- Assessed current presence, viability and relevance of key attributes of a successful transition strategy, to recognize priorities and identify gaps;
- Defined specific priorities and articulating specific actions for priorities;
- Assessed readiness to collaborate and describing the desired and expected benefits of the partnership;
- Developed the Mission Statement;
- Considered additional potential members of the partner network;
- Continued to develop the strategy-to-action timeline document; and,
- Is establishing the NYS PROMISE Steering Committee as a permanent sub-committee within the Governor's Employment First Commission.

Strengthening capacity and potential impact, this expanded identity provides heightened significance, and supports a permanent place for systemic transition efforts within the broader portfolio of EFC and the State. Transition to sustainable outcomes is a part of the EFC's mission, and positioning the Steering Committee as the Transition Sub-Committee of the EFC allows focus on transition issues beyond PROMISE objectives to reflect its place in the broader context. As a permanent Sub-Committee, the group is no longer time-bounded, and can continue to expand critical program improvement and community engagement, while at the same time attending to the important aspects of structure and systems for its own sustainable progress.

As a Sub-Committee of EFC, the committee will have a natural communication line directly to the Commissioners who serve on the EFC, addressing an issue that the Steering Committee discussed

regarding higher level engagement in the PROMISE strategies and providing the opportunity for both increased awareness and broader support.

With the confirmation of the PROMISE Steering Committee's relationship to EFC, the PROMISE initiative has started a new chapter. Given the change in identity, the group may consider the degree to which the planning for systemic partnership undertaken here informs the strategy going forward, and influences Sub-Committee's priorities.

Building Blocks of Sustainable Partnership: Structure for Ongoing Assessment

In our discussions we continued to emphasize the following benefits as the milestones for the Steering Committee to keep in sight as it developed both programmatic expansion and structural systems to support PROMISE. These benefits came from Steering Committee observations about the Group Concept Map's two-region framework, and the priorities within each of the regions. The Steering Committee answered the question: If the priorities associated with these key components of transition delivery and systems were addressed, what benefits would be evident? Focusing first on the program/policy region of the map, the members reviewed the map items and summed up benefits, as short term or long term:

Short Term Benefits: Program, Policy Focus

- ✓ Improve Services
- ✓ Operationalize collaboration for service coordination
- ✓ Move kids through PROMISE
- ✓ More youth will receive necessary services
- ✓ Begin to close / bridge gaps Real time feedback from grantees to inform priorities

Long Term Benefits (Outcomes): Program, Policy Focus

- ✓ Building to impact
- ✓ Improved outcomes for TA youth beyond PROMISE
- ✓ Improved system of supports for families
- ✓ Systematic evidence of effectiveness

The Steering Committee looked at the structure and systems region, and noted the following as short term and long term benefits.

Short Term Benefits: Structure Focus

- ✓ Lay the groundwork for long-term collaboration/foundation
- ✓ Increase collaboration
- ✓ Facilitate initial implementation
- ✓ Share issues and best practice
- ✓ Build momentum and strategic thinking
- ✓ Understanding we are greater than the sum of our parts

- ✓ Drive the initiative forward more effectively, greater buy-in
- ✓ Position PROMISE as respected partnership of collaborating entities

LONG Term Benefits (Outcomes): Structure Focus

- ✓ Culture for shared accountability, risks, rewards
- ✓ Seamless policy/practice/services
- ✓ Integrated policies
- ✓ Continuous service improvement
- ✓ Sustained cross-system collaboration
- ✓ Expectation of working together on future endeavors
- ✓ Infrastructure for long-term change
- ✓ Mission sustainability
- ✓ Taking PROMISE model to scale

In program planning at the state (or virtually any) level, these specific benefits may be assumed, but not often articulated as valued benefits within a program structure. In the case of PROMISE, however, the Steering Committee and the Core Management Team made a specific commitment to articulating partnership, which produced this set of benefits. We anticipate that the Transition Sub-Committee continues to refer to these hoped for developments as markers, or measurable indicators of progress, change and even impact in the longer term. The Steering Committee may consider using these markers to develop an informal assessment, and over time develop program and organizational/structural evaluation approaches that might take these elements into account.

Changing the Culture

Through our work with both the Steering Committee and the Learning Community, we observe and appreciate the great commitment, universally demonstrated, to change the culture of transition to integrate, accelerate and produce greater, more sustainable results for students and their families. We observed the growth in mutual awareness of the challenges in achieving the vision of PROMISE, while at the same time witnessing each member's commitment to prioritize and support PROMISE. Members' self-reports on the viability of improving the priorities described in the map indicate a common commitment to focus on gaps that, if addressed, will support and sustain an integrated system of transition.

Taking into account that the Sub-Committee will work within the EFC while at the same time expanding the inclusion and reach of the PROMISE efforts into communities of need via the partner providers and advocates, it will continue to work at multiple system levels, each with its own set of priorities and ways to produce change.

NEXT STEPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Expanding PROMISE to Scale

With its role as a Transition Sub-Committee of the Employment First Commission, the group will be guided by the Mission Statement to ensure adherence to its role as the entity responsible for NYS PROMISE and an enhanced transition system for New York State in future.

The working timelines (Documents 4a and 4b) that were developed at the last meeting of the Steering Committee in 2015 are very ambitious, currently including all priority items and key actions developed by the Steering Committee, as well as the time frames estimated by Steering Committee members. The Core Team and CSI agree that they require review from three different viewpoints:

- How do the program and the structure timelines affect one another?
- How does the EFC recommendation and mission affect the timelines?
- How do these timelines align with work already in progress via the Transition program priorities? Via other State agency programs?

The Steering Committee may be able to take on this assessment in early 2016.

As a summary of activities through 2015, this document also aligns the Steering Committee's work with the Employment First Commission recommendations, which include the following:

- Creating an employment first culture through cultural modeling by state agencies and community-based organizations;
- Supporting a business first platform to promote existing tax credits and pursue federal contracts;
- Adoption of the New York Employment Services System (NYESS) by all agencies that provide employment supports to foster employment data collection and exchange of employment information;
- Ensuring knowledge of the impact of benefits for people as they explore employment options so they can make educated and informed choices about work; and,
- Initiative to test the impact of early employment supports coupled with services and significant family involvement.

The Steering Committee recognizes that the Committee's identity as a Sub-Committee of the EFC may change priorities, timing and perhaps roles. But with a strong emphasis on purposeful collaboration and integration of the PROMISE transition into the State system, PROMISE and the Steering Committee will doubtless add strength, innovation and sustainable progress for transition in the State. The work of the Steering Committee so far on planning and partnership building will now be considered in light of this larger system, and may change accordingly. We believe that the diligent steps that the Steering Committee has taken to self-identify, construct and populate a purposeful community of agencies focused on transition may serve as a model for other agencies.

Leveraging Connections

Through this process the members of the Steering Committee, with strong leadership from the Core Group, have identified existing and potential additional partners to extend the work of PROMISE, which we anticipate will enable PROMISE to extend its reach systematically. The Committee's linkage to the EFC will naturally allow expanded reach, as well as the capacity of the PROMISE program to influence other EFC efforts.

NYS PROMISE is one of 6 demonstration projects across the US. As these programs are evaluated, it is our hope that the PROMISE model in New York State is considered a high value, replicable model for others, and that the PROMISE vision and diligent implementation creates lasting, measurable and meaningful change that can be replicated elsewhere.

CONCLUSION

Andrew Karhan, Director of Employment Policy for NYESS and Project Director of NYS PROMISE, issued a communication to Steering Committee and Learning Community members on January 21, 2016, in which he observed the following:

“Since its inception, NYS PROMISE has been faced with a variety of challenges that are a result of the ever changing landscape of individuals we are attempting to reach, statewide policy, and the economy. Throughout the implementation of PROMISE we have sought to stay true to our program’s design, while remaining flexible enough in our approach to adapt to the ever-changing needs of the “system”. As you know, the PROMISE model is predicated upon the utilization of our “indigenous” service system, in order to maximize the impact lives of children and families, both now, and at the conclusion of PROMISE. NYS PROMISE is grounded in the belief that success would only be achieved if we engaged schools, regional parent centers, and community providers in a collaborative effort to create change. In short, we were striving to create community.

In the face of a variety of challenges your collective commitment to PROMISE has been exceptional. Together, we have created a robust learning community of practitioners who are collectively learning and growing through shared successes and challenges. Together, we have created enough interest in the project to have the Steering Committee of PROMISE be named as the transition sub-committee to Employment First in New York. Together, we have recruited nearly 1700 youth, and are on pace to recruit 2000 youth before the end of our recruitment period in April of this year. Together, we are impacting the lives of hundreds of youth and families who are beginning to receive the hope that PROMISE is aimed to bring. We have done all of this – together.”

Recognizing NYS PROMISE’s importance as an innovative and integrated model, that may offer examples to others, will benefit the overarching goal to create a stable, sustainable role in the State system for meaningful change in New York State.

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Appendix I - Core Team and Steering Committee Participants

Core Team

Andrew Karhan	NYS Office of Mental Health / The Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene, Inc.
Andrew Sink	NYS Office of Mental Health / The Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene, Inc.
Kelly Stengel	NYS Office of Mental Health / The Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene, Inc.
Jessica Elliot	NYS Office of Mental Health / The Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene, Inc.
Thomas Golden	Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan Employment and Disability Institute
David Filaberto	Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan Employment and Disability Institute
Michelle Podolec	Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan Employment and Disability Institute

Steering Committee

Megan Brown	NYS Education Department – Office of Special Education
Robin Hickey	NYS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
Deborah McMahon	NYS Office of Temporary Disability Assistance
Ceylane Meyers-Ruff	NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities
Laurel Munro	NYS Office of Children and Family Services – NYS Committee for the Blind
Alda Osinaga	NYS Department of Health
Patrick Pascarella	NYS Department of Labor
Amy Steiner	NYS Education Department – Adult Career and Continuing Education Department – Vocational Rehabilitation
Deborah Waymer	NYS Office of Mental Health – Home and Community Based Services Waiver Program

Appendix II - Discovery and Strategy Development Statement List

The following is a list of statements used in the group concept mapping project from the focus prompt:

“To yield enduring individual outcomes, a viable system to support youth with disabilities in their transition from high school to successful adult lives needs to include...”

#	Statement
1.	Similar access to jobs as non-disabled high school students have.
2.	Job coaching as a phased support to aid in the transition to the work environment.
3.	Longer-term support to facilitate job retention and encourage job advancement.
4.	A focus on the emotional and social benefits one receives from work.
5.	Real work experiences that reinforce the student's abilities.
6.	Informing youth on how ones' hobbies, interests, household chores/responsibilities translate into the workplace.
7.	Presenting career and technical education as a viable alternative choice to attending college.
8.	A focus on economic benefits of earning a salary, leading to financial independence.
9.	Discussing the benefits to society when a person becomes a contributing member of that society.
10.	Exploring career options, through job shadowing, mentoring, and work experience.
11.	Supporting and enforcing a culture that supports empowerment towards success.
12.	Experiences that will show students that there are educational and career choices for them.
13.	Instruction in financial literacy and navigating systems related to finances.
14.	Training on how to use public or para transportation.
15.	An increased focus and training on self-advocacy and expectations for youth with disabilities.
16.	Supporting drivers education.
17.	Providing connections with local self-help programs including Independent Living Centers.
18.	Supporting the development of self-advocacy, self-reliance and resilience skills as students mature.
19.	Teaching independent living skills.

#	Statement
20.	Providing access early in their education careers to students and families about benefits, work incentives information, and planning.
21.	Updating inventory/directory of statewide resources for students, schools and families to support the transition process.
23.	Access to strong peer role models and mentors who demonstrate high quality skills in living, learning and earning.
24.	Dedicated staff at the school level and agency level focused on transition.
25.	Financial support from the state attached to defined performance outcomes.
26.	Training and coaching for parents who are trying to support their children.
27.	Aligning vocational counseling and training to strengthen the match between a young person's skills and interests on the way to reaching employment goals.
28.	Training on interpersonal relationships in the workplace.
29.	Using NYS resources like the Department of Labor One Stop.
30.	Training and guidance on resume building, interviewing skills and job search techniques.
31.	Instruction and guidance on how to learn about and access to community resources.
32.	Protection and advocacy services for adults living with family members.
33.	Benefits advisement for the student and family.
34.	Individual job counseling based on each person's characteristics.
35.	Providing the youth access to quality healthcare to support their work plans.
36.	Developing an exit plan from school that identifies next steps, supports and potential barriers.
37.	Encouraging students to fulfill the community services requirement for high school graduation.
38.	Working within the school environment so that youth experiences realistic consequences and opportunities.
39.	Supporting stronger integration between school and adult services.
40.	Ensuring that schools are completing their responsibilities accurately and accountably.
41.	An availability of services at a younger age.

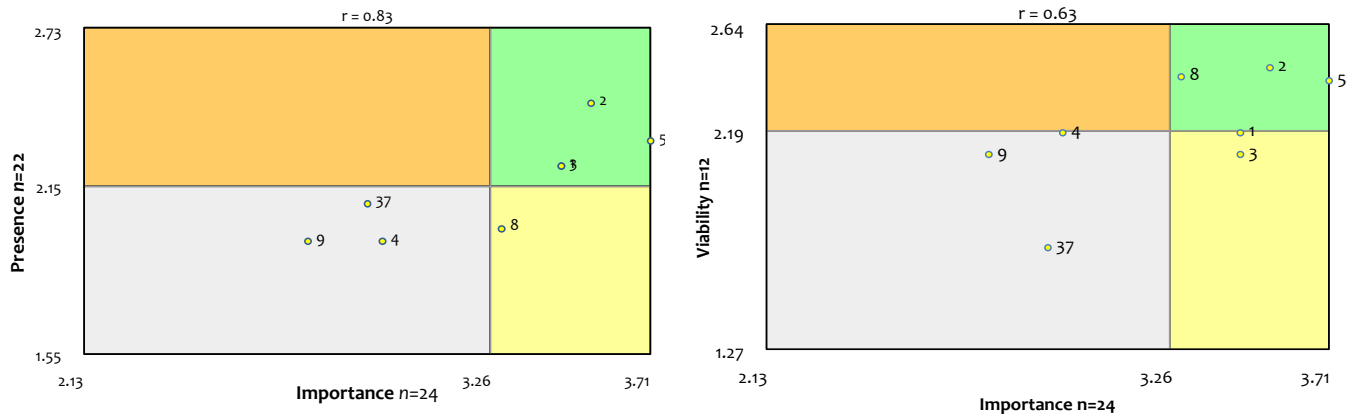
#	Statement
42.	A process that allows services to change as the student develops/transitions in his or her worklife.
43.	An evaluation of how youth and families access the system.
44.	A system evaluation of what is working and what is not effective, with actionable results.
45.	Performing vocational assessments of skills, abilities, aptitudes and interests.
46.	Comprehensive statewide data integration around case management issues.
47.	Improved coordination and use of current services and programs.
48.	Willingness to consider and develop new services and program ideas.
49.	A policy of evaluating long term programs and projects for their delivery effectiveness and desired outcomes.
50.	Using evidence-based models that would change the system outcomes.
51.	Using program evaluation results to inform decisions about what to stop in order to do better overall.
52.	Using program evaluation results to design corrective strategies for increasing program performance.
53.	Identifying how agencies' missions and programs align and work together for greater synergy.
54.	Strategies for making the connection from practice to policy.
55.	Adopting and integrating promising or best practices from agency to agency.
56.	An agreed upon common platform for diffusion of best policies and practices.
57.	A systemic evaluation structure that takes into account unique missions of agencies and their respective roles in transition.
58.	Identifying and agreeing on priorities to create successful outcome as a system.
59.	A shared system of accountability to achieve outcomes.
60.	Educating the entire family.
61.	Educating statewide agencies about existing systems, programs, delivery and outcomes to enhance service delivery and outcomes.
62.	Active and timely cross system communication.

#	Statement
63.	Focus on statewide capacity to achieve outcomes through system agencies' collaboration.
64.	A clear unified vision for outcome focused partnership.
65.	Provider understanding of best outcomes for the individual (e.g., good work experience vs. any work).
66.	An approach that supports an individual's 'career trajectory', taking into account the range of services from different agencies to achieve it.
67.	Identifying what services an individual should have to allow for a natural long term career trajectory.
68.	A study of third party influencers' effect on youth decision regarding work.
69.	Recognition of the influence of agency/program staff opinions of youth capacity to achieve.
70.	An agreed-upon definition of successful adulthood and outcomes for youth.
71.	Honoring the informed decision of the young person whether they decide to continue or stop program participation.
72.	Understanding the contemporary labor market in each region to match skill building to market needs.
73.	Recognizing the issue of balancing quality service delivery with policy compliance.
74.	Structured collaboration with the business community as potential employers.
75.	Practical, up to date MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding) between state agencies pertaining to interagency collaboration.
76.	Collaboration of statewide agencies to meet the changing needs of the students and their families during the process.
77.	Collaboration of statewide agencies to meet the changing needs of the schools during the process.
78.	More/earlier coordination between school staff and outside agencies to ensure that youth will be able to exit school with a comprehensive plan.
79.	Collaboratively developed policies between/among the state agencies pertaining to transition planning.
80.	A unified network of state and local partners designed to eliminate overlapping and duplication of services.

Appendix III - Go-Zone Comparison

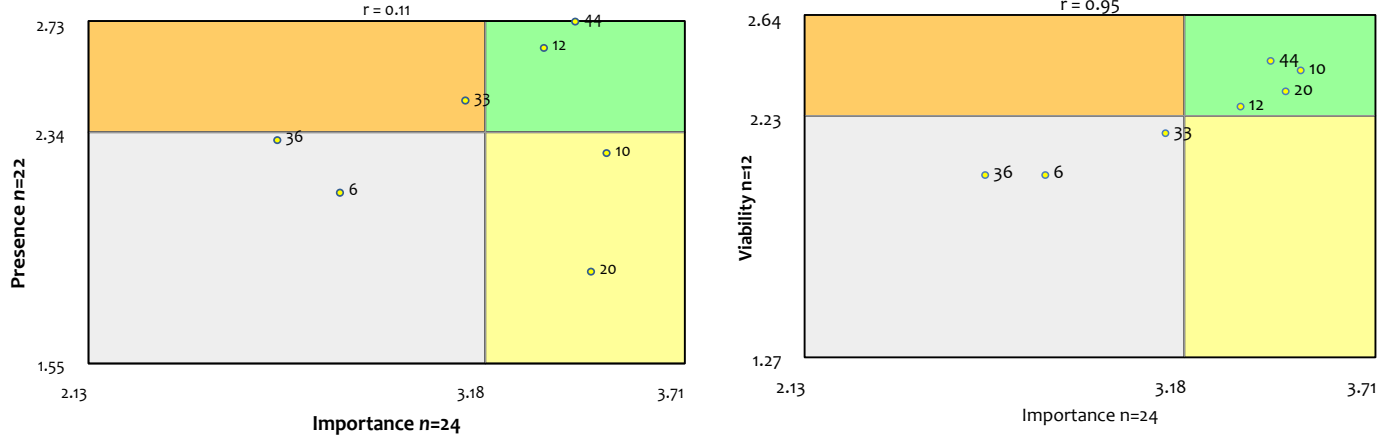
Importance to Presence & Importance to Viability in NYS PROMISE

Cluster 1: Work Experience Support



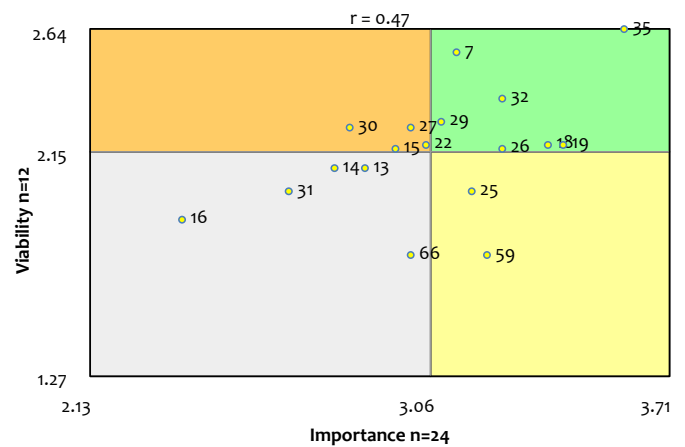
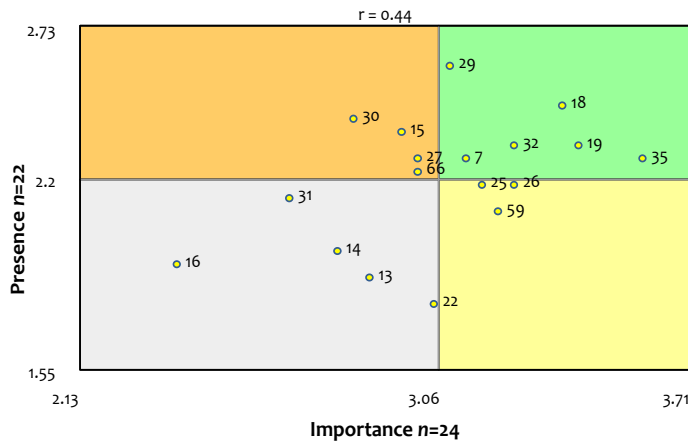
#	Cluster Title / Statement: “To yield enduring individual outcomes, a viable system to support youth with disabilities in their transition from high school to successful adult lives needs to include...”	Importance n=24 Scale 1-4	Presence in NYS n=22 Scale 1-4	Viability in NYS n=12 Scale 1-3
Work Experience Support				
1	Similar access to jobs as non-disabled high school students have.	3.46	2.23	2.18
2	Job coaching as a phased support to aid in the transition to the work environment.	3.54	2.45	2.45
3	Longer-term support to facilitate job retention and encourage job advancement.	3.46	2.23	2.09
4	A focus on the emotional and social benefits one receives from work.	2.96	1.95	2.18
5	Real work experiences that reinforce the student's abilities.	3.71	2.32	2.4
8	A focus on economic benefits of earning a salary, leading to financial independence.	3.29	2	2.42
9	Discussing the benefits to society when a person becomes a contributing member of that society.	2.75	1.95	2.09
37	Working within the school environment so that youth experiences realistic consequences and opportunities.	2.92	2.09	1.7

Cluster 2: Learning-to-Work



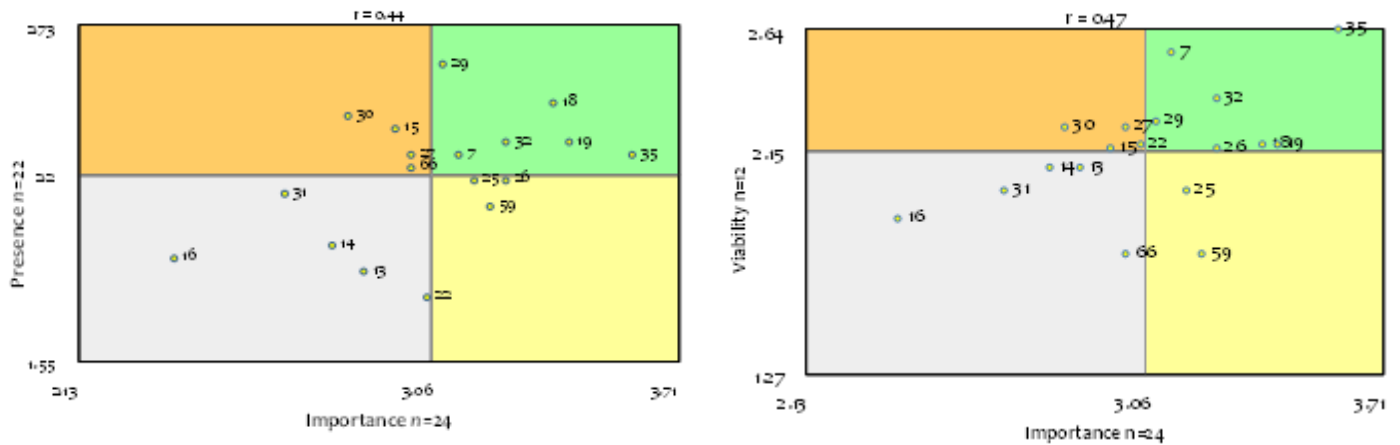
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Learning-to-Work				
6	Informing youth on how ones' hobbies, interests, household chores/responsibilities translate into the workplace.	2.79	2.14	2
10	Exploring career options, through job shadowing, mentoring, and work experience.	3.5	2.27	2.42
12	Experiences that will show students that there are educational and career choices for them.	3.33	2.64	2.27
20	Providing access early in their education careers to students and families about benefits, work incentives information, and planning.	3.46	1.86	2.33
33	Individual job counseling based on each person's characteristics.	3.13	2.45	2.17
36	Encouraging students to fulfill the community services requirement for high school graduation.	2.63	2.32	2
44	Performing vocational assessments of skills, abilities, aptitudes and interests.	3.42	2.73	2.45

Cluster 3: Self-Advocacy & Independence Development (page 1)



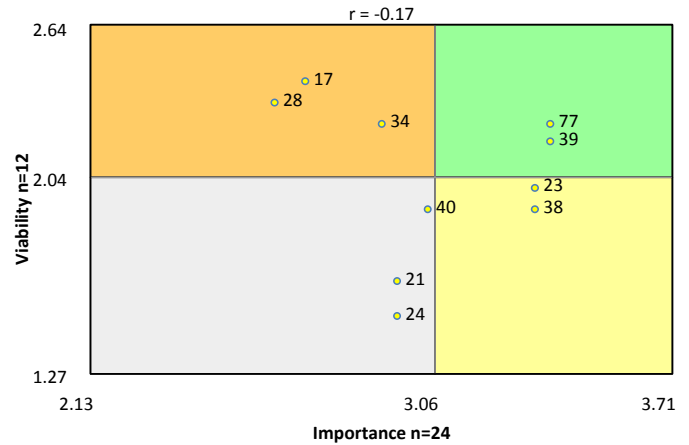
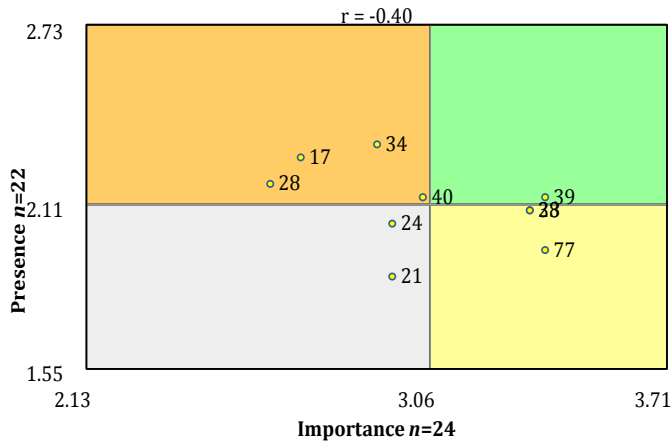
#	Cluster Title / Statement: “To yield enduring individual outcomes, a viable system to support youth with disabilities in their transition from high school to successful adult lives needs to include...”	Importance n=24 Scale 1-4	Presence in NYS n=22 Scale 1-4	Viability in NYS n=12 Scale 1-3
Self-Advocacy & Independence Development				
7	Presenting career and technical education as a viable alternative choice to attending college.	3.13	2.27	2.55
13	Instruction in financial literacy and navigating systems related to finances.	2.88	1.86	2.09
14	Training on how to use public or para transportation.	2.79	1.95	2.09
15	An increased focus and training on self-advocacy and expectations for youth with disabilities.	2.96	2.36	2.17
16	Supporting drivers education.	2.38	1.91	1.89
18	Supporting the development of self-advocacy, self-reliance and resilience skills as students mature.	3.38	2.45	2.18
19	Teaching independent living skills.	3.42	2.32	2.18
22	Access to strong peer role models and mentors who demonstrate high quality skills in living, learning and earning.	3.04	1.77	2.18
25	Training and coaching for parents who are trying to support their children.	3.17	2.18	2

Cluster 3: Self-Advocacy & Independence Development (page 2)



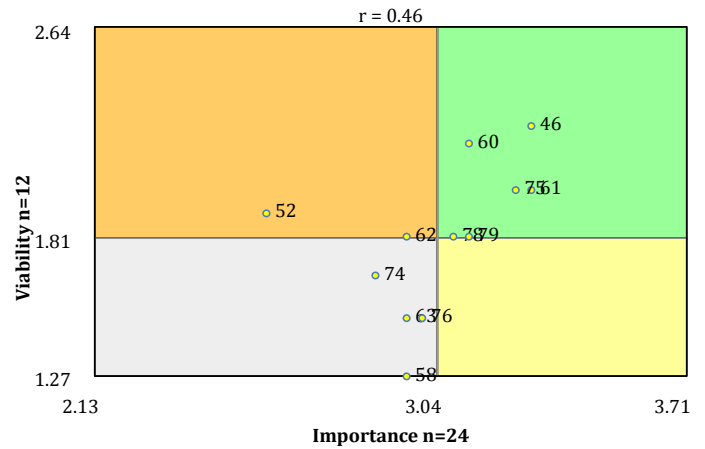
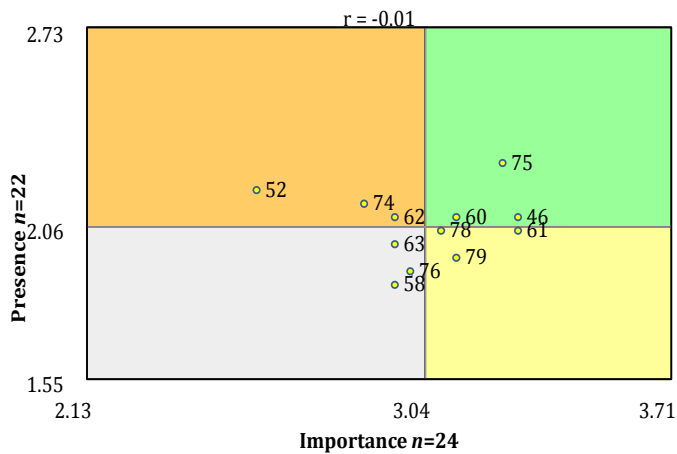
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Self-Advocacy & Independence Development				
26	Aligning vocational counseling and training to strengthen the match between a young person's skills and interests on the way to reaching employment goals.	3.25	2.18	2.17
27	Training on interpersonal relationships in the workplace.	3	2.27	2.25
29	Training and guidance on resume building, interviewing skills and job search techniques.	3.08	2.59	2.27
30	Instruction and guidance on how to learn about and access to community resources.	2.83	2.41	2.25
31	Protection and advocacy services for adults living with family members.	2.67	2.14	2
32	Benefits advisement for the student and family.	3.25	2.32	2.36
35	Developing an exit plan from school that identifies next steps, supports and potential barriers.	3.58	2.27	2.64
59	Educating the entire family.	3.21	2.09	1.75
66	Identifying what services an individual should have to allow for a natural long term career trajectory.	3.00	2.23	1.75

Cluster 4: Transition Supports



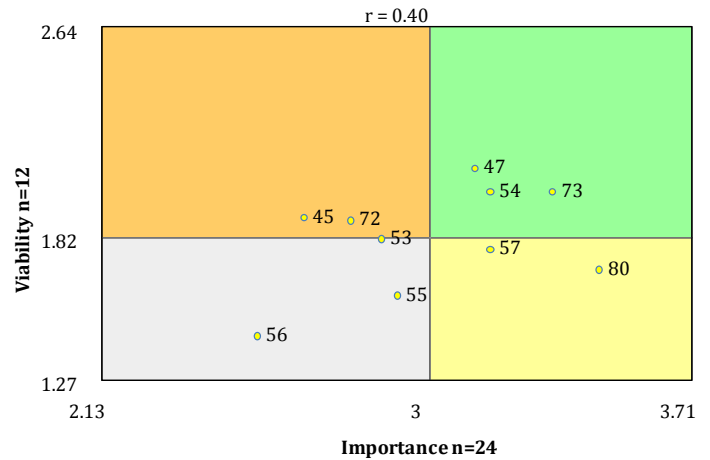
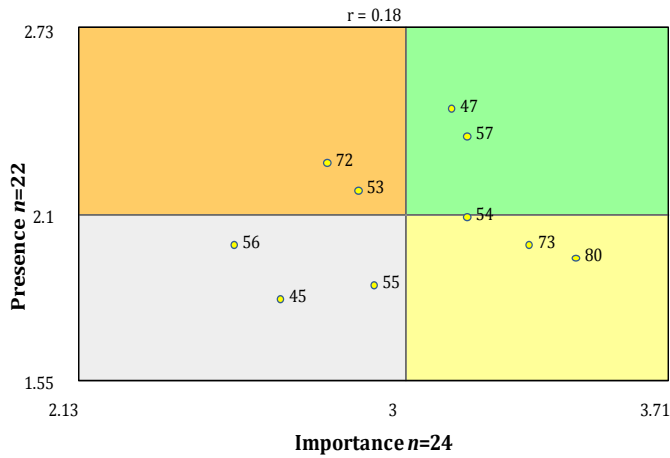
#	Cluster Title / Statement: “To yield enduring individual outcomes, a viable system to support youth with disabilities in their transition from high school to successful adult lives needs to include...”	Importance n=24 Scale 1-4	Presence in NYS n=22 Scale 1-4	Viability in NYS n=12 Scale 1-3
Transition Supports				
17	Providing connections with local self-help programs including Independent Living Centers.	2.71	2.27	2.42
21	Updating inventory/directory of statewide resources for students, schools and families to support the transition process.	2.96	1.86	1.64
23	Dedicated staff at the school level and agency level focused on transition.	3.33	2.09	2
24	Financial support from the state attached to defined performance outcomes.	2.96	2.05	1.5
28	Using NYS resources like the Department of Labor One Stop.	2.63	2.18	2.33
34	Providing the youth access to quality healthcare to support their work plans.	2.92	2.32	2.25
38	Supporting stronger integration between school and adult services.	3.33	2.09	1.92
39	Ensuring that schools are completing their responsibilities accurately and accountably.	3.38	2.14	2.18
40	An availability of services at a younger age.	3.04	2.14	1.92
77	More/earlier coordination between school staff and outside agencies to ensure that youth will be able to exit school with a comprehensive plan.	3.38	1.95	2.25

Cluster 5: System-wide Collaboration



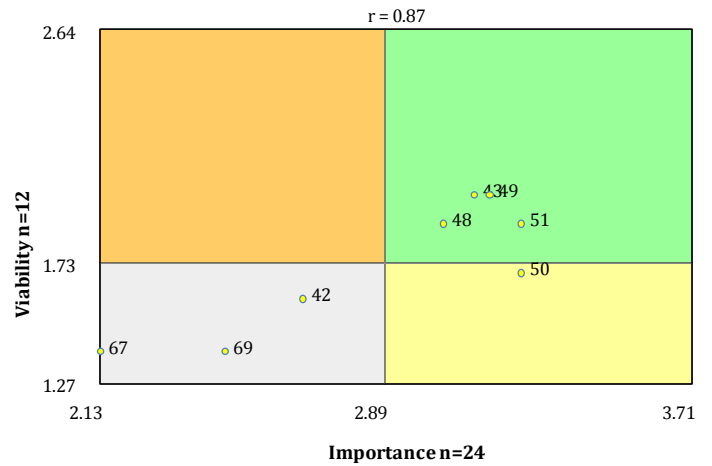
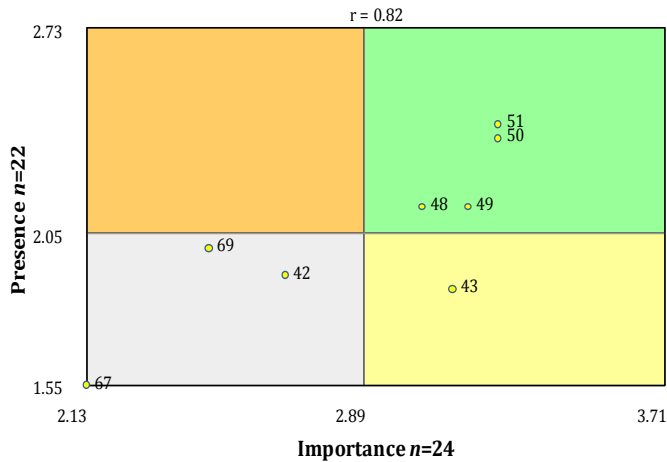
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System-wide Collaboration				
46	Improved coordination and use of current services and programs.	3.29	2.09	2.25
52	Identifying how agencies' missions and programs align and work together for greater synergy.	2.58	2.18	1.91
58	A shared system of accountability to achieve outcomes.	2.96	1.86	1.27
60	Educating statewide agencies about existing systems, programs, delivery and outcomes to enhance service delivery and outcomes.	3.13	2.09	2.18
61	Active and timely cross system communication.	3.29	2.05	2
62	Focus on statewide capacity to achieve outcomes through system agencies' collaboration.	2.96	2.09	1.82
63	A clear unified vision for outcome focused partnership.	2.96	2	1.5
74	Practical, up to date MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding) between state agencies pertaining to interagency collaboration.	2.88	2.14	1.67
75	Collaboration of statewide agencies to meet the changing needs of the students and their families during the process.	3.25	2.27	2
76	Collaboration of statewide agencies to meet the changing needs of the schools during the process.	3	1.91	1.5
78	Collaboratively developed policies between/among the state agencies pertaining to transition planning.	3.08	2.05	1.82
79	A unified network of state and local partners designed to eliminate overlapping and duplication of services.	3.13	1.95	1.82

Cluster 6: System Components



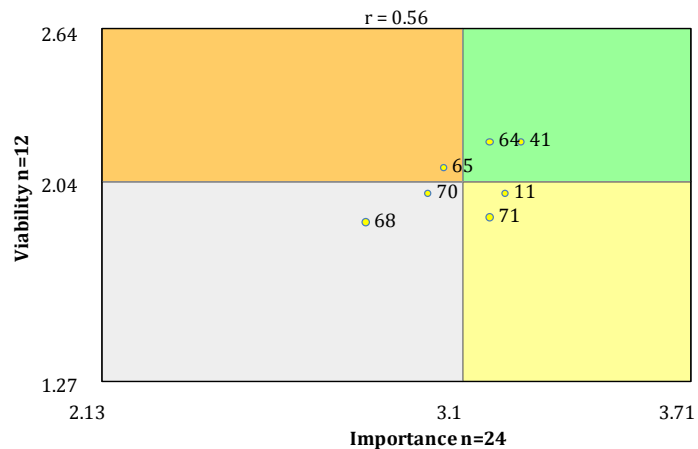
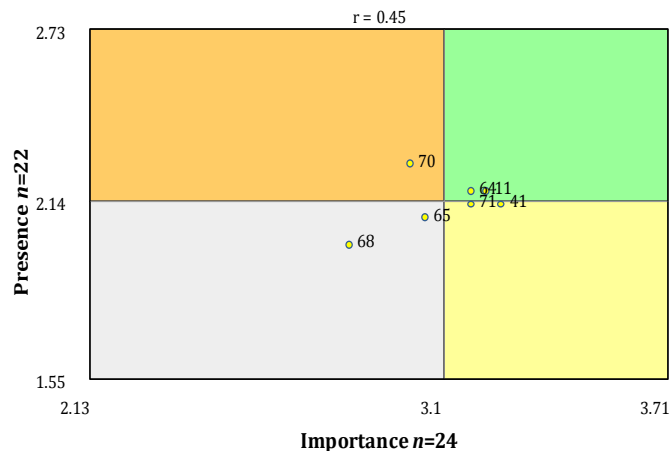
#	Cluster Title / Statement: “To yield enduring individual outcomes, a viable system to support youth with disabilities in their transition from high school to successful adult lives needs to include...”	Importance n=24 Scale 1-4	Presence in NYS n=22 Scale 1-4	Viability in NYS n=12 Scale 1-3
System Components				
45	Comprehensive statewide data integration around case management issues.	2.67	1.82	1.9
47	Willingness to consider and develop new services and program ideas.	3.13	2.45	2.09
53	Strategies for making the connection from practice to policy.	2.88	2.18	1.82
54	Adopting and integrating promising or best practices from agency to agency.	3.17	2.09	2
55	An agreed upon common platform for diffusion of best policies and practices.	2.92	1.86	1.6
56	A systemic evaluation structure that takes into account unique missions of agencies and their respective roles in transition.	2.54	2	1.44
57	Identifying and agreeing on priorities to create successful outcome as a system.	3.17	2.36	1.78
72	Recognizing the issue of balancing quality service delivery with policy compliance.	2.79	2.27	1.89
73	Structured collaboration with the business community as potential employers.	3.33	2	2
80	Sustainable funding to support local partnerships between transition stakeholders for successful adult outcomes of youth.	3.46	1.95	1.7

Cluster 7: Research & Evaluation



#	Cluster Title / Statement: “To yield enduring individual outcomes, a viable system to support youth with disabilities in their transition from high school to successful adult lives needs to include...”	Importance n=24 Scale 1-4	Presence in NYS n=22 Scale 1-4	Viability in NYS n=12 Scale 1-3
Research & Evaluation				
42	An evaluation of how youth and families access the system.	2.67	1.91	1.6
43	A system evaluation of what is working and what is not effective, with actionable results.	3.13	1.86	2
48	A policy of evaluating long term programs and projects for their delivery effectiveness and desired outcomes.	3.04	2.14	1.89
49	Using evidence-based models that would change the system outcomes.	3.17	2.14	2
50	Using program evaluation results to inform decisions about what to stop in order to do better overall.	3.25	2.36	1.7
51	Using program evaluation results to design corrective strategies for increasing program performance.	3.25	2.41	1.89
67	A study of third party influencers' effect on youth decision regarding work.	2.13	1.55	1.4
69	An agreed-upon definition of successful adulthood and outcomes for youth.	2.46	2	1.4

Cluster 8: Culture



#	Cluster Title / Statement: “To yield enduring individual outcomes, a viable system to support youth with disabilities in their transition from high school to successful adult lives needs to include...”	Importance n=24 Scale 1-4	Presence in NYS n=22 Scale 1-4	Viability in NYS n=12 Scale 1-3
Culture				
11	Supporting and enforcing a culture that supports empowerment towards success.	3.21	2.18	2
41	A process that allows services to change as the student develops/transitions in his or her worklife.	3.25	2.14	2.2
64	Provider understanding of best outcomes for the individual (e.g., good work experience vs. any work).	3.17	2.18	2.2
65	An approach that supports an individual's 'career trajectory', taking into account the range of services from different agencies to achieve it.	3.04	2.09	2.1
68	Recognition of the influence of agency/program staff opinions of youth capacity to achieve.	2.83	2	1.89
70	Honoring the informed decision of the young person whether they decide to continue or stop program participation.	3	2.27	2
71	Understanding the contemporary labor market in each region to match skill building to market needs.	3.17	2.14	1.91

Appendix IV - Steering Committee Member Agencies' Cluster View of Relevance to Their Agency

Steering Committee members rated the items within each cluster on *relevance to their agency*. Each agency is represented by one representative (except the Cornell Institute (2) and OMH (3)). The rating is a current state assessment of each SC member, reflecting that agency's mission and program alignment with each area.

Relevance Scale:

5=Relevant to Agency

4= Somewhat Relevant to Agency

3=Somewhat Relevant to Agency

2=Not Relevant to Agency

1=Relevance Not Rated

Agency: Cornell K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan Institute on Employment and Disability		
Clusters	Average	Range
Cluster 1: Work Experience Support	4.4	3 to 5
Cluster 2: Learning-to-Work	3.7	2 to 5
Cluster 3: Self Advocacy & Independence Development	3.7	2 to 5
Cluster 4: Transition Supports	3.6	2 to 5
Cluster 5: System-wide Collaboration	4.25	3 to 5
Cluster 6: System Components	4.1	3 to 5
Cluster 7: Research & Evaluation	5.0	5
Cluster 8: Culture	4.1	3 to 5

Agency: Department of Health		
Clusters	Average	Range
Cluster 1: Work Experience Support	2.4	2 to 3
Cluster 2: Learning-to-Work	2.4	2 to 3
Cluster 3: Self Advocacy & Independence Development	3.7	2 to 5
Cluster 4: Transition Supports	3.1	2 to 5
Cluster 5: System-wide Collaboration	5.0	5
Cluster 6: System Components	4.5	2 to 5
Cluster 7: Research & Evaluation	4.65	2 to 5
Cluster 8: Culture	4.0	2 to 5

Agency: Department of Labor		
Clusters	Average	Range
Cluster 1: Work Experience Support	1.5	1 to 5
Cluster 2: Learning-to-Work	2	1 to 5
Cluster 3: Self Advocacy & Independence Development	1.8	1 to 5
Cluster 4: Transition Supports	2.3	1 to 5
Cluster 5: System-wide Collaboration	1.5	1 to 2
Cluster 6: System Components	2	1 to 5
Cluster 7: Research & Evaluation	1.5	1 to 5
Cluster 8: Culture	2.1	1 to 5

Agency: Developmental Disabilities Planning Council		
Clusters	Average	Range
Cluster 1: Work Experience Support	3.6	2 to 5
Cluster 2: Learning-to-Work	4.4	3 to 5
Cluster 3: Self Advocacy & Independence Development	3.6	2 to 5
Cluster 4: Transition Supports	3.2	2 to 5
Cluster 5: System-wide Collaboration	2.9	2 to 5
Cluster 6: System Components	2.3	2 to 3
Cluster 7: Research & Evaluation	3.75	2 to 5
Cluster 8: Culture	2.85	2 to 5

Agency: New York State Education Department – Adult Career & Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation		
Clusters	Average	Range
Cluster 1: Work Experience Support	4.4	2 to 5
Cluster 2: Learning-to-Work	4.3	2 to 5
Cluster 3: Self Advocacy & Independence Development	3.1	2 to 5
Cluster 4: Transition Supports	3.4	2 to 5
Cluster 5: System-wide Collaboration	3.7	1 to 5
Cluster 6: System Components	3.4	2 to 5
Cluster 7: Research & Evaluation	3.4	2 to 5
Cluster 8: Culture	4.0	2 to 5

Agency: New York State Education Department – Office of Special Education		
Clusters	Average	Range
Cluster 1: Work Experience Support	5.0	5
Cluster 2: Learning-to-Work	5.0	5
Cluster 3: Self Advocacy & Independence Development	4.2	1 to 5
Cluster 4: Transition Supports	3.9	2 to 5
Cluster 5: System-wide Collaboration	2.25	1 to 5
Cluster 6: System Components	2.3	1 to 5
Cluster 7: Research & Evaluation	1.5	1 to 5
Cluster 8: Culture	1	1

Agency: Office of Children and Family Services – New York State Commission for the Blind		
Clusters	Average	Range
Cluster 1: Work Experience Support	4.1	2 to 5
Cluster 2: Learning-to-Work	4.7	3 to 5
Cluster 3: Self Advocacy & Independence Development	3.6	2 to 5
Cluster 4: Transition Supports	4.4	3 to 5
Cluster 5: System-wide Collaboration	2.9	1 to 5
Cluster 6: System Components	2.3	1 to 5
Cluster 7: Research & Evaluation	2.4	1 to 5
Cluster 8: Culture	3.0	2 to 5

Agency: Office of Mental Health / Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene		
Clusters	Average	Range
Cluster 1: Work Experience Support	4.1	3 to 5
Cluster 2: Learning-to-Work	3.9	2 to 5
Cluster 3: Self Advocacy & Independence Development	3.7	3 to 5
Cluster 4: Transition Supports	3.7	3 to 5
Cluster 5: System-wide Collaboration	3.75	1 to 5
Cluster 6: System Components	4.3	3 to 5
Cluster 7: Research & Evaluation	3.9	3 to 5
Cluster 8: Culture	3.85	3 to 5

Agency: Office of Mental Health – Home and Community-Based Services		
Clusters	Average	Range
Cluster 1: Work Experience Support	4.75	3 to 5
Cluster 2: Learning-to-Work	4.7	3 to 5
Cluster 3: Self Advocacy & Independence Development	4.3	2 to 5
Cluster 4: Transition Supports	4.4	3 to 5
Cluster 5: System-wide Collaboration	4	3 to 5
Cluster 6: System Components	4.1	2 to 5
Cluster 7: Research & Evaluation	4.25	3 to 5
Cluster 8: Culture	4.4	3 to 5

Agency: Office of Temporary Disability Assistance		
Clusters	Average	Range
Cluster 1: Work Experience Support	3	2 to 5
Cluster 2: Learning-to-Work	3.14	2 to 5
Cluster 3: Self Advocacy & Independence Development	2.7	2 to 5
Cluster 4: Transition Supports	2.7	2 to 5
Cluster 5: System-wide Collaboration	2.3	1 to 3
Cluster 6: System Components	2.3	2 to 3
Cluster 7: Research & Evaluation	2.2	2 to 3
Cluster 8: Culture	3.1	2 to 5

Appendix V - Initial PROMISE Collaboration Readiness Assessment

	CATEGORY	Agency	CORNELL	CORNELL	DOH	DOL	DDPC	NYSE-AVR	NYSE-OSE	OCFS-NYSCB	OMH-HCBS	OMH-RMFH	OMH-RMFH	OMH-RMFH	OMH-RMFH	OTDA	AV	RANK
#	Item																	
	ADOPT A RESPONSIVE STRUCTURE		3.50	3.00	3.00	2.00	3.25	3.00	3.00	3.50	3.75	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.25	3.75	3.14	1
10	The partnership demonstrates respect for member commitment by working efficiently.		4	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	3.14	
11	A flexible structure allows for appropriate change and responsive action.		3	3	3	2	3	3	3	4	4	2	3	2	3	4	3.00	
12	The partnership sets goals, expectations, and reasonable time frames for achieving them.		3	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	4	3		3	3	3	2.92	
13	The group recognizes and values the "core" group of partners, while supporting their added commitment.		4	4	3	2	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	3.50	
	ENGAGE DIVERSE PARTNERS		3.33	3.00	3.67	2.67	3.00	2.67	2.67	3.67	2.33	3.33	3.00	2.67	3.00	2.67	2.98	2
21	Members present innovations and problem-solving approaches that add value to the partnership.		3	3	3	2	3	3	2	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	2.86	
22	Partners can act as advocates for the program.		3	4	4	2	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	3.00	
23	The partnership has an updated profile of partner organizations and others representatives to ensure engagement.		4	2	4	4	3	3	3	3	2	4	3	2	3	3	3.07	
	ACTIVATE PARTNER RESOURCES		2.67	3.33	3.00	2.33	3.00	3.33	2.67	3.67	3.00	2.67	2.67	3.50	2.33	3.00	2.94	3
24	Strategies to involve partners who have participation constraints (limited funding, staff) are in place.		2	3	3	2	2	3	3	4	3	2	2	N/A	2	2	2.54	
25	Members demonstrate effective leadership skills in meeting facilitation, negotiation and networking.		4	4	3	2	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3.29	
26	Knowledge and capabilities of specific members are regularly used for action that benefits the partnership.		2	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	4	2	4	2.93	
	IDENTIFY PARTNER RISKS AND REWARDS		3.00	3.25	2.75	2.50	2.75	3.25	2.25	3.25	1.75	2.75	2.75	3.00	2.50	3.00	2.77	4
14	The partnership acknowledges and openly addresses competing demands of the partner institutions.		3	3	3	2	3	4	2	4	2	4	2	3	2	4	2.93	
15	Focus of the partnership is kept on the larger issue; each partnership activity is designed to serve that focus.		3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	2.71	
16	Each partners' stake and interest in the project or problem is clearly identified and considered.		2	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	1	2	3	2	2	2	2.14	
17	The partnership demonstrates respect for each partner's unique contribution.		4	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	2	3	3	4	3	3	3.29	
	AGREE ON PRINCIPLES		2.67	3.33	2.67	1.67	2.00	3.00	2.67	2.67	2.33	3.00	3.33	3.67	2.67	3.00	2.76	5
4	Members actively work on earning and maintaining a high level of trust among the partners.		3	4	3	2	3	4	3	3	2	3	4	3	3	3	3.07	
5	Members know the issues and have a common vocabulary to support effective communication within and outside the partnership.		3	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	4	3	3	2.86	
6	The partnership seeks ways to broaden capacity and build sustainability for partners' organizations.		2	3	2	1	1	2	2	3	2	3	3	4	2	3	2.36	
	EMPLOY EFFECTIVE WORK STRATEGIES		2.33	2.67	3.00	1.67	2.67	3.00	2.67	2.67	2.00	2.67	3.00	3.33	3.33	2.00	2.64	6
18	An effective model for communicating among and through the partners is in use.		2	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	2.64	
19	Members take into account natural power differentials in the collaboration, and work to balance appropriately.		2	2	3	1	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	2.36	
20	Members understand the need for negotiating within the partnership, for planning and problem solving.		3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	2	4	3	4	4	2	2.93	
	ASSESS AND MONITOR		1.50	3.25	2.25	1.75	3.00	3.25	2.75	2.75	2.50	2.50	3.00	2.50	2.75	2.50	2.59	7
27	The partnership ensures accountability by ongoing assessment of its effectiveness.		1	3	0	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	2.14	
28	Activities and outcomes are documented to provide feedback to partners about what is working.		1	4	3	2	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3.00	
29	Members keep abreast of social and political changes that may affect the work of the partnership.		2	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	4	2	2.64	
30	The partnership measures, reports, and uses data to inform partnership progress and adjust actions as needed.		2	3	3	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	2.57	
	PLAN PURPOSEFULLY		1.33	2.00	1.33	1.00	2.33	2.33	2.33	2.67	3.33	2.67	2.67	2.33	2.67	2.00	2.21	8
7	The partnership demonstrates shared governance, responsibility and ownership of planning, implementation and outcomes.		1	2	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	1.93	
8	The partnership realizes the need for various types of resources while working to balance each member's contribution and risk as a partner.		1	2	1	1	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2.36	
9	The partnership has a clearly articulated agreement as to the vision and purposes of the partnership.		2	2	2	1	3	2	2	2	4	3	3	2	3	2	2.36	
	BUILD SUSTAINABLE POLITICAL SUPPORT		2.00	2.33	1.33	1.33	1.67	2.00	1.67	1.67	2.67	2.00	3.00	3.00	2.33	2.00	2.07	9
1	Funding for the partnership's work is in place to support partnership action.		3	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	3	2	3	3	2	2	2.00	
2	Funding and support agencies for each active partner are also supportive of the activities of the partnership.		2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	3	3	3	2	2.00	
3	The partnership is recognized as a respected entity that can speak to the issue at hand.		1	3	0	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	2.21	

Appendix VI - Steering Committee Reported Linkages

Steering Committee members identify the following agencies who are not involved in PROMISE but connected to Steering Committee Agencies via other programs and activities:

Other State Agency	PROMISE Steering Committee Agency	Committee or Program Connection
Employment First Commission	OMH/RMFH OCFS-NYSCB DOL	Steering Committee Director Involvement Implementation Committee
NSTTAC – National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center	ACCES-VR Cornell	Subscribe to information Web support and assistance
NYAPRS - NY Association of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services	OMH/RMFH	NYESS & Inclusive Workforce Alliance
NYS APSE - NYS Association of People Supporting Employment First	OMH/RMFH	NYESS & Inclusive Workforce Alliance
NYS Council on Children and Families	DDPC	Navigate multiple systems with NYSCCF
NYS Justice Center for the Protection of People with Special Needs	ACCES-VR OCFS-NYSCB DOL DDPC	Information sharing re: transition & youth services Occasional Interaction Assistive Technology Committee DDPC Council
NYS Office for the Aging	OCFS-NYSCB	Occasional Interaction
NYSRA - NYS Rehabilitation Association	OMH/RMFH	NYESS & Inclusive Workforce Alliance
NYS Vocational Rehabilitation Council	DDPC NYSED-OSE ACCES-VR	
OASAS –Off ice of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services	DOH	
Olmstead Plan	DOL	
PROJECT Search	OMH/RMFH OCFS-NYSCB DOL DDPC	Steering Committee Partnerships in Employment University of Rochester University of Rochester
Transition PDSC – Professional Development Support Center	ACCES-VR Cornell	Active in Quarterly Meetings Contract holder
WIOA Assessment - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act	ACCES-VR OCFS-NYSCB DOL	Central office planning Law and Proposed Regulations – Active Review Title I & III
Youth Power	OMH/RMFH	

The following activities, other than PROMISE, link Steering Committee agencies:

Activity/Program/Committee	# of Steering Committee Linkages
Partners in Employment	8
NYESS	8
Employment First	7
WIOA	4
RSE-TASC	4
Adult Issue Committee	2
Partners in Policy Making	2
State Vocational Rehabilitation Council	2
CES	1
Children with special healthcare needs	1
Customer Satisfaction MOU	1
DDPC Council	1
Developmental Disability Tax Credit Program	1
Disabilities Resource Council	1
HCBS Waiver	1
K-12 Transition PDSC	1
Medicare	1
MOU Training CES	1
NYS CASE	1
NYS Transition Partners	1
PROJECT Search	1
PROS	1
Rehab Programs	1
Ticket to Work	1
Transition PDSC	1

Appendix VII - Mission Statement

Mission Statement

Employment First Transition Sub-Committee

NYS PROMISE Steering Committee

Introduction

This Agreement describes the proposed Mission among all agencies who are partners in New York State's Promoting the Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income (NYS PROMISE). The partnership of New York State agencies involved in PROMISE includes: The Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, Department of Health, Department of Labor, State Education's Office of Adult Career & Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation, State Education's Office of Special Education, Office of Children and Family Services' Commission for the Blind, Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Office for People with Developmental Disabilities, and the Office of Mental Health, all supported by the Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene, Inc. and researchers from the Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations, K. Lisa Yang and Hock E. Tan Employment and Disability Institute.

The NYS PROMISE Steering Committee will operate as the Employment First Transition Sub-Committee, upon approval of this Mission Statement by the Employment First Commission, in order to bring the goals of the Steering Committee into alignment with the overall goals of New York State. The purposes of the Transition Sub-Committee are to construct and maintain a comprehensive, collaborative system to prepare youth with disabilities ages 10 through 24 in New York State to live, learn and earn as adults, to support the families of youth with disabilities in transition, and to increase integrated planning surrounding transition of youth from schools into the community as adults. To realize this vision, the Transition Sub-Committee seeks to have in place a system to assist all youth with disabilities and their families, at the local and state levels, through a cross-agency partnership that will support innovation and improved outcomes for students in the future.

The partner agencies recognize the untapped potential of these youth and their families, and can attest to the myriad of benefits that successful transitions can foster in communities throughout the state. Further, partner agencies concur that well-planned and well-managed systemic collaboration will lead to greater ability for New York State to identify and address gaps and to overcome systemic weaknesses.

The Transition Sub-Committee focuses on the following objectives:

- Bridging gaps in services
- Influencing transition policy statewide
- Improving service delivery and outcomes at the individual, family and community level
- Monitoring policy changes and their collective impact on practice and outcomes

- Ensuring on-going system assessment of the above.

Operating Principles

Building on existing multiple relationships among the member agencies, members agree that engagement in the Transition Sub-Committee represents a unique opportunity to enhance the outcomes of youth in transition through alignment with the Employment First Recommendations¹, and through supporting the implementation of related key action items. This endeavor is a commitment to a more effective use of State resources, and a responsibility to participate and contribute to the Transition Sub-Committee.

Membership Roles and Responsibilities

The Transition Sub-Committee member's responsibilities include:

1. Actively participating in Sub-Committee and work group meetings and activities
2. Supporting strategic planning and implementation
3. Helping to assess of the Sub-Committee progress
4. Representing each agency's interests on the Sub-Committee, and representing fully the work of the Sub-Committee to the agency
5. Contributing to integrated data development
6. Co-authoring a state agency level transition assets inventory, and updating regularly
7. Participating in status assessment and progress/outcomes evaluation, at the program level and the system level
8. Other roles as determined appropriate for the Sub-Committee.

Work groups may be formed to help efficiently complete the work associated with the Transition Sub-Committee's Strategic Plan and associated timeline. Groups may include: Program/Integration, Policy, Communication, Data and Evaluation, and/or Case Management. Work group members will be members of the Transition Sub-Committee and others as appropriate, either from member agencies or groups related to the issues that the specific work group is addressing.

Cross-System Assessment

The Transition Sub-Committee members understand the value of ongoing system assessment to

- Measure progress
- Identify milestones and achievements on service delivery and outcomes
- Evaluate system development progress statewide, to help with ongoing planning.

¹ New York State Employment First Commission Report and Recommendations, March 1, 2015
http://www.nyess.ny.gov/Employment_First_March2015_final.pdf.

Member agencies agree to participate in this assessment and evaluation. They will reference the following sources to conduct the assessment or evaluation, aligning with the above objectives:

1. The Employment First Recommendations and the PROMISE Strategic Plan, with action items, timeline and outcomes
2. NYS and Federal PROMISE Research Results
3. New York Employment Services System (NYESS) data
4. Baseline reassessment of progress and outcomes for NYS PROMISE and youth in transition and their families
5. New York State Education data on transition outcomes
6. Other resources as appropriate.