

What is Technical Assistance? | CPD

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Technical assistance doesn't get as much attention as some of the programs of Utah State University's Center for Persons with Disabilities, yet it is vital to the CPD's role to improve the lives of people with disabilities. Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) provides research and information on all areas of special education, assists with the development and formatting of technical assistance documents and create documents in a variety of formats from hard copy to electronic as needed. TAESE works directly with state education agencies, school districts and schools, said John Copenhaver, TAESE director. "We work with 22 states and every state is a little different. We try to find a niche that no one else is fulfilling. We're not trying to duplicate what other centers are doing." Staff members facilitate critical meetings between state agencies and stakeholders like special education advisory panels, Copenhaver said. TAESE staff recently facilitated a series of high-profile meetings in South Dakota between the state superintendent of education, parent groups and advocacy groups. In neighboring North Dakota, TAESE facilitated meetings to draft guidelines for students with intellectual disabilities. In Washington, D.C., the public school system has implemented a survey to rate the satisfaction of parents whose children have received special education services. TAESE staff has facilitated discussions of how the response rate of the survey can be increased by making it more parent-friendly.