Chapter Two

Administration of the TAGG

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The purpose of Chapter 2 of this technical manual is to provide test administrators with the information they need to correctly administer the three versions (i.e., Professional, Family, and Student) of the *Transition Assessment and Goal Generator* (TAGG) in a way that scores obtained can be interpreted and used correctly. In this chapter we will discuss the following things:

- the specific individuals for whom the TAGG is an appropriate assessment,
- the individuals who should complete the three versions of the TAGG,
- the online system used to administer the TAGG,
- the procedures education professionals need to follow in order to complete the TAGG-P,
- the procedures for distributing the TAGG-F and TAGG-S forms to family members and students,
- the directions for administering the TAGG for all three groups.

Although any person can purchase and complete the appropriate versions of the TAGG, it is generally expected that an education professional will be the primary person around whom the administration of the TAGG will occur. This chapter will make the assumption that the professional educator is the person who will coordinate the administration of the three versions of the TAGG assessment battery.

Individuals for Whom the TAGG is an Appropriate Assessment

Because three different versions of the TAGG exist, three different categories of individuals can respond to the appropriate versions of the TAGG to provide information about the skills and behaviors a student exhibits. Detailed administration procedures and directions regarding the types of information about which the responders will provide are given later in this chapter. At this point, it suffices to say that the three categories of individuals who can suitably respond to TAGG items on the appropriate versions will respond based upon their understanding and knowledge of the skills and behaviors of the student about which they are responding. It is imperative, then, to delineate the particular students for whom the TAGG is an appropriate transition assessment.

As stated in Chapter 1 of this technical manual, the TAGG is an appropriate assessment for many students who have disabilities. Students for whom this assessment is appropriate can have identified disabilities in any one of the 13

disability categories identified by IDEA (2004). It is, however, specifically recommended for students who may have disabilities but expect to be competitively employed in the future. This includes students whose disabilities may fall in the range of mild to moderate in severity. Some students who have significant disabilities can also appropriately complete the TAGG, provided that their disabilities are such that they would not be precluded from the ability to be competitively employed at some point upon exiting high school. In other words, students who have disabilities severe enough to preclude them from future competitive employment should not take the TAGG, because the results will not provide education professionals with reliable information about potential transition goals. The behaviors inherent in the TAGG items are not appropriate for those students who will not be competitively employed at a future point. The TAGG should only be completed about the skills and behaviors of those students who the educator deems have the opportunity to be competitively employed at a future point after exiting high school, because these are the only students for whom evidence has been collected of the appropriateness of TAGG scores.

Individuals Who Should Complete TAGG Assessments

The TAGG consists of a battery of assessment versions (i.e., Professional, Family, and Student). In order to gain full information about the student so that example transition goals can be generated for inclusion in the student's IEP, it is recommended that all three versions of the TAGG be completed by the appropriate individuals. However, this is not a requirement, and it is suggested that as many TAGG versions be completed as possible in order to gain the most information about the student's skills and behaviors.

After identifying whether or not the TAGG is an appropriate assessment for an individual student, education professionals must then identify the individuals from whom data should be collected regarding the student's non-academic skills and behaviors. Throughout the beginning of this chapter, the term "professional educator" has been used to identify the person who it is assumed will be coordinating the administration of the TAGG. This term will now be defined; definitions of other groups of respondents will also be given.

Professional educators. Professional educators who may appropriately respond to the items on the professional version of the TAGG (TAGG-P) regarding the skills and behaviors exhibited by an individual student are defined as those educators who are responsible for completing the transition plans for that student. This could be a special education teacher, secondary transition coordinator, special education director, school psychologist, rehabilitation counselor, job coach, or other individual. The education professional must have direct knowledge and insight into the student's behaviors over the past year in order to appropriately complete the TAGG-P items.

Family members. Family members should also respond to TAGG items on the Family version (TAGG-F). Family members who can appropriately respond are parents, stepparents, grandparents, legal guardians, or any other family member who may have guardianship or a vested interest as well as in-depth knowledge of the student's behaviors. It is not necessary that the student live with the family member answering the TAGG-F items, provided that the family member has knowledge of the

non-academic skills and behaviors exhibited by the student over the past year.

Students. Finally, the student being assessed should complete the Student version of the TAGG (TAGG-S). As stated before, students who can be appropriately assessed by the TAGG are those whom the educator determines have disabilities that do not preclude them from competitive employment at a future point. It is not necessary that a student know how to read to complete the TAGG. Suitable accommodations and variations in assessment procedures are discussed later in this chapter.

Description of the TAGG Assessment

The TAGG assesses the extent to which students have completed or participated in behaviors that have been shown by prior research (e.g., Aune, 1991; Fourqurean, Meisgeier, Swank, & Williams, 1991; Gerber, Ginsberg, & Reiff, 1992; Greenbaum, Graham, & Scales, 1995; Higgins, Raskind, Goldberg, & Herman, 2002; Lachapelle, Wehmeyer, Haelewyck, Courbois, Keith, & Schalock, 2005; Madaus, 2006; Skinner, 2004; Thoma & Getzel, 2005) to be associated with employment and educational outcomes upon exiting high school. The three versions of the TAGG assessment (i.e., Professional, Family, and Student) have parallel item structures. Specifically, the three versions of the TAGG assessment require respondents to answer items about the student under question, which are mapped to one of eight underlying constructs. The eight constructs (i.e., *Strengths and Limitations*, *Disability Awareness*, *Persistence*, *Interacting with Others*, *Goal Setting and Attainment*, *Employment*, *Student Involvement in the IEP*, and *Support Community*) have been previously described in Chapter 1 of this technical manual. A varying number of items have been shown to be necessary to appropriately assess each of the constructs (see Chapter 3 for additional information regarding the structure of the TAGG).

Procedures for Responding to the TAGG Assessment Materials

All TAGG assessment forms may be accessed online through the TAGG website at http://tagg.ou.edu/tagg, which is run through the *Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment*. More details about obtaining access to the three versions of the TAGG assessment are given in the User's Guide. This portion of the technical manual will be devoted to emphasizing the instructions and procedures for completing the three versions of the TAGG after access is obtained.

Assigning TAGG assessments to students. After obtaining access to the TAGG assessment, professional educators will be able to assign assessments to students and family members. Professional educators can determine which students and family members should respond to the appropriate versions of the TAGG assessment, but must use caution to ensure the student has the characteristics that make the TAGG an appropriate assessment to use to develop annual and postsecondary transition goals. Users are encouraged to reference Chapter 1 to determine if the purpose of the TAGG matches their purpose for its use and also the beginning of Chapter 2 to determine whether or not the student in question can appropriately respond to TAGG items. Following this determination, professional educators will then assign TAGG assessments to individual students. The full battery of TAGG assessments is assigned as a group to each individual student. The profiles and annual transition goals

generated will provide the most information when all three versions of the TAGG are completed by the appropriate individuals; however, this is not a requirement. It is strongly recommended that as many TAGG versions are completed as possible about students' behaviors to gain the most information about students. Professional educators can complete the TAGG-P version of the assessment for each student using the TAGG website. From this website, professional educators can email links for the TAGG-F and TAGG-S versions to the appropriate people or can print out paper versions of the assessment for their use. Please note that the data obtained on these paper versions must be input into the online TAGG website for profiles and annual transition goals to be generated.

Procedures for rating items. When professional educators, family members, and students respond to the three versions of the TAGG assessment about a student, they must think of the skills and behaviors the student currently exhibits and has exhibited in the past year. In order for scoring to be as precise as possible, the reporter or scorer must choose the highest quantifier that portrays an appropriate and accurate depiction of the student's typical behavior(s). Behaviors may be observed currently or within the past year. Please be advised that obtaining answers to all items is imperative to calculating the most complete and accurate scores. Please ensure the individuals responding to the three versions of the TAGG are the individuals for whom the version of the assessment is appropriate so they are able to best answer the questions given to them. Below, we will describe the rating system for each of the three versions of the assessment.

TAGG-P. There are a number of different options for administration of the TAGG;

however, in order for scores to be calculated, ratings for each of the TAGG items must be input into the online system at http://tagg.ou.edu/tagg. Scores for the TAGG-P cannot be calculated by hand, and example goals cannot be generated unless item responses are input online. Upon accessing the online TAGG-P, the professional will initially provide information to allow student files to be linked across administrations from year to year.

The professional will then complete the TAGG-P, focusing on behaviors demonstrated by the student within the last year. Professionals use a scale of 1 to 5 to rate how well each statement best describes the student's behavior. A score of "1" indicates the behavior has not been seen from the student at all within the last year, and "5" indicates the behavior has been seen from the student and the student performs it well or often. Some items require a "yes" or "no" response. Items are answered based on the professional's knowledge of the student. As stated previously, it is important that the professional educator have knowledge of the student's skills and behaviors. Please ensure the professional educator responding to the TAGG-P version has adequate opportunity to observe the student.

- A score of a 1 means the behavior has not been observed within the last year.
- A 2 rating is indicative of a developing skill or behavior not yet mastered.
- A number 3 rating is suggestive of a developed skill or behavior practiced inconsistently.
- A score of 4 infers a skill or behavior is demonstrated most of the time on a consistent basis.
- A rating of 5 implies the skill or behavior happens successfully on a consistent basis.

Although it is assumed the professional educator has extensive knowledge of the skills and behaviors of the student about whom they are responding, it is appropriate for the professional educator to consult other educators having knowledge of the skills and behaviors of the student to complete the TAGG-P.

TAGG-F. Family members can follow similar procedures to complete the TAGG-F; namely, family members can respond to the TAGG-F items in an online format using the TAGG website (http://tagg.ou.edu/tagg). If the family member does not have Internet access, the TAGG-F can be printed and family members can respond to the items in a paper format. As with the TAGG-P, TAGG-F answers must be entered into the online system; neither scores on this assessment nor example goals for IEPs can be obtained through hand scoring. If family members choose to respond using a paper format, either they or the professional educator must input the responses into the online system.

Upon accessing the online TAGG-F, family members will provide contact information to allow student files to be linked across administrations from year to year and will then complete the TAGG-F. The TAGG-F version allows family members or guardians to use a scale of 1 to 5 to rate how well they think each statement best describes the student's behavior currently or within the past year. A score of "1" means they have not seen this behavior from the student at all within the last year, and "5" means they have seen this behavior from the student and the student performs it well or often. Some items require a "yes" or "no" response.

- A score of a 1 means the behavior has not been observed within the last year.
- A 2 rating is indicative of a developing skill or behavior not yet mastered.

- A number 3 rating is suggestive of a developed skill or behavior practiced inconsistently.
- A score of 4 infers a skill or behavior is demonstrated most of the time on a consistent basis.
- A rating of 5 implies the skill or behavior happens successfully on a consistent basis.

Family members may seek assistance from others, such as other family members or professional educators, to complete the assessment as needed. Such assistance could include clarification of questions or oral administration of items as well as aid in responding to items using either the online system or a paper format. As the three versions of the TAGG are designed to assess student skills and behaviors from various viewpoints, it is not appropriate for professional educators or the student to answer questions for the family member.

TAGG-S. Similar to the procedures for distributing the TAGG-F, the TAGG-S can be given to students by the professional educator in either an online format or in a paper format. As with the other two versions of this assessment, responses must be input into the online system at http://tagg.ou.edu/tagg to obtain assessment scores and example goals by either students themselves or the professional educator. To reduce the cognitive load often associated with assessments, particularly for students with disabilities, students are asked to rate their own performance or behaviors on a 3-point scale for the TAGG-S version based on what they are doing currently or have done in the past year. The three scale points are written in words instead of numbers (i.e., Rarely, Sometimes, and Often) to reduce interpretation issues. As with the previously described versions, some items require a "yes" or "no" response.

- A score of "Rarely" may be given if the student perceives the behavior as never or slightly occurring.
- "Sometimes" reflects the behavior happening occasionally.
- The score of "Often" represents a behavior transpiring frequently based on student perspectives.

As with the TAGG-F, alternative administration procedures are acceptable for administering the TAGG-S. Specifically, the professional may provide students with the link for the TAGG-S to complete on their own or provide students with computer access to complete the TAGG-S at school. In the school setting, teachers can choose to administer the TAGG-S either individually or in a group setting. During administration, professional educators should urge students to ask questions concerning terminology and also to think for a moment about the question before responding. The TAGG-S may be read aloud to the students if needed, and assistance may be provided (e.g., clarification of words, items, and concepts; handwriting, assistive technology, and other adaptive equipment). However, answers should be self-reflective and represent students' thoughts and feelings at the time of the assessment. It is inappropriate for professional educators or family members to respond to questions for the students. Students should also be encouraged to rate themselves as honestly as possible to obtain accurate information about their skills and behaviors as there are no right or wrong answers.

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