State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Evaluation Planning: A Companion Resource to OSEP's SSIP Phase II Guidance Tool

Introduction

The National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) designed this document as a resource for states as they consider the requirements needed to develop the Phase II evaluation component of their Part B or Part C State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). The document is organized around the Part B and Part C SSIP Phase II OSEP Guidance and Review Tools. The OSEP guidance tool is based on the three components described in Phase II of the Measurement Table under Indicators B-17 and C-11: 1) Infrastructure Development; 2) Support for Local Educational Agency (LEA)/Local EIS Programs and Providers Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices; and 3) Evaluation. This document focuses on the third component, evaluation, to help states develop a comprehensive and in-depth evaluation plan.

Considering the evaluation component of the OSEP guidance tool as a template for the Phase II Evaluation Plan, the document suggests a series of questions for states to think through within each element of OSEP's proposed evaluation component. This document serves as a companion to the OSEP Guidance and Review Tool as it provides probing questions for states to consider when engaging in evaluation planning.

Directions for Use

It is recommended that this document be completed by the SSIP or evaluation team. It would be helpful for team members to review the document prior to meeting in order to become familiar with the questions. When completing the document, the group can be divided into smaller working teams, with each smaller team assigned a specific evaluation element. To build consensus and foster authentic stakeholder engagement, responses from each small group should be shared and reviewed by the full team. It may not be necessary to respond to each individual question in the *Additional Questions to Consider* section, but the team should respond to all *OSEP Questions to Consider* and use the *Additional Questions* as a supplemental tool, to ensure the OSEP questions have been comprehensively addressed.

Element 3(a)		
Specify how the evaluation is aligned to the theory of action and other components of the SSIP and the extent to which it includes short-term and long-term objectives to measure implementation of the SSIP and its impact on achieving measurable improvement in SIMR(s) for children with disabilities/infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.		
OSEP Questions to Consider	Additional Questions to Consider	Notes or Next Steps
Will the evaluation be handled internally or externally, and are sufficient resources identified to conduct it?	• Who are the team members responsible for the evaluation planning? • Does the team represent a diverse range of stakeholders and how will they be integrated into the team's work? • What expertise and skills do the selected SSIP team members possess? • Will the team need to include experts or other essential staff not on the SSIP team to assists in the evaluation process (e.g. individuals to collect data, run reports, communicate with stakeholder groups) • How much time will be dedicated to managing the evaluation and does the team have sufficient time to do so? • What resources are available to support evaluation planning and team members, e.g., budget for personnel, convening stakeholders, materials, etc.? If an **external evaluations** is conducted consider the following questions: • Why did you decide to conduct an external evaluation? • Who will be responsible for communicating with the evaluation team? • Who will be responsible for preparing and providing state information to the	

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	evaluation team? • How do you plan to finance the costs of the evaluation? • What is your planned budget for the evaluation? • What are the related costs of conducting the evaluation, (i.e., staff time, materials, travel)?	
What are the identified measurable inputs (resources), outputs (strategies and activities), and short-term and long-term outcomes?	• If you have developed or are considering to develop a logic model, how will you align it with your theory of action? • How have you aligned the theory of action or logic model to defined inputs, activities, short-, intermediate-, and long-term outcomes? • How will you track the availability and use of inputs (resources)? • What activities must be conducted to achieve your long-term SiMR outcomes? • Are all of outputs and outcomes measureable within the logic model? • What outcomes are expected at different stages and levels of implementation? • What changes do you expect to see, and when, in terms of state, district, school systems or local EIS programs; teacher/practitioner knowledge and behaviors; child learning and performance; parent/family knowledge and behaviors? How will you measure these outcomes?	
What are the links between the evaluation and the theory of action and other components of the SSIP? For example has the State formulated evaluation questions that test its theory of action (e.g., A question for each activity that asks, "To what extent did [an activity]	• How will you track progress in implementing your strategies? Consider how you will assess activities to be carried out by different agencies (e.g., the state, districts, schools, teachers, parent center and other partners). • How do your evaluation questions examine the relationships between the	

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produce a change in [an outcome]") as well as questions to gauge progress in implementation of coherent improvement strategies (e.g., To what extent were milestones in implementation [# of sites, # of implementers trained to criterion, proficiency on fidelity measures, # of coaches employed] reached on schedule)?	inputs, outputs, and outcomes laid out in your theory of action and logic model? • How do the evaluation questions address both measurement of implementation and outcomes? • How does your state plan measure implementation of coherent improvement strategies? What are the expected milestones for different agencies or levels of implementation at different points in time? • What is your plan to track progress in achieving your milestones? How do you plan to assess short-term results to inform mid-course corrections as needed? • Consider how you will disaggregate results of implementation activities to assess impact on targeted groups across sites.	

Element 3(b)

Specify how the evaluation includes stakeholder involvement and how information from the evaluation will be disseminated to stakeholders.

OSEP Questions to consider	Additional Questions to Consider	Notes or Next Steps
If different stakeholders were recruited for Phase II's evaluation, how were they recruited and what organizations or groups do they represent?	• Who are the key stakeholders participating in the phase II review of the evaluation plan? • If different stakeholders are involved in the Phase II evaluation, why were they selected? • What value or perspective was or will be gained with the addition of these stakeholders? • To what extent are stakeholders representing the primary beneficiaries of IDEA, i.e., children with disabilities/infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families?	

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OSEP Questions to consider	Additional Questions to Consider	Notes or Next Steps

How might the stakeholders participate in creating the evaluation questions to be asked and in judging the acceptability of the strategies used and outcomes achieved?	• How does your state plan to engage stakeholder authenticity throughout the process of :
	    o Creating evaluation questions?
	    o Designing implementation activities?
	    o Measuring impact and results?
	    o Analyzing data to inform mid-course corrections?
	 • What processes are in place to build the knowledge and capacity of stakeholder to participate in evaluation activities (i.e. creating questions, determining appropriate activities, and outcomes)?	

How will stakeholders continue to be informed and provided opportunities to provide input on the evaluation process and/or results?	• What processes are or will be place to solicit ongoing input from stakeholders in evaluation activities? • What processes are or will be place to inform stakeholders of the progress of the evaluation? • What processes are or will be place to disseminate information to the stakeholders? • How will stakeholders be informed of changes, completion of activities, or findings? • How often will the evaluation team communicate with the SSIP stakeholders?	

Element 3(c)

Specify the methods that the State will use to collect and analyze data to evaluate implementation and outcomes of the SSIP and the progress toward achieving intended improvements in the SIMR(s).

OSEP Questions to consider	Additional Questions to Consider	Notes or Next Steps
How does the evaluation measure State infrastructure changes needed to better align current initiatives identified in the infrastructure analysis conducted in Phase I?	• What are the expected infrastructure changes? To what extent have you considered non-lead agency state infrastructure, i.e., other state agencies, universities, parent centers, etc.? • How will the evaluation measure that the expected changes are occurring? • How will the intended changes improve alignment with the initiatives identified in the Phase I of	

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	the infrastructure analysis? • How will your state know what Phase I activities are achieving the desired changes as identified in Phase I? • How will you measure the impact of the identified Phase I activities? How much change is expected within a given timeframe?	
What are the criteria for successful implementation based on the measure(s) established (e.g., the level of proficiency on a fidelity measure)?	• How will implementation "success" be operationalized (at the state, local, and school level)? • How much progress constitutes success? What measures will be used to quantify implementation success? • How will you measure fidelity of local implementation of evidence-based practice activities?	
What is the State's system for collecting implementation data and data applicable to the SIMR that yields valid and reliable data collected at regular intervals?	• What data are you collecting to measure activities? • What are the timelines associated with data collection? • What are your data collection methods? • Does the data collection method capture student-level data? If so, are you concerned about measures being sensitive to student growth? • How will you ensure that the measure is reliable for the targeted population? • Are the measures appropriate for the desired outcomes? How does it align with short-, intermediate-, and long-term outcomes? • What will be the frequency of collecting and reviewing implementation data? (Also, addressed in Element 3d)	
If the State's evaluation process is based upon a sample of the target children with disabilities (target infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families), how does the State ensure that the sample is	• How is the sample representative of the population identified in the SiMR? • How will you validate that the targeted group in the SiMR was represented in the group that received the improvement strategies?	

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representative of all of the children and youth (infants and toddlers and their families) receiving the EBPs or coherent improvement strategies?		
What comparison(s) will be made to demonstrate the effectiveness of the coherent improvement strategies? For example, did student/infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families results change over time (e.g. pre-post) or did results change when compared to other groups of students/infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families?	• How will you measure intervention/ improvement strategy effectiveness? • How does your evaluation design assess growth, if examining student/infant and toddler or family outcomes results over time? • What children or families will comprise the comparison group, if applicable? How was the comparison group for the target group selected? • What will be the frequency of reviewing progress towards the desired changes?	

Element 3(d)		
Specify how the State will use the evaluation data to examine the effectiveness of the implementation, assess the progress toward achieving intended improvements, and to make modifications to the SSIP as necessary.		
OSEP Questions to consider	Additional Questions to Consider	Notes or Next Steps
How often is the data reviewed? Who is participating in the review? How are changes made to the implementation and improvement strategies as a result of the data reviews?	• What are the timeframes for collecting and analyzing these data? • What procedures are in place to address unexpected results in improvement data trends? • How frequently will the evaluation team and stakeholders review implementation data to assess progress towards meeting outcome goals? • How do you plan to address unexpected results that inform mid-course corrections? • What processes are put into place to ensure that stakeholders are engaging in continuous review of improvement data?	

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How does the State evaluate the effectiveness of the TA and/or PD? If the TA and/or PD are determined to be ineffective, what is the process for making adjustments?	• What are your short- term outcome measures for TA and/or PD? • How do you plan to analyze data related to short-term outcome data of PD/TA • Have you considered fidelity of implementation within PD/TA? • How will you know that your PD/TA impacted the implementation effectiveness?	
What is the process the State will use to make modifications to the SSIP as necessary?	• What are some considerations that could possibly lead to modifying your SSIP? (Did you have problems or issues with baseline data?) • Did you have target setting issues, data collection or quality issues including accessibility to data and timeliness that may impact your SiMR, activities, or outcomes?	

Resources

The following chart provides a list of resources that SSIP teams may find useful as they move through the evaluation tool.

Preparing for the Evaluation Plan
Part B State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Phase II OSEP Guidance and Review Tool & Part C State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) Phase II OSEP Guidance and Review Tool **The Part B and Part C SSIP Phase II OSEP Guidance and Review Tools are based on the three components described in Phase II of the Measurement Table under Indicator B-17 and C-11.Those components are 1) Infrastructure Development; 2) Support for LEA Implementation of EBPs; and 3) Evaluation.** **https://osep.grads360.org/#program/ssip** *Webinar: Getting Ready for Phase II of the SSIP* **Two-part DaSy, ECTA, RRCP, IDC Webinar series designed to assist states in understanding how Phase II requirements are linked with Phase I of the SSIP. This one covers general requirements of Phase II.** **(Part 1) http://ectacenter.org/~stream/calls/2014/ssip2-2014-12-01/** **(Part 2) http://ectacenter.org/~stream/calls/2014/ssip2-2014-12-09/** *The Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation, 2nd Edition* **The Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) explains what program evaluation is, why evaluation is important, how to conduct an evaluation and understand the results, how to report evaluation findings, and how to use evaluation results to improve programs that benefit children and families.** **http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/the-program-managers-guide-to-evaluation-second-edition**

Element 3(a) Resources
Building an Effective SSIP Evaluation Team *IDC Interactive Institutes on High-Quality Data & the SSIP - April-May 2015* **The resources provided by the IDEA Data Center (IDC) on assembling a team that is well equipped to complete the kind of evaluation states envision for their SSIP, including the types of skills and knowledge states will need represented on their evaluation teams.** **https://ideadata.org/resource-library/55a3bdcd140ba0e92d8b45c8/** *SSIP Phase II: The Planning Phase* *IDC Interactive Institutes on High-Quality Data & the SSIP - April-May 2015* **NCSI and IDC Presentation on phase II components and provides tools for infrastructure, implementing EBP's, and evaluation.** **http://nsttac.org/sites/default/files/assets/CBI%20Presentations/Thursday%2C%209%20AM%20Sessions/SSIP%20Phase%20II.pdf**

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Logic Model Workbook
The Innovation Network provides a review of the logic model's role in evaluation and showcases tools for short and long term outcome alignment.
http://www.innonet.org/resources/files/logic_model_workbook_0.pdf

Action Planning for Implementation
IDC Interactive Institutes on High-Quality Data & the SSIP - April-May 2015
The presentation presents several action plan formats that can help states identify the key criteria that should be included in a high-quality action plan.
https://ideadata.org/resource-library/55bbb7a0140ba099768b4576/

Building an SSIP Evaluation Plan, IDC Interactive Institutes on High-Quality Data & the SSIP - April-May 2015
This information is presented by IDC and provides guidance on developing an evaluation plan by differentiating implementation and impact. Several topics are addressed such as translating theory of action into specific evaluation questions and possible formative and summative measures for evaluation. All worksheets and handouts can be found on the IDC evaluation resource page.
https://ideadata.org/resource-library/55c247b5140ba0ac3b8b4576/
The worksheets include:
    SSIP Worksheet 1: Evaluation Summary Chart and Logic Model
    SSIP Worksheet 2: Logic Model Shell without Arrows
    SSIP Worksheet 3: Outcomes in Relation to Evaluation Questions
    SSIP Worksheet 4: Evaluation Questions in Relation to Outcomes, Data Collection Activities, and Instruments
    SSIP Worksheet 5: Evaluation Data Collection Schedule
    SSIP Worksheet 6: Evaluation Analysis Plans by Evaluation Questions, Data Elements, and Instruments

Element 3(b) Resources

Quick Reference Guide: Working with Stakeholders to Identify Potential Improvement Strategies for Program Improvement (Including the SSIP)
ECTA, DaSy, and RRCP quick reference guide to assist states in identifying what information needs to be available to stakeholders to build their capacity to identify steps to implement improvement strategies.
http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/topics/ssip/ssip_strategies_for_improvement.pdf

Community Toolbox: Evaluating the Initiative
Designed by the Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas, this Community Tool Box provides instructions for how to perform evaluations of a general initiative, including working with stakeholders and designing communications.
http://ctb.dept.ku.edu/en/evaluating-initiative

Building an Effective SSIP Evaluation Team
IDC Interactive Institutes on High-Quality Data & the SSIP - April-May 2015
The resources provided by the IDEA Data Center (IDC) on assembling a team that is well equipped to complete the kind of evaluation states envision for

their SSIP, including the types of skills and knowledge states will need represented on their evaluation teams.
https://ideadata.org/resource-library/55a3bdcd140ba0e92d8b45c8/

A Practical Guide for Engaging Stakeholders in Developing Evaluation Questions
This Robert Wood Johnson Foundation resource provides advice on how to connect evaluators and stakeholders, and ultimately "increase the value and usefulness of evaluation."
http://www.innonet.org/resources/files/rwj.stakeholders.final.1.pdf

Leading By Convening: A Blueprint for Authentic Engagement
NASDSE presents information about bringing together stakeholders to address a common interest by coalescing around issues, ensuring relevant participation, and doing the work together.
http://www.ideapartnership.org/documents/NovUploads/Blueprint%20USB/NASDSE%20Leading%20by%20Convening%20Book.pdf

Element 3(c) Resources

Planning Guide to Statewide Implementation, Scale-up, and Sustainability of Recommended Practices: Reaching Potentials through Recommended Practices
ECTA provides a guide for implementing evidence based practices on a wide scale. Discussion of leadership teams, TA, demonstration sites and decision making using relevant data.
http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/implement_ebp/ECTA_RP_StateGuide_2-2015.pdf

The Active Implementation Hub: Fidelity Assessment
Provides an initial approach for identifying, categorizing, and discussing challenges related to assessment of fidelity. Includes two activities, which cover initial approaches and tools for plan development.
http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/category/tags/fidelity-assessment?_sm_au_=iVVWD3SbQT6nt6tM

The Active Implementation Hub: **Strategic Analysis of Implementation Drives Worksheet**
A planning tool that can utilized by state, district, or school level teams to explore the three Active Implementation Drivers: *competency*, *organizational* **and** *leadership*. **The tool assists teams in determining the function of each Driver as well as identifying who is accountable for each and how each can be improved to better support implementation. (Also, found on GRADS360 -** https://osep.grads360.org/#program/evaluation**)**
http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/NIRN-Education-StrategicAnalysisImplementationDriversWorksheet.pdf.

> **Additional resources pertaining to assessment tools for implementation drivers that teams may use during the implementation stage can be on** *The Active Implementation Hub* **sponsored by** State Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices Center (SISEP) **and the** National Implementation Research Network (NIRN). **(Also, found on GRADS360 -** https://osep.grads360.org/#program/evaluation**)**
> http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/resources/results/taxonomy%3A23%2C40)

Final Part B SPP/APR Measurement Table (OMB Approved)
This measurement table is an official source for information on Part B indicator measurements, including instructions for implementation. Includes general guidance on Indicator 17, the SSIP.
https://osep.grads360.org/services/PDCService.svc/GetPDCDocumentFile?fileId=4606

Evaluation Plan Workbook
Resource from the Innovation Network that introduces the evaluation planning process and allows the user to use the logic model framework for evaluation. Evaluation of both implementation and outcomes is discussed.
http://www.innonet.org/resources/eval-plan-workbook

A Practical Guide to Evaluating Systems Change in a Human Services System Context Pp. 79 -82 (steps 6-8)
Tool provided by the Center for Evaluation Innovation that discusses the basics of Systems Change. Part 1 introduces the concept of system and system change and part 2 provides tools to design and carry out an evaluation of systems change initiatives.
http://www.innonet.org/resources/files/Latham_Human_Services_Systems.pdf

Element 3(d) Resources

Strategic Analysis of Implementation Drivers Worksheet
This tool, designed by the Active Implementation Hub, is meant to be used by implementation teams to begin understanding the "three Active Implementations Drivers: competency, organizational and leadership." Guidance is provided for establishing team roles and the basics of implementation drivers.
http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/NIRN-Education-StrategicAnalysisImplementationDriversWorksheet.pdf

Considerations for Making Changes to SIMR Baselines and Targets
IDC Interactive Institutes on High-Quality Data & the SSIP - April-May 2015
This presentation examines reasons why states would change baseline or targets for their SSIP. Issues pertaining to changes in assessments, data collection methods, and data quality are explored.
https://ideadata.org/resource-library/55ba8570140ba0541a8b4585/