



# Transforming State Systems to Improve Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

The National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) provides strategic technical assistance (TA) to help State Education Agencies (SEAs) refine infrastructures and engage stakeholders to transform systems in order to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) NCSI provides

differentiated support through Universal, Targeted, and Intensive technical assistance to states to help them best use their general supervision and professional development (PD) systems to establish and meet high expectations for all students with a disability.

NCSI provides TA that builds capacity for lasting impact through a focus on four high-impact transformation priorities and the complementary knowledge and skills needed to achieve them.

## HIGH-IMPACT TRANSFORMATION PRIORITIES

**1 Maximize leadership** to align general and special education systems to close equity gaps

**2 Optimize general supervision, accountability and support systems** to improve results

**3 Operationalize evidence-based practices** for teaching and learning

**4 Actualize improvement** for students with disabilities in low-performing schools

## FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO ACHIEVE TRANSFORMATION PRIORITIES

NCSI helps states to develop and deepen the foundational knowledge and skills required for sustaining impact in each priority:

**a. Data Literacy:** Collecting necessary data and determining quality, understanding what the data mean, and deriving sensible data-based conclusions to guide decision-making.

**b. Research-Informed Practice:** Providing effective TA&PD on using high-leverage evidence-based practices (EBPs) for students with disabilities and supporting implementation of EBP frameworks.

**c. Stakeholder & Family Engagement:** Meaningfully engaging diverse stakeholders and strengthening the role of family members in shaping educational systems and decisions.

**d. Systems Coherence:** Designing interconnected policies and allocating resources to enable efficiency and effectiveness in developing and implementing strategic improvement plans.



## INTENDED OUTCOMES

1. Align ESSA and IDEA improvement methods
2. Improve general supervision systems
3. Achieve success with State Systemic Improvement Plans (SSIPs)
4. Fully engage stakeholders in ESSA and IDEA implementation
5. Implement Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs) within functional EBP frameworks
6. Meaningfully partner with families
7. Increase effectiveness of TA&PD systems
8. Improve stakeholder access to information about quality educational options and supports

## TA PRINCIPLES UNDERGIRDING NCSI'S APPROACH

NCSI's work is built on trusting relationships and is consistently driven by data; is customized to meet individual state contexts; leverages resources to maximize efficiency and effectiveness; and is provided by staff with credible expertise. NCSI also provides horizon leadership for our clients, helping them to anticipate future implications and bring ideas for advance consideration. Finally, much of NCSI's approach is to embrace collective engagement as a centrally important strategy for understanding and solving systemic problems.

## RESEARCH FOUNDATIONS

NCSI's work is grounded in five complementary bodies of research: improvement science, implementation science, evidence-based instruction for students with disabilities, adult learning principles, and adaptive leadership.

## NCSI LEADERSHIP

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NCSI staff are always my first call/ email when I have a question or when I have an idea for which I'd like to get some critical feedback. Our work would not have progressed as quickly or as far as it has without their support. NCSI is our most valued partner outside of (state) in our effort to improve outcomes for students with disabilities."

— State Special Education Director

## PROJECT PARTNERS

WestEd

American Institutes for Research (AIR)

The National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE)

Regional Parent TA and Family Engagement Centers, and

The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk (MCPER) at the University of Texas at Austin



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