



The National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) aims to help states transform their systems and support their districts and local early intervention service programs in improving educational results and functional outcomes for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. Keep up to date with recent products, webinars, resources, and announcements at www.ncsi.wested.org or by following NCSI on Twitter at [@TheNCSI](https://twitter.com/TheNCSI).

TA in Action

Cross State Learning Collaboratives!

NCSI has kicked off the first in a series of face-to-face Cross

State Learning Collaboratives (CSLC). More than 90 participants representing 13 states gathered in Chicago September 29–30, 2015, as NCSI, in collaboration with the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA), hosted the first CSLC on Social and Emotional Outcomes. The energy was palpable as state teams used the discussions regarding these topics to continue to build Phase II of their State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). The room only got louder as participants engaged in cross-state cafés where they gathered to discuss current issues in topical areas they had designated as important during calls leading up to the face-to-face meeting, along with potential strategies to address these issues in their states. A state representative said, “Overall this was one of the best working conferences I have attended. It was evident that the planning committee

developed the agenda based on the States' needs that were expressed on calls. The pace was good and facilitators were diligent about keeping things on time. I also appreciated that the planning team was willing to adjust the agenda and allow more state time so we could really work on our plans and ask for help as we were going through the process. Despite the jet lag, I was engaged the entire time.”

The high energy and active participation continued as six states and representatives from the Pacific entities met in Los

QUICK LINKS

- [TA in Action](#)
- [Service Area Highlights](#)
- [Partner Resources](#)
- [State Spotlight](#)
- [Mark Your Calendars](#)
- [Updates from ED](#)
- [Meet the NCSI Team](#)
- [Ask the NCSI](#)

Mark Your Calendars

Webinars

Missed the Transition webinar that was held September 29 in partnership with NTACTION? [View the recording and NCSI's other archived webinars on the NCSI website and stay tuned for upcoming webinars.](#)

On October 19, 2015 the IDEA State Advisory Panel and Interagency Coordinating Councils hosted a webinar on engaging stakeholders in data analysis. [Learn more about the webinar and the State Advisory Panel.](#)

Angeles on October 14–15 at the first of three language and literacy meetings. Over the two days, state teams worked on developing or refining their logic models and next steps for the SSIP Phase II plans. Dr. Sharon Vaughn walked states through research related to language and literacy, and representatives from Colorado, Idaho, and Washington shared some of their work concerning commented “We got a significant benefit out of spending time with the experts. You had exactly the right people there, and having them available for conversation is just with our state was super meaningful.”

NCSI to Host a Thought Leader Forum on Building and Measuring State Capacity

NCSI is working with states to build state capacity to develop, implement, and evaluate their SSIP. To inform this work, the NCSI is convening a Thought Leader Forum on November 12–13, 2015 in San Francisco. Thought Leader Forums brings together a group of experts, policy makers, and state and local stakeholders to explore a problem in-depth, share lessons learned from practice and research, and develop a set of recommendations for the field to consider. For the upcoming forum, participants will include U.S. Department of Education (ED) and Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) leadership and staff from several OSEP and ED-funded centers, as well as state and local staff with expertise in building state capacity and experience working with children with disabilities. The meeting will address the following objectives:

- Provide background and an update on OSEP’s Result Driven Accountability initiative and Phases I and II of the SSIP.
- Share lessons learned about building state capacity to support local education agencies and lead agencies to implement their State-identified Measurable Result (SIMR) at the local level.
- Define state capacity in relation to the SSIP
- Refine key criteria to measure capacity building success

The next NCSI Thought Leader Forum will be held February 17–18, 2016, with a focus on levels of evidence for evidence-based practices.

Conferences

See NCSI staff present and facilitate sessions at these upcoming conferences.

[National Title I Conference, January 28–31, 2016, Houston](#)

Upcoming Learning Collaboratives

Language & Literacy, November 3–4, 2015, Washington, DC

Family Outcomes, November 16–17, 2015, Houston

Results-Based Accountability, November 18–19, 2015, Houston

Mathematics, December 1–2, 2015, Phoenix

Language and Literacy, December 9–10, 2015, Guam

School Turnaround, January 2016, Phoenix

Updates from ED

OSEP Announcements

[ED & HHS Release Policy Statement on Inclusion in Early Childhood Programs](#)

[Part B State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report 2015 Indicator Analyses](#) and [Part C State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report 2015 Indicator Analyses](#)

NCSI Leadership Present Keynote at NASDSE Annual Meeting



NCSI's co-directors, Rorie Fitzpatrick and Kristin Reedy, were joined by team members Johnny Collett and Anne Louise Thompson in a presentation at the annual meeting of the

National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) October 3–6 in Baltimore. NCSI described a framework for continuous improvement to be used as a structure for review of state system capacity across four foundational areas and seven key systems attributes. The presentation also featured a report on the recent analysis of Phase I SSIPs, conducted by NCSI in collaboration with the IDEA Data Center and the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT). Preliminary data and findings from the analysis provided a national snapshot of the “state of the states” with regard to Phase I SSIP improvement planning. View the [Part B](#) and [Part C](#) reports.

Service Area Highlights

How do you improve stakeholder engagement and collaboration?

Stakeholder engagement is a critical component of each state's SSIP. The Communication and Collaboration (C&C) team has been working with a number of states—including Alabama, Arkansas, Kansas, Maine, North Dakota, New Hampshire, South Dakota, Utah and Vermont—as they work to communicate effectively with various stakeholder groups, including teachers, administrators, practitioners, and families. C&C has assisted states in creating agendas for stakeholder meetings, developing stakeholder engagement surveys, and providing resources to promote the authentic engagement of families in the SSIP process. The C&C team also has supported state-level trainings and hosted webinars and presentations related to *Leading by Convening*, a framework for authentic stakeholder engagement developed through the work of the IDEA Partnership.

Interested in co-creating tools with us or finding out more about *Leading by Convening*? Contact us and stay tuned for resources and events from the C&C team!

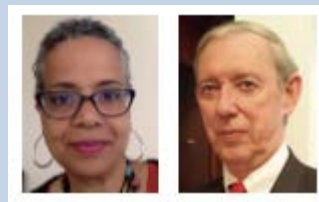
Celebrating 40 Years of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). How has IDEA affected you?

[Share your recollections.](#)

Stories, art, photographs, and other submissions may be used during the upcoming 40th anniversary events. [Submit by November 8, 2015.](#)

OSEP recently released [guidance](#) to state and local educational agencies around specific learning disabilities including the use of terms such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia. View the [guidance](#) and related [blog post](#) focused on raising awareness.

Meet the NCSI Team



Collaboration is key! Meet two center leaders who embody the principles of authentic engagement and infuse it into their own work and the work of NCSI.

Debra Jennings is executive co-director of the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network, a

Partner Resources to Support SSIP Implementation

DEC Recommended Practices

The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) promotes policies and advances evidence-based practices that support families and enhance the optimal development of young children (0–8) who have or are at risk for developmental delays and disabilities. DEC recommended practices bridge the gap between research and practice, offering guidance to parents and professionals who work with young children. [View the recommended practices.](#) [ECTA](#) provides resources for recognizing and performing the practices. View the resources that currently are in development, including the following:

- [Checklist](#)
- [Practice Guides for Practitioners](#)
- [Practice Guides for Families](#)

CEEDAR Course Enhancement Modules

The Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR) center has developed a series of Course Enhancement Modules (CEMs) that include usable resources for faculty and professional development providers to include in effective opportunities for teachers and leaders to learn about and use evidence-based practices. Current CEMs available cover areas that include [disciplinary literacy](#) and [classroom and behavior management](#). Additional CEMs on reading and mathematics are coming soon. Learn more about [how to use the CEMs](#), [view the available CEMs](#), and learn more about what the [CEEDAR center](#) has to offer.

REL West: Infographic and Report

Understanding the rates of students with disabilities who change schools, dropout, or graduate is important to allow officials to further investigate and design programs to support the most vulnerable groups. To address this, the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) West, recently released a [report](#) and [infographic](#) that examined the rates at which Utah students classified with different disabilities changed schools, dropped out, or graduated. [Learn more about the Dropout Prevention Alliance for Utah Students With Disabilities, a partnership involving REL West, and the work it has done.](#)

nonprofit organization that provides support for families, parent organizations, and professionals in negotiating the complexities of child- and family-serving systems.

Theron (Bill) East has been executive director of the NASDSE since 1989; he has acted as the organization's principal investigator for centers and projects such as the IDEA Partnership.

[Learn more about Debra and Bill and the rest of the NCSI leadership team](#)

Have a Question? Submit it to *Ask the NCSI*

The NCSI service area teams have been busy addressing a range of requests that have been submitted through *Ask the NCSI*. Do you have a question about “what works” to improve results for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities? Are you looking for information related to developing, implementing or evaluating your SSIP? Do you want to learn from other states? *Ask the NCSI* is intended to help states tackle these questions. [Click here to submit a request](#) or contact NCSI at NCSI@wested.org or 866-664-8471.

State Spotlight

Rhode Island Aligning Supports to Build Capacity Toward Meeting Its SIMR Goal

Since 2012, the Rhode Island Department of Education has worked with the National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII) to implement data-based individualization in reading, mathematics, and behavior for students with severe and persistent learning and behavioral needs. Rhode Island plans to leverage its ongoing work with NCII along with other efforts to tackle its SIMR that are focused on improving mathematics outcomes for students with disabilities. [Learn more about the state's efforts.](#)



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