WestEd NCSI NETWORKER
Connecting you with updates and resources to help drive results for students with disabilities.

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 and toddlers with disabilities and their families and children and youth with disabilities. Keep up to date with recent products, webinars, resources, and announcements at www.ncsi.wested.org and @TheNCSI.

TA in Action
Save the Date! NCSI CSLCs Host Fall Part B and C Meetings

In November NCSI will host two face-to-face meetings for collaborative participants. The Part C meeting will occur November 15–16, 2016, and the Part B meeting will occur November 30–December 1, 2016. The meetings will provide opportunities for states to continue to share and collaboratively problem-solve as they address the next steps of their work supporting State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) implementation and evaluation. Your feedback will be instrumental in shaping the agenda and focus of these meetings, so keep an eye out for information from your Cross State learning Collaborative (CSLC) leads regarding logistics and planning!

NCSI Hosts Two Thought Leader Forums

On July 21–22, 2016, NCSI hosted a Thought Leader Forum, "Assessment for Programs Serving Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers With Disabilities," that brought together a team of researchers, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) staff, technical assistance (TA) facilitators, and parent center staff with expertise in assessment for children birth to 5. The forum:

- Discussed how formative assessment is defined and distinguished from other types of assessment.

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Mark Your Calendars

Webinars

NCSI will host a discussion-based webinar, *Instructing and Assessing English Learners With Disabilities in Part B*, focused on reviewing the required methods for instruction, curriculum, and assessment for English learners, followed by methods for determining special education eligibility and the coordination of services for an English learner if a disability exists.

Presenters include Jill Pentimonti and Lauren Artzi (NCSI), Jayne Sowers (Great Lakes

- Identified what formative assessment tools currently exist and how these have been used with young children.
- Discussed what tools states are currently using to monitor progress with young children based on their SSIP plans.
- Identified common challenges on the use of formative assessment in Part C.
- Planned next steps to develop guidance and other resources for Part C and 619 state teams on implementation measures and child-level assessment for evaluating program improvement.

To explore how the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) can be leveraged to improve outcomes for students with disabilities and align with the work states are undertaking through their SSIPs, NCSI and the Council for Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) hosted a Thought Leader Forum, "Leveraging the Every Student Succeeds Act to Achieve Results-Driven Accountability," focused on ESSA on August 4, 2016 at the CCSSO offices in Washington, D.C. This forum brought together 40 participants representing 10 different states and a range of roles, including state chief school officers, state directors of special education, state accountability directors, state Title I directors, OSEP, the U.S. Office of State Support, and several general education and special education national organizations. Participants discussed the identification of issues and recommendations concerning how states might leverage ESSA to improve achievement and outcomes for students with disabilities.

Stay tuned for additional information from and resources developed as a result of the forums.

NCSI Staff Presented 14 Sessions at the 2016 Improving Data, Improving Outcomes Conference

NCSI was excited to participate in the Improving Data, Improving Outcomes Conference August 15-17, 2016 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Across the three day conference NCSI staff presented 14 sessions, many in collaboration with other TA Centers including DaSy, ECTA, and IDC. One of the highlights of the conference was NCSI's pre-conference workshop, *Integrating the SSIP into Early Childhood Improvement Initiatives in Your State*.

Comprehensive Center), Shereen Tabrizi (Michigan Department of Education), and Diane August and Rachel Slama (American Institutes for Research).

Stay tuned! The webinar will be conducted in fall and additional information will be provided soon.

Conferences

Save the date to see NCSI staff present and facilitate sessions at these upcoming conferences.

CASE and NASDSE Annual Conference 2016, September 25–27, 2016, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

- Data-Driven Collaboration for Sustaining Change to Improve Student Outcomes
- Supporting and Reporting CEIS
- ESSA: Equity in Developing and Implementing Coherent State and Local Systems
- Improving Results: What Does It Require of States, Districts, and Schools?

Division of Early Childhood Annual Conference, October 18–19, 2016, Louisville, Kentucky

- State of the States Related to Systemic Improvement
- Improving Language and Literacy

Federal panel representatives from left to right: Ruth Ryder (US DOE, Office of Special Education Programs), Libby Doggett (USDOE, Office of Early Learning), Richard Gonzales (US DHHS, Administration for Children and Families)

In this session, a federal panel shared cross-department and cross-agency collaborative activities and provided advice to state Part C and preschool special education (619) programs on how to leverage the momentum created by the SSIP in support of other state early childhood program improvement efforts. In addition, a state panel featuring New Mexico, Michigan, and Pennsylvania spoke about their states' improvement initiatives.

Interested in exploring materials from the different presentations? View the presentations and handouts on the conference website.

Continuous Improvement in Action

Improvement begins with understanding your current system and work processes, and thinking deeply about how you are organized to do the work to identify strengths and areas for improvement planning and implementation.

NCSI describes four interconnected areas—data use, knowledge utilization, systems change and, communication and collaboration—that help teams reflect on their current systems and drive improvement

NCSI has developed a tool that includes guiding questions for each of these areas. For example, with regard to data use, you may consider:

- How your organization selects, gathers, analyzes, manages, and improves data information and knowledge assessments
- How you manage information technology
- How you review and use the data and information to improve results performance
- How your organization examines performance and improvement results in all key areas

Outcomes for Infants and Toddlers Using Activity-Based Intervention

Save the date for the Center for IDEA Fiscal Reporting National Conference, November 2–4, Denver, Colorado.

Updates from ED

The U.S. Department of Education has recently issued guidance on a number of topics, including:

- A Dear Colleague Letter from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) that emphasized positive behavioral support to students with disabilities as required by the IDEA
- A Dear Colleague Letter from OSERS regarding requirements in IDEA, which apply to public virtual schools.
- Guidance from the Office of Civil Rights clarifying the obligation of schools to provide students with attention-

View the document to see questions about each of the areas. For more information about continuous improvement through a systems lens, watch Johnny Collett, NCSI at CCSSO, discuss this topic.

Service Area Highlights

NCSI's service area teams have continued to develop resources and supports to assist states as they move into Phase III.

The Data Use Team Releases Data Visualization Toolkit: Tools & Tips for Presenting Data Effectively

NCSI in collaboration with DaSy recently released the Data Visualization Toolkit to help Part B and C staff develop the skills to effectively present data that are engaging, comprehensible, relevant, and meaningful to stakeholders. The toolkit includes resources that provides explain how to create and use engaging data displays. For each data visualization topic, a comprehensive set of resources and information is provided, including design principles, data considerations, accessibility tips, general how-to's, examples, and sample tools. View the toolkit to learn more about data visualization.

The Systems Change Team Explores Implications for Students with Disabilities in ESSA

The CCSSO and NCSI have released a new document, *ESSA: Key Provisions and Implications for Students With Disabilities*, that aims to assist states in thinking about, and making connections between, improvement efforts for students with disabilities and the state's overall vision and goals; identify opportunities; and provide planning questions to consider during ESSA planning. Additional ESSA resources from CCSSO are available.

deficit/hyperactivity disorder with equal educational opportunity under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. View the letter and a brief for parents and families.

- Guidance to states and schools to better understand and implement the provisions in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) that support homeless youth.
- OSERS releases 2016 IDEA determinations. View the Part B and Part C determinations by click on the sate in the state maps and learn more about state determinations by reading the State Determination Fact Sheet.

OSEP will issue FFY 2016 DMS notices for all Part B and Part C programs in September 2016, with FFY 2016 DMS activities taking place between October 2016 and September 2017.

Stay up to date by visiting the OSEP website, OSEP GRADS360°, reading special education related ED blogs, and connecting with @ED_Sped_Rehab.

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The Communication & Collaboration Team Establishes a Community of Partners

Learning from the years of experience and a deeply established and robust network of stakeholders developed through the IDEA Partnership, NCSI has established a Community of Partners to continue the work of the Partnership and embed it in the ongoing work of tackling Results-Driven Accountability. Do you have questions about how to connect with your state associations, parent centers, and other stakeholders or deepen the levels of engagement for stakeholders that you are connected to? To connect with our Community of Partners, contact Communication and Collaboration Lead Joanne Cashman at joanne.cashman@nasdse.org.

Partner Resources to Support SSIP Implementation

DaSy: Framework Self-Assessment Comparison Tool

DaSY has developed the Self-Assessment Comparison Tool for state Part C and Section 619/Preschool programs to use to assess changes in the implementation of one or more components of the ECTA System Framework or subcomponents of the DaSy Data System Framework. The Self-Assessment Comparison Tool shows changes in the Quality Indicator and the Elements of Quality ratings between two points in time. It enables states to track the results of efforts to improve various aspects of system or data system infrastructure and can be used as part of an SSIP evaluation. The Self-Assessment Comparison Tool is accompanied by written guidance. View the guidance and Excel tool.

SISEP's Hexagon Tool Helps Sites Evaluate Context

Are you familiar with the Hexagon Tool developed by SISEP? The Hexagon Tool can help states, districts, and schools appropriately select evidence-based instructional, behavioral, and social-emotional interventions and prevention approaches by reviewing six broad factors in relation to the program or practice under consideration. A more generalized version of the tool also is available for use in other domains and contexts (see the download links below). The tool assesses needs, fit, resource availability, evidence, readiness for replication, and the capacity to implement and sustain over time. View the Hexagon Tool, Hexagon Discussion and Analysis Tool, and view a short presentation discussing its use.

State Spotlight

Maine Uses a Risk Assessment to Monitor Federal Grant Programs

Did you know the NCSI has a team designated to support states with fiscal issues? The Fiscal Support Team (FST) objectives include (1) providing state educational agencies (SEAs) with technical assistance regarding fiscal issues to support local educational agencies (LEAs) to improve outcomes for children with disabilities and (2) collaboration across national technical assistance centers to ensure state access to a continuum of support in unpacking fiscal questions. States are using risk assessments to monitor LEAs that are considered subrecipients of subawards under this federal provision. Maine is one state that has developed a risk assessment to assess all of its federal grant programs, including IDEA. Its tool measures fiscal risk by assigning weighted numeric values to multiple measures impacting federal grant management, resulting in a total risk value. Learn more about the FST and Maine's risk assessment work. Do you have fiscal questions? Talk to your NCSI TA Facilitator or reach out to the FST member assigned to your state or territory.

- Anne Louise Thompson at althomp@wested.org: ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT, NY, PA, NJ, DE, MD, DC, WV, VA, SC, NC, TN, KY
- Jana Rosborough at jrosbor@wested.org: AL, HI, WA, OR, CA, ID, NV, AZ, BIE, CO, KS, MN, NE, NM, ND, SD, UT, WY, AS, FM, GU, MH, MP, PW
- Katherine Bradley-Black at kbradle@wested.org: AL, GA, FL, TX, LS, MS, OK, AK, PR, VI, IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, MO, OH, WI

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.

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