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NETWORKER

Connecting you with updates and resources to help drive results for children 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 or by following NCSI on Twitter at [@TheNCSI](https://twitter.com/TheNCSI).

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TA in Action

NCSI Welcomes New Associate Director

NCSI is excited to announce that Michele Rovins has joined the NCSI team as the Associate Director for the Center. Michele has 25 years of experience in the field of education, working primarily in special education. She specializes in the areas of capacity building, provision of technical assistance, dissemination, technology systems development, implementation and evaluation. Join us in welcoming Michele to the NCSI team!

SSIP Pre-submission Review Opportunity

Would you like NCSI staff to provide feedback on your Phase III State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) prior to submission? NCSI in collaboration with other Technical Assistance (TA) Centers will review and provide feedback on your SSIP draft or portions of your SSIP draft prior to submission. If you are interested, contact your state TA Facilitator or submit a request through [Ask the NCSI](#).

NCSI Hosted Facilitated Conversations Focused on Measuring Progress for Children Birth to 5

As a follow-up to the NCSI Thought Leader Forum on child assessment for programs serving infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with disabilities, NCSI staff hosted a series of facilitated group discussions with states and TA providers around states' needs and challenges related to measuring developmental progress for children ages birth to 5. These discussions are informing current and future technical assistance and product development. For additional information, please contact your NCSI TA facilitator or Kristin Ruedel, NCSI Data Use Lead, at kruedel@air.org

Do you have a TA question? Don't forget that you can submit a question to [Ask the NCSI](#) or your TA Facilitator, or contact NCSI at NCSI@wested.org or 866-664-8471.

NCSI Products and Tools

NCSI continues to develop resources and supports to assist states during Phase III.

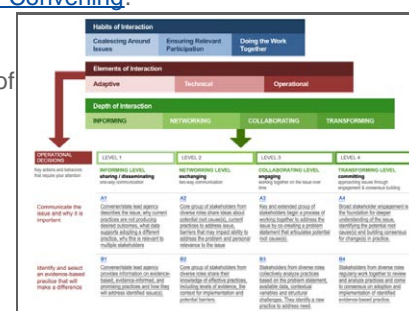
Developing Coherent State Systems to Achieve Educational Equity: Checking for Alignment in the State's ESSA Plan and SSIP

NCSI and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) recently released a [tool](#) intended to support State Education Agencies (SEAs) and their stakeholders, as they work to develop state plans pursuant to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The questions provided in the tool can serve to prompt or deepen thinking about the ways in which the ESSA Plan is, or can be, configured to improve achievement and outcomes for students with disabilities by leveraging the work that has been accomplished through the SSIP. [Click here to view the tool](#). Would you like additional help with aligning your state's ESSA Plan and SSIP? Contact [NCSI](#) or [CCSSO](#).

Are You Actively Engaging Your Stakeholders? How Do You Know?

What does it mean to actively engage your stakeholders and how do you know whether you are providing opportunities for your stakeholders to deeply engage with the work? NCSI's Communication and Collaboration Team in partnership with a range of stakeholders have developed four interactive rubrics focused on [Coalescing Around Evidence-based Practices](#), [Building Support Through Data](#), [Creating Active Engagement](#), and [Stakeholder Engagement in Evaluation](#) that can be used to understand the growth of critical relationships, engage in reflection, and generate a group data source and plan for future engagement. The rubrics are based on the format of habits of interaction rubrics provided in the IDEA Partnership publication, [Leading by Convening](#).

- Across the top of the rubric, you will see the depths of interaction: informing, networking, collaborating, and transforming. Down the side are a series of themes related to the topic of the rubric.
- Descriptors in each cell refer to relationship building and interactions among the people coming together around an issue—the stakeholders.
- Deeper levels of interaction are described in a progression from left to right.
- Each of the cells are interactive. Click on the cell and learn about resources to help move to deeper levels of engagement.



View the [rubrics](#) and learn more about how they can help you measure stakeholder engagement.

What Does Research Say About Identification and Assessment of English Learners with Disabilities?

Did you miss NCSI's webinar that addressed this topic? View the [recorded webinar](#) to learn more. In the webinar, Jill Pentimonti and Lauren Artzi from NCSI, Jayne Sowers from Great Lakes Comprehensive Center, Shereen Tabrizi from the Michigan Department of Education, and Rachel Slama and Diane August from American Institutes for Research discussed:

- Evidence-based curriculum, instruction, and interventions for struggling English learners and English learners with disabilities
- Fostering valid and reliable assessments for English learners
- Considerations for determining English learner eligibility for special education services and providing support services
- State examples of development and implementation of processes and supports for English learners with suspected disabilities

[View the recording](#) and download the [slide presentation](#).

Mark Your Calendars

- [March 2017 Office of Special Education Programs \(OSEP\) TA Call](#), March 9, 2017, 4:00–5:00 p.m. EDT
- OSEP's [Creating Positive Environments for Children with Disabilities](#), March 22, 2017, 1:30–3:30 p.m. EDT
- SSIP Phase III submission is due April 3, 2017
- [Council for Exceptional Children Special Education Convention and Expo](#), April 19–22, 2017
- OSEP's [Displaying Our Data—Conveying Our Stories](#), May 17, 2017, 1:30–3:30 p.m. EDT



State Spotlights

Many states have questions about data use and measuring progress. This series of spotlights highlights challenges that states are facing and provides examples of how different states are addressing them.

How Do We Effectively Support Schools' Use of a Statewide System for Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring?

The Iowa Department of Education allows schools and districts to select their own screening and progress monitoring measure, but also provides a statewide assessment that approximately 10 percent of the state uses for universal screening and progress monitoring. [Learn more](#) about the strategies that the state has undertaken to encourage the use of accurate and reliable information to monitor student progress and considerations for other states facing similar challenges.

Partner Resources to Support SSIP Implementation

CCSSO and CEEDAR Center Release PSEL 2015 and Promoting Principal Leadership for the Success of Students with Disabilities

A supplement to the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders 2015 (PSEL 2015), this document provides state education agencies (SEAs) with actionable steps to promote practices and cultivate competencies for effective principal leadership where all children, including those with disabilities, have an equal opportunity to succeed. The document can serve as a tool to assist SEAs to work with stakeholders in setting policies or launching programs to cultivate and promote these core practices and competencies to maximize success for struggling learners. It includes a broad range of actions states can take to strengthen leadership preparation that align with state actions from previous CCSSO reports. Download the [report](#) or read the [user guide](#) for this document.

NCII Opens Call for Intensive TA Partners

Does your SSIP or other state initiatives focus on improving outcomes for students with severe and persistent learning and behavioral needs? Are you struggling to implement effective Tier 3 or intensive intervention support within your multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), response to intervention (RTI), or positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) framework? NCII has released a national call to identify partner sites. View the [call materials](#), register to learn more at one of two upcoming webinars on [March 17, 2017](#) or [April 3, 2017](#), or contact ncii@air.org with questions.

CIPR Releases New Resources to Support ESSA

The Center for Parent Information and Resources (CIPR) has released a Stakeholder Guide and series of companion resources related to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) including:

- An interactive [Stakeholder Guide](#) that provides Parent Center staff and their advocacy partners with an understanding of key provisions in ESSA and opportunities for meaningful involvement.
- A [webinar](#) introducing the stakeholder guide and providing a history of the inclusion of students with disabilities in state assessments.
- Fact sheets focused on [academic assessment requirements for students with disabilities](#) and [assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities](#).

IDC Releases Operationalizing Your SSIP Evaluation: A Self-Assessment Tool

The IDEA Data Center's (IDC's) interactive self-assessment checklist provides a process for operationalizing their SSIP evaluation plan in tandem with implementation efforts. State staff can use the tool to gauge their team's progress on key components necessary for fully executing their SSIP evaluation plan and to identify action steps needed to realize the greatest benefit from their evaluation efforts. [View the tool](#).

Updates from ED

SSIP Phase III FAQ Released

In early January 2017, OSEP released an SSIP Phase III frequently asked questions (FAQ) document for Indicators B-17 and C-11. This document is an updated version of the “Phase III Q & A” released in September 2016 based on feedback from states and various stakeholders. View the [FAQ document](#) and additional tools to support the SSIP submission process on [GRADS 360](#).

Joint Statement on Collaboration and Coordination of the MIECHV and IDEA Part C Programs

The Department of Education and Health and Human Services released a joint statement that set a vision for stronger partnerships, collaboration, and coordination between awardees of the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part C Program (IDEA Part C Program). [View the statement](#).

Transition Guide to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students and Youth with Disabilities

The recently released *Transition Guide to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students and Youth with Disabilities* from the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services aims to advance efforts in ensuring that all students and youth with disabilities are equipped with the skills and knowledge to be engaged in the 21st century workforce. [View the guide](#).

Do you have suggestions for resources or topics that we can cover in the newsletter? Send them to us at NCSI@wested.org.

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