

National SEA Convening

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Let's Stay Connected!



@TheNCSI
#NCSIConvening

WiFi: Renaissance Conference

Password: NCSI19



Convening Objectives

- Deepen productive relationships to foster support and communication that increases success in leading systemic improvement
- Increase capacity related to state responsibilities for improving student outcomes
- Share lessons learned from experiences to date and discuss solutions to existing and anticipated issues
- Gain a better understanding of the technical assistance and supports available to SEAs to lead continuous improvement efforts





Foundation for State Support Systems Transformation Priorities Capacity Building Focus Areas

Utilizing:NCSI's TA Principles & Research Foundations

We Build Capacity in Four Focus Areas

To Impact:
Systems Transformation
Priorities

To Improve Outcomes

NCSI Conceptual Framework



Data Literacy



Research-Informed Practice



Stakeholder & Family Engagement



Systems Coherence

Maximize leadership

to close equity gaps by aligning general and special education systems

Optimize general supervision,

accountability, and support systems to improve outcomes for students with disabilities

Operationalize evidence-based practices for teaching and learning

Prioritize improvement in low-performing systems

Aligned systems to support high expectations



Improved outcomes for students with disabilities and their families

NCSI's TA Principles

- » Needs-Driven
- » Credible Expertise
- » Horizon Leadership
- » Customized TA
- » Leverage Resources
- » Collective Engagement
- » Trusting Relationships

Research Foundations

- » Improvement Science
- » Implementation Science
- » Evidence-Based Practices
- » Adaptive Leadership
- » Adult Learning Principles

Quick Chat

- Turn to a colleague next to you
- Share your immediate reactions to the concepts presented
 - Do the transformation priorities seem intuitively right to you, based on what you know about your state?
 - Can you see how the capacity building areas are designed to support the systems change work?
- Note any questions or unclarity you have





Why did these priorities rise to the top?

A look at the related variables and respective data

NCSI Systems Transformation Priorities

- Maximize leadership to align general and special education systems to close equity gaps
- Optimize general supervision, accountability and support systems to improve results
- Operationalize evidence-based practices for teaching and learning
- Actualize improvement in low-performing systems

At-a-glance list of what's driving selection of NCSI's four Transformation Priorities

- (Backdrop) Performance gaps for students with disabilities remain pervasive
- Lack of coordination across federal programs hinders progress in closing equity gaps, especially for low-performing schools and districts
- General supervision systems still largely focus more on compliance and not enough on results
- SEAs are struggling to achieve SIMRs and to reach widespread impact with their SSIPs
- More and better implementation of evidence-based practices is needed in instruction for students with disabilities
- High SEA staff turnover hampers leadership for systemic reform
- Authentic and meaningful engagement with diverse stakeholders is inconsistent across states



Backdrop:

Performance gaps for students with disabilities remain pervasive

- National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 2015 to 2017 students with disabilities compared to general education peers
 - Reading: An achievement gap of over 40 percentage points at each tested grade, compared to general education peers
 - Math: An achievement gap ranging from 29 percentage points in 4th grade to 44 percentage points in 8th grade, compared to general education peers

Graduation rates

- Percentage of SWD graduating with a regular high school diploma has increased in the last decade — from 56% in 2007 to 70% in 2016
- Still lags far behind general education population, with 85% achieving a regular diploma



Lack of coordination across federal programs hinders progress in closing equity gaps, especially for low-performing schools/LEAs

- The number of schools identified under ESSA as needing improvement because they
 are specifically failing to meet the needs of SWD is startling
- IDEA and ESSA emphasize importance of aligned systemic approaches for LEA/school support, yet differential appreciation and attention exists on how these two programs can be implemented in concert
- In many states, IDEA and ESSA operate as separate mandates, with unrelated accountability approaches, performance goals, improvement strategies, and resource decisions, which creates inefficiencies and surmised ineffectiveness
- Effective alignment between ESSA and IDEA improvement strategies can lead to:
 - a collective vision of high expectations and accountability for all students
 - shared understanding of student performance and systemic improvement needs
 - intentional decision-making about resource allocation and policy design across all levels of the system
 - the accompanying implementation of sound EBPs in instruction and leadership that closes equity gaps



General supervision systems still largely focus more on compliance and not enough on results

- Accountability systems:
 - provide the core structure for school and district support and improvement by codifying specific expectations for student outcomes; holding systems accountable for helping students reach goals; and activating a variety of supports
 - have the potential to "raise the bar of expectations for learning for children, adults, and the system as a whole — and trigger the intelligent investments and change strategies that make it possible to achieve these expectations")
- Some states operate a compliance-dominated approach, treating each LEA in the state the same, regardless of variables such as student demographics, financial solvency, and student and systemic performance results
- A sub-set of states have begun to substantively reform their general supervision systems to pivot towards result-based, differentiated support



SEAs are working hard but need support to achieve SIMRs and to reach widespread impact with their SSIPs

- States have made progress in developing, implementing, and evaluating SSIPs, but the number of students targeted in these efforts is limited
- SEAs have strengthened SIMR targets, but scaling EBPs in LEAs poses substantial challenges
- SSIP implementation remains a focus area for improvement
 - 41 states and territories identified for assistance at the Universal level, 12 at the Targeted level, and 7 at the Intensive level
- Furthermore, fewer states are meeting their SIMR targets in 2019 than in previous years
 - In some cases declines in achieving SIMR targets are the result of better measurement choices and a more accurate reflection of true student outcomes
 - In other cases, these results are related to scaling (i.e., as states increase the number of districts/schools participating in the SSIP, implementation dips occur)



More and better implementation of evidence-based practices is needed in instruction for students with disabilities

- At its core, improving outcomes for SWD is dependent upon successful implementation of EBPs for teaching and learning at the local level
- Multi-Tier Systems of Support (MTSS) is the most commonly cited EBP framework, with more states mentioning it in their SSIP each year (from 31% in 2017 to 40% in 2019)
- SEAs and LEAs need support to ensure quality use of such frameworks to support evidence-based instruction
- States need support for:
 - understanding and applying the construct of MTSS
 - creating PD and coaching supports to guide EBP and MTSS implementation
 - refining infrastructures for tracking and evaluating EBP use. SEAs also need assistance in helping LEAs to develop deep content knowledge and pedagogical capacity to implement EBPs in reading, writing, and math



High SEA staff turnover hampers leadership for systemic reform

- The top two barriers SEAs reported as impacting their 2019 SSIP success were turnover/personnel shortages and lack of resources
- 60 new state special education directors and 43 changes in state chief school officers since 2015
- Only seven states have not had a leadership change in either role in the past five years
- The average tenure for current SEA special education directors is three years, with 77% having fewer than five years of experience
- Turnover can have a negative effect on building momentum and sustaining a commitment to continue implementation of strategic improvement strategies, including stalling team cohesion and stakeholder engagement while new people come up to speed to learn the state's climate, culture, and strategic partnerships



Authentic and meaningful engagement with diverse stakeholders is inconsistent across states

- Nearly all states report involving stakeholders in ongoing implementation of SSIPs (n=57); most report their participation in evaluation decisions (n=50)
- Among states revising their SSIPs in 2019, the majority reported including stakeholders in their revision decisions (79%)
- There is a difference between involvement which can look more like simple input, and meaningful engagement — which enables shared decision-making
- More states than before are reaching the Transforming level (21%) when involving stakeholders in SSIP implementation, yet twice as many are still at the Informing or Networking levels
- Capacity building necessitates strengthening relationships within and among organizations that have influence with the practitioners that are being asked to change instructional and leadership practices
- States request help to increase capacity for adaptive leadership, deepen levels of interaction, and promote EBPs for engaging families as real partners in systems improvement

Conceptualizing the Concepts

Use the *Dialogue & State Team Planning Guide* (Section One) to consider the variables and data we've just reviewed

- How do these variables and priorities relate to your state context?
 - Are some variables more, or less, reflective of dynamics in your state?
 - Which of the variables have the greatest impact on your state's capacity to improve outcomes for students with disabilities?
 - Which priority/priorities most resonate with your state needs?
 Why?





Foundational Knowledge and Skills

Capacity Building Focus Areas

How would you rate your state's capacity in each of these four areas?

Text:

NCSIWESTED458 to 22333

Underlying Capacity Needed for Systemic Improvement

Achieving success with systemic change focused on any transformation priority requires a set of complementary, foundational knowledge and skills



Capacity is needed for:

 exploring which data are necessary to deeply understand the problems that are driving poor systemic results



- enabling nimble access to necessary data
- analyzing, interpreting, using, and reporting data to promote goal attainment
- reflecting on data access and analysis to improve infrastructure to enable better use



High

Medium

Low

Capacity is needed for:

 using high-leverage instruction within EBP frameworks (e.g., MTSS) to ensure high expectations are set and met for SWD



- designing and using TA&PD systems
 (including coaching) that are built on adult learning principles
- improving general supervision systems based on emerging best practices to yield actionable data & differentiated support
- using implementation and improvement science to guide planning, execution, and continuous improvement for systemic change

For Research-Informed Practice, the capacity of my state team is:

High A

Medium **B**

Low C

Capacity is needed for:

 ensuring adaptive leadership to develop and sustain trusting relationships that support shared problem solving



- purposeful networking to gather and disseminate information about pressing issues and educational options
- communication approaches to generate, scale, and sustain a shared commitment to improvement pursuits
- navigating and planning for leadership turnover

For Stakeholder and Family Engagement, the capacity of my state team is:

High

Medium

Low

Capacity is needed for:





- creating complementary policies and procedures to leverage funding streams and support unified approaches to implementing educational mandates (e.g., IDEA, ESSA, State Performance Plans, state legislation)
- refining infrastructures to reliably operate in ways that are both effective and efficient

For Systems Coherence, the capacity of my state team is:

High

Medium

Low

Start the presentation to see live content. Still no live content? Install the app or get help at PollEv.com/app

Resource to Deepen Understanding





NCSI provides differentiated support through Universal, Targeted, and Intensive TA to help states best use their general supervision and TA&PD systems to establish and meet high expectations for all students with disabilities.

To do so, NCSI builds SEA capacity in four Systems Transformation Priorities:

Operationalize evidence-based practices (EBPs) for teaching and learning. States have expressed a need for help in supporting the implementation, tracking, and improved use of EBPs, and in evaluating the resulting impact. SEAs are weining to increase capacity to determine if EBPs are being implemented with fidelity and are also concerned about scaling the use of EBPs to more schools than are currently engaged in their State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) work. Many SEAs have established MTSs as a key approach for supporting EBP implementation, and neet help to increase capacity for developing and implementing strong MTSS frameworks. NCSI's work is to help SEAs grow and improve infrastructure for state TA&PD systems to support schools and districts to implement effective EBPs as described in states' ESSA plans and SSIPs.

Optimize general supervision, accountability, and support systems to improve outcomes for SWD. Significant resources have been invested in traditional IDEA megilarity systems for SWD. Dispinion on IDEA compilarities, and the same for all LEAs in the state, without regard for student permitted the same for all LEAs in the state, without regard for student systems are existed to guide the ways the SEA engages with metric results to guide the ways the SEA engages with metric results to guide the ways the SEA engages to help SEAs rethink the ways they are approaching general supervisional control or order to rethink special education, and to operationalize timely and useful TA based on data. NCSI helps SEAs to work to ensure that all aspects of the state's general supervision system — including monitoring and accountability of LEAs; TAAPD system supports; fiscal integration; and dispute resolution — are focused on the goal of improving student outcomes while maintaining compliance with IDEA.

Actualize improvement in low-performing school systems. The schools identified under states' ESSA plans as needing Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) have performance problems for SWD, since that status is denoted when the whole school is not succeeding. For schools identified for Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) because of failing specific subgroups of students, it is also almost universally true that they are persistently failing SWD. This subgroup, more than any other, represents a class of students whose needs are systemically not being met. If states are only as strong as their lowest performing schools, then attention must be brought to bear to align systems and nest supports to improve conditions of teaching and learning for SWD in the nation's lowest performing schools, with paround support from districts and SEAs. NCSI supports SEAs and their partners to examine and improve systemic alignment and resource allocation models to support educators and families in achieving both quick wins and long-term change for pervasively under-performing schools and districts in order to improve outcomes for SWD.

Maximize leadership to close equity gaps by aligning general and special education systems. Leadership turnower hampies SEA systemic reform efforts, often side-tracking them from a necessary big-picture focus on equity, and affecting agency capacity to build intentional partnerships among general and special education systems at the state and local level. SEAs can face problematic stops and starts in alignment efforts both within the SEA as well as with districts. NCSI supports state special education leaders to build momentum and sustain a commitment to continue implementation of priority improvement strategies, including helping to focus on team cohesion and stakeholder engagement while they come up to speed to learn the state's climate, culture, and strategic partnerships. MCSI helps state special education leaders by bridging knowledge gaps, helping new leaders understand the requirements and context of the work, and supporting them to successfully manage up, down, and laterally.

For more information, contact us or or ask your state's assigned TA Facilitator

Evidence-Based Practices: Lauren Artzi (lartzi@air.org) and Kat Pfannenstiel (kpfannenstiel@air.org)

Low-Performing School Systems: Jana Rosborough (jrosboro@wested.org) and Matt Navo (mnavo@wested.org) Results-Based Accountability and Support: Susan Hayes (shayes/dwested.org) and Sara Doutre (sdoutre/dwested.org) SEA Leadership: Rorie Fitzpatrick (fftzpa@wested.org). John Eisenberg (john.eisenberg@nasdse.org) and Colleen Riley (colleenm.eil/gboutlook.com)

Conceptualizing the Concepts

- Refer to the *Dialogue & State Team Planning Guide* (Section Two) to engage:
 - Discussion Prompts
 - Action Planning



NCSI Support to States: Universal TA

NCSI Support to States: Universal TA

- Support state directors to understand the TA landscape and access TA in ways that make sense for them
- TA Facilitator for each state (<u>www.ncsi-resources.wested.org/</u>
- SSIP review/feedback upon state request
- Website (<u>www.ncsi.wested.org</u>)
- Creates new products as the field needs
- Webinars when perceived as useful
- National and state conference presentations
- Collaboration with other centers as relevant





NCSI Support to States: Targeted TA

Cross-State Learning Collaboratives
Thought Leader Forums





Learning Collaboratives

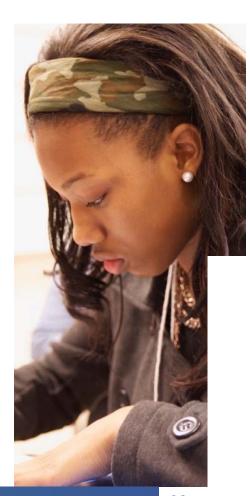
Learning Collaboratives

- There were five... now there are four
 - SEA Leadership (SEAL)
 - Designed for state special education directors only (at least initially)
 - Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs)
 - Graduation/Post-School Outcomes, Math, and Language & Literacy to be served within macro Collab.
 - Results-Based Accountability & Support (RBAS)
 - Continued focus on general supervision & monitoring, with increased attention on data-based support
 - Low-Performing School Systems (LPSS)
 - Gen & sp ed alignment to improve designated schools



NCSI Logistics

- Face-to-Face Meetings
 - Teams: once per year in fall
 - State Leads: once per year in spring
 - Some travel support available
- Virtual Engagement
 - Monthly or bi-monthly zoom meetings
 - Invision online platform



Learning Collaboratives: Layers of engagement and support

- Learning Collaborative (CSLC)
 - Whole group shared learning and support on widely shared needs (same as previous Collaboratives)
- Shared Interest Groups (SIGs)
 - Smaller sets of states within the CSLC who have a common affinity/topical interest
- Deep Dive Groups (Deep Dives)
 - Small groupings of states within the CSLC who want to concentrate on understanding and helping each other solve pressing problems of practice through Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles of rapid testing and improvement design

Shared

Interest

Groups

Learning Collaborative

Deep Dive

Groups





Thought Leader Forums

- A small group of experts representing researchers, SEAs, TA&PD, LEAs, and families — come together to unpack a pressing problem associated with the performance of SWD and make recommendations for improving impact in the field
- These recommendations then lead to resources and dynamic TA
- Forum content guided by Targeted and Intensive work with states, to ensure we maximize attention on thorny problems and questions facing the field, for which there are not already clear-cut solutions

Examples of past NCSI Thought Leader Forums: ESSA/SSIP Alignment; Measuring Growth in Performance of SWD



NCSI Support to States: Intensive TA

Leveraging General Supervision Systems and

Operationalizing Evidence-Based Practices through Networked Improvement Communities

Leveraging General Supervision Systems

- Support SEAs to:
 - set a vision for student achievement
 - look at the eight components of a state's general supervision system
 - consider ways to create a systemic balance in weighing results and requirements
 - shift away from an insular focus on compliance to a systemic approach that also incorporates differentiated monitoring and supports designed to impact student achievement



Create Networked Improvement Communities (NICs) within Individual States

- Support states to create and sustain teams to function as networked improvement communities in order to undertake improved use of EBPs in:
 - SSIP schools
 - Low-performing schools designated through state accountability systems

NICs bring together a deliberately crafted team to: (1) focus on a well-specified aim; (2) deeply understand the problem to be solved in the system that produces it, and a theory of improvement relative to it; (3) follow the rigor of improvement science; and (4) coordinate actions to accelerate the development, testing, and refinement of interventions and their effective integration into practice across varied educational contexts (LeMahuei, 2015).

Thank you! Feel free to connect with Rorie Fitzpatrick for any follow up ideas or questions – 415.205.3155 (cell) or rfitzpa@wested.org

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