



Connecting you with updates and resources
to help drive results for students with disabilities

Director's Welcome



Dear Readers,

We are in the midst of two pandemics: a health pandemic in the form of COVID-19, and a social justice pandemic in the form of deep-seated and pervasive systemic racism. NCSI has been working actively since early March to support educators, families, and policymakers to respond to the crisis that the coronavirus is wreaking on our educational systems, and we will continue to do so. Herein, we are now publicly committing to also taking action to support increased state capacity to deconstruct the systemic racism that pervades the education of children and youth of color with disabilities.

To [read the complete statement](#), please visit our website.

Warmly, Rorie Fitzpatrick
NCSI Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Rorie Fitzpatrick'.

Quicklinks:

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STP Spotlight



NCSI's Results-Based Accountability and Support (RBAS) Team works with states to design, implement, and evaluate general supervision systems that improve outcomes for students with disabilities while maintaining compliance with IDEA. NCSI's RBAS team generated two "Fast

Fives” resources, which are friendly, short overviews on key components of general supervision systems. [Five things to know about state and LEA determinations](#) provides an overview of data used, levels of determination, and enforcement of public reporting requirements. [Five questions answered about including results in LEA determinations](#) addresses the use of results data in LEA determinations, including why some states choose to include results, what types of data states are incorporating, how states score LEA determinations, how states use them as part of their overall accountability and support system, and what advice states that have incorporated results into their LEA determinations would offer to other interested states. Look for more “Fast Fives” in the future in the [RBAS Fast Fives Collection](#).

Featured Resources



Tools to Support Hosting and Participating in Virtual IEP Meetings

As a result of school closures and social distancing, holding in-person meetings has not been allowed in many states, schools, and districts. But that does not mean that important meetings, including special education meetings related to IEPs, mediation, resolution sessions, and due process hearings, cannot happen. In response to the need for strategies and recommendations for conducting virtual meetings, NCSI created a collection of resources in partnership with five centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs — the Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education (CADRE); the Center for Parent Information & Resources (CPIR); the Family Network on Disabilities (FND); the PROGRESS Center; and the Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS).

View the [full collection](#) of tools, including the following:

- [Virtual IEP Meeting Tip Sheets](#) (tips for before, during, and after meetings)
- [Infographic: Participating in Virtual Meetings \(in English\) | \(in Spanish\)](#)
- [Sample Virtual IEP Meeting Agenda \(in English\) | \(in Spanish\)](#)

NCSI *Strategic Resource Management in Response to COVID-19 Webinar Series* — Resources Now Available!

During May 2020, NCSI hosted a webinar series sharing best practices for state special education leaders to make the best use of available resources during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Maintaining the provision of a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) through the COVID-19 pandemic and related school closures has challenged many school systems. States are faced with balancing legal programmatic requirements and projected budget cuts. NCSI and invited experts shared information to help state leadership teams make informed decisions amid current circumstances, ensuring leaders are poised to continue high-quality educational programming for students with disabilities and their families.

Attendees received guidance on budget changes, how to direct the effective use of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) funding, strategies for comprehensive planning across programs, tips for leveraging education resources, and an overview of funding flexibilities. Presentation recordings, slides, and associated materials for this

webinar series can be accessed at our [NCSI Strategic Resource Management in Response to COVID-19 Webinar Series](#) page.



TA in Action

Working remotely is not slowing down the Vermont (VT) Agency of Education! In June, the State SSIP Coordinator and the NCSI TA facilitator convened a two-day SSIP retreat to complete a data dig, create root cause statements, and revise Vermont's current Theory of Action and Logic Model. Using virtual tools such as polling features, collaboration boards, and breakout rooms, stakeholders met to review state and national data in mathematics as well as completed a "5 Whys" activity to determine root cause statements for low math achievement for students in special education in grades 3–5. The stakeholders included representatives from the VT special education and MTSS divisions, mental health representatives, higher education representatives, special education advisory council members, systems coaches, an outside evaluator, parent representatives, a math instructional coach, and special education leaders. The following day, the VT SSIP core team utilized the root cause statements to revise and align its Theory of Action and Logic Model to the newly updated SiMR. While all participants would have loved to have completed the work in-person, the virtual retreat still allowed for all voices to be heard, the SSIP work to continue, and, regardless of how school might look in the fall, greater outcomes for students.

Updates from ED



OSEP posted three information briefs describing evidence-based and promising practices to support continuity of learning on the [IDEAs That Work website](#). Each brief provides an overview of the challenges faced by families, teachers, and service providers who were unexpectedly placed in the role of supporting children with disabilities in distance and virtual learning. In addition to providing specific practices, tools, and resources, each brief provides practical examples illustrating possible solutions to specific challenges or barriers. To read each brief, click on the links below.

- [Practices and Resources to Support Parents and Families](#)
- [Practices and Resources to Support Teachers](#)
- [Practices and Resources to Support Related Service Providers](#)



Mark Your Calendars

Virtual Convening

The NCSI Fall Cross-State Learning Collaborative (CSLC) Virtual Convening will take place on **October 20-22, 2020**. This event will be an engaging opportunity for topical learning, peer support, and networking for state teams. Look for more details in the coming months.

Considerations for the Fall: Applying the Essential Elements of Data Literacy to Respond to Student and System Needs Webinar

[Register Here!](#)

July 16th, 2pm ET / 11am PT

In order to support educators, as well as state and district leaders, in answering critical questions about how data can be used to help plan instruction that will meet student's needs and support decision-making for system-wide changes after preparing to re-open schools: the National Center on Systemic Improvement (NCSI), PROGRESS Center, and American Institutes for Research's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Center will share how the four essential elements of data literacy can guide teams in using data, both virtually and in-person, to make accurate and feasible decisions in times of unknown. Additionally, SEAs will be given tools to help support their LEAs to work together to meet student's diverse needs.



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