

**NETWORKER**

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

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Director's Welcome



Dear Readers,

I have heard from many of you that you are worn more than a little thin by the sustained pressure of so many things in our world right now. I get that. I really do. And when I have these moments, I try to remember sentiments like what is expressed in this quote from James Whitcomb Riley:

“The most essential factor is persistence — the determination never to allow your energy or enthusiasm to be dampened by the discouragement that must inevitably come.”

I encourage you to take a couple of deep breaths in the frustrating moments and reconnect with the reasons you engaged in this work. Picture a specific child or family who made you care more than you thought you would or could. For me it is almost always a sweet little 4-year-old guy with gold front teeth. Memories of his golden grin make me smile every time I think of him. And they help me find that extra gear to keep climbing the big hills too.

Toward that end, this issue of the Networker has lots of resources to help you manage the hills in front of you. Keep shifting and climbing. You got this. And we're here to road crew for you.



Warmly,

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

Rorie Fitzpatrick
NCSI Director

Featured Resources



Schools on the Move Podcast — Episode 2: Professional Learning Communities and Improving Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

In this episode, Matt Navo from NCSI and Dr. Annie Sharp from Fresno County Superintendent of Schools travel to Arkansas to speak with Darla Sampley, a 5th and 6th grade teacher at Spradling Elementary School with Fort Smith Unified School District. The discussion focuses on the impact of professional learning communities, what it means to be “culture keepers,”

guiding coalitions, and how to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. The “Schools on the Move” podcast highlights innovative and promising school practices across the country that enhance outcomes for students with disabilities and create teaching and learning opportunities for educators. Join us as we “move” across the country to speak with experts in the field, highlighting a new school in a different state with each episode. [Listen to Episode 2 on Podbean](#) now.



General Soup Podcast — Episode 2: Measuring Educational Benefit

In Episode 2 of “General Soup” podcast, Sara Doutré and Susan Hayes from NCSI’s Results-Based Accountability and Support (RBAS) Team delve into the topic of Educational Benefit Reviews, where you will hear how three states — California, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania — are incorporating this valuable process into their state monitoring and support systems. You’ll also learn about a new RBAS “Fast Five” focused on Educational Benefit Review

and pick up two new fantastic soup recipes! Episode and show notes are available on the [NCSI website](#).

Fast Five: Five Questions Answered About Educational Benefit Review

The RBAS “Fast Five” series is designed to provide short, bite-size information on a key topic related to special education general supervision, accountability, and support systems. This Fast Five explores the topic of Educational Benefit Review (including its history, its purpose, and the process for conducting one) and how states can incorporate the process into their general supervision systems. Find this latest Fast Five on “[Five Questions Answered About Educational Benefit Review](#)” in our Resource Library.

Data Literacy With an Equity Mindset

Approaching data literacy with an equity mindset requires a transformative approach in the collection and analysis of traditional data methodologies. To rethink data with an equity mindset, we approached a group of [NCSI Thought Leaders](#) and asked, “What are the questions about racial equity in our education systems that could be transformative?” After collecting their recommendations, we organized their list based on the characteristics of an equity mindset in our [Data Literacy and Equity Mindset Resource](#). Additional information from Thought Leaders was also included, highlighting why these questions are important, along with references to research.



Watch Session 5: Equity-Driven Coherent Systems TLC Session

NCSI's Thought Leader Conversation (TLC) concluded on July 13th with its 5th and final session focused on [Equity-Driven Coherent Systems, and it's now available to view](#). NCSI's TLC series brings

together experts in the field of race and disability in education to discuss how to systematically improve the educational outcomes and conditions for Black students with disabilities or those identified as needing special education services. The session 5 PowerPoint presentation, resource materials, and all session recordings from the series can be found on our [Pursuing Equity page](#).

Achieving Educational Equity Requires More Than a Lens — It Requires an Equity Mindset

Moving from an equity lens to an equity mindset changes our framing for the work that lies immediately before and way ahead of us. An equity mindset and the necessary cognitive shifts that accompany it are needed to normalize a new way of thinking, acting, and doing that will work in the service of achieving educational equity and eradicating racism at all levels — personal, structural, and institutional. Find out more about the concept of the “equity lens” and learn how to begin to shift your mindset with [this brief](#), written by Thought Leader Saroja Warner.



Key Products and Tools

Meeting the Needs of English Learners With Disabilities: Virtual, Hybrid, and In-Person Instruction

When the pandemic forced many schools to transition to virtual or hybrid learning, educators often struggled to meet the language and learning needs of the diverse population of English learners (ELs) with disabilities. Although most students have returned to school, distance learning (including virtual and hybrid learning contexts) may continue or be needed again, whether due to the pandemic or to other causes, such as natural disasters. Further, state education agencies (SEAs), districts, and schools may seek to strengthen supports and foster learning recovery for EL students with disabilities as they return to in-person instruction. We've compiled [guidance and example resources](#) that may be helpful for educators and SEAs supporting districts and schools in serving these students during or after distance learning.

Technical Assistance Resource: Part B SPP/APR FFY 2020-2025 Expanded Stakeholder Engagement

We know there are expanded stakeholder engagement requirements for the federal fiscal year (FFY) 2020-2025 State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR), but how can we meet them? This [tool](#) was developed to support the development, implementation, and documentation of stakeholder engagement activities aligned with the new requirements within Indicator 17. View the [tool](#) to find guiding questions, helpful ideas, and links to resources that support states. The practices and resources shared in the tool are applicable to soliciting broad stakeholder input for target setting and for any subsequent revisions to targets for other indicators in the SPP/APR.

Updates from ED



News From OSEP



OSEP has posted all the recordings from the 2021 OSEP Leadership and Project Directors' Conference. You can find the videos on the [OSEP IDEAsThatWork YouTube Channel](#). You can also review the agenda and program on the [2021 OSEP Leadership and Project Directors' Conference](#) website. Preparing for the 2022 SPP/APR submission? Don't forget to check the [OSEP Monitoring and State Improvement Planning](#) (MSIP) website often for news and updates. OSEP conducts monthly National Technical Assistance (TA) calls to provide timely information on topics related to the SPP/APR. The website also houses archived recordings and related resources.



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