

Implementation Plan for State Capacity Building

Scope of work

1. Help state and local education agencies organize and use data to identify where they need help to address dropout prevention and meet state performance targets.
2. Provide states, districts, and schools with reliable, actionable information on effective programs and interventions capable of helping students with disabilities complete high school.
3. Facilitate access to rigorously evaluated programs and practices to help schools meet dropout prevention targets.
4. Assist state and local education agencies to develop model program sites that can be replicated and sustained through a strategically designed process of training, coaching, consultation, and evaluation.
5. Train LEAs to evaluate outcomes of district and school implementation and adoption of evidence-based strategies for dropout prevention.
6. Capture and describe key components and processes used in the implementation and evaluation of each model site to inform and facilitate replication in other schools.

Overview of Requirements for Participation

In order to secure the assistance from NDPC-SD, a state must identify systems in place to implement change. The state must also identify a team that is committed to participating in the process over a significant period. Additionally, with NDPC-SD's guidance, the state must select a program model to focus their efforts. A State will also be required to designate a lead state liaison, which will participate in monthly coaching conversations with NDPC-SD, attend quarterly meetings with NDPC-SD staff, and lead the change efforts in the state. The work done in these states will serve as an evidence base on which to build a stronger set of interventions for other states to utilize. These states would be committing to sharing their data, designing implementation plans, conducting research, participating in ongoing professional development, and improving their systems.

Phase 1: SEA consultation and needs assessment

NDPC-SD will meet with designated SEA personnel to provide insight into the issues of dropout in the state through focused discussions and analysis of the state's data. NDPC-SD will help SEA personnel identify critical data that must be gathered to support the initial analysis of dropout correlates. SD staff will lead focused discussions and work with the SEA staff using the NDPC-SD framework to analyze the state's data and identify the areas of need within the state. At this phase of the process, the emphasis will be on identifying factors related to

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dropout that are operating within the state. State-level factors analyzed during this initial phase of the process will include: dropout rate, graduation rate, proficiency on statewide assessment, discipline, transition, and attendance.

In addition to analyzing state data, NDPC-SD staff will assist SEA personnel in examining state infrastructure and systemic factors related to dropout, including: dropout policies and procedures, dropout-prevention initiatives currently in place, the state's student information system, as well as resources available to support dropout prevention within the state.

These two activities will yield an in-depth picture of dropout in the state as well as an assessment of the state's current capacity to conduct dropout-prevention activities. It will highlight areas in which NDPC-SD can support the state in building capacity for dropout prevention.

Expected outcomes from this phase of the process include identification of the:

1. systems in place to identify and track risk factors;
2. dropout prevention strategies, initiatives, or programs currently in place within the state,
3. state policies and procedures that serve to facilitate or hinder the implementation of change in the dropout rate;
4. SEA personnel committed to participate in the process;
5. specific, addressable factors present in the state that contribute to dropout; and
6. clusters of districts in which the specific risk factors are present.

Phase 2: Action Planning

SEA personnel and NDPC-SD staff will review the results of the analyses from Phase 1 and will identify potential districts. The next step will be to identify target districts and schools that might serve as model sites in which to implement specific programs. NDPC-SD is looking for two schools per state that might serve as demonstration sites for the programs. SEAs will select these sites with NDPC-SD input. In some instances, states may seek volunteers from a participant pool. In other instances, states may have targeted districts in advance.

With SEA personnel, NDPC-SD staff will meet with district/school administrators to develop buy in for the program. Based upon analysis of building level data, local schools will assist in selecting the model program they wish to implement. The district/school will identify local staff to serve as resources and or trainers for the program and help implement the program in the district/school. These implementers, along with SEA personnel will receive

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program specific training from NDPC-SD staff, partners, and consultants to implement the selected model.

Phase 3: Development of SEA Training Team

A two-tiered process will be used to equip SEA staff with competencies to sustain and expand efforts in developing, identifying, or planning effective programs in dropout prevention.

Tier One Training

In the first tier, NDPC-SD will provide training to support a trainer of trainers' model for future implementation. Members of the SEA team will be identified and invited to participate in the training based on their willingness, ability, and availability to serve as master trainers. NDPC-SD will identify experiences needed, as well as future roles and responsibilities of a master trainer. Master Trainers will serve as district coordinators and liaisons between NDPC-SD staff and LEA personnel.

The train-the-trainer model will be used to leverage resources and set a foundation that will support SEA capacity building to address state dropout prevention in the future. The content modules described in the following pages will serve as training materials to guide capacity building. These modules are designed to create an awareness and understanding of dropout among students with disabilities; identify effective research-based interventions and effective program models, and guide the implementation of a systematic framework to support effective school based implementation. Initially, seven modules will be used to train SEA and LEA staff. As appropriate, additional modules may be developed.

- I. Dropout Prevention for Students with Disabilities: A Critical National Concern
 - A. *Prevalence, costs*
 - B. *Accountability*
 - C. *Negative effects*
 - D. *Visibility*

- II. What the Research Tells Us
 - A. *What Is Dropout*
 - B. *What Do We Know (Understanding Dropout)*
 - C. *Causes and Risk Factors*
 - D. *Differential Outcomes for Youth Who Dropout*
 - E. *Theoretical Models of Prevention*
 - F. *Effective Interventions and Models*

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- III. Examining Causes and Prioritizing Needs
 - A. *Steps to Better Data*
 - B. *Looking Across the Indicators*
 - C. *Using Data to Guide Improvement*
 - D. *Examining Causes and Prioritizing Needs*
 - E. *Data Collection on Specific Measures*
 - F. *Putting It Together: Moving Forward*

- IV. Risks and Remedies: Examples of Effective Evidence-Based Interventions and Programs
 - A. *Interventions to improve academic success*
 - B. *Interventions to improve self-management*
 - C. *Interventions to promote pro-social behavior*
 - D. *Interventions to improve attendance*

- V. Building Home-School and Community Partnerships
 - A. *Family Influence*
 - B. *Role of home-school partnerships in dropout prevention*
 - C. *Common characteristics of effective family engagement programs*
 - D. *Essential components of family-school partnerships*

- VI. Dropout Prevention School Intervention Framework
 - A. *Step 1: Data collection & analysis*
 - B. *Step 2: Identification of target areas & interventions*
 - C. *Step 3: Intervention framework & plan development*
 - D. *Step 4: Intervention implementation, monitoring & evaluation*
 - 1. *Training*
 - 2. *Coaching*
 - 3. *Consultation/performance feedback*
 - 4. *Evaluation*

- VII. Sustainability and Replication
 - A. *Building your technical assistance strategy for maintenance and scale-up*

Module I. Dropout Prevention for Students with Disabilities: A Critical National Concern

This module is designed to provide insight and understanding about school dropout among students with disabilities. It discusses accountability and other major factors that make dropout a serious national concern. Additionally, it presents background information about the consequences of dropout and its costs to individuals and society.

How to use the DVD
★
While questions arise!

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Module II. What the Research Tells Us

This module is designed to increase participants' awareness and understanding of dropout and its effect on students with disabilities. An overview of recent research on the causes and risk factors associated with dropout is provided and examples of effective practices that increase student engagement, school completion, and family engagement are presented.

Module III. Examining Causes and Prioritizing Needs

This module is designed to assist states and local education staff to organize and use data to examine school factors affecting school completion and identify where they need to address dropout prevention to meet designated dropout targets. The models also provide guidance in prioritizing needs and selecting models and interventions for specific demographics and school structures.

Module IV.

Module IV is designed to address key factors associated with school completion and provide examples of remediation strategies to address each key factor. Module IV is enhanced by facilitated access to developers and certified trainers for selected interventions.

Module V. Building Home- School and Community Partnerships

This module identifies some common characteristics of effective partnerships, discusses the importance of home-school partnerships, and provides practical suggestions to increase family engagement that promotes student achievement. Additionally, it explores issues and strategies in building community collaborations to address dropout.

Module VI. Dropout Prevention School Intervention Framework

This module describes a framework for school based model development. Critical steps in implementation at the local level are explained. Participants will have multiple opportunities to apply knowledge and skills learned in earlier modules while practicing putting the school intervention framework into place.

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Module VII. Sustainability and Replication

This module describes best practice strategies for replicating and sustaining practices. The training addresses addressing barriers, creating infrastructures to support change, professional development, policy changes, securing stable funding, and communicating results, clearly describing key components in print and visual media so that process is evident, changing mindsets and attitudes, and maintaining functional relevance.

Tier II Training

The second tier of training consists of guided practice in deploying the Dropout Prevention School Intervention Framework. This phase begins with targeted program review of interventions presently in place and the compatibility and feasibility of new or additional interventions at the LEA level. During this stage, NDPC-SD proves support at the LEA level; shadows SEA personnel to validate fidelity and integrity in the buy-in, implementation, improvement, and evaluation process; and discusses strategies and recommendations for scaling up state wide implementation. Strategies for data collection are addressed and consultative feedback (e.g., minor critique, suggestions, recommendations, and plan for improvement) is provided. At the LEA level, a master trainer's responsibilities will include:

1. Securing administrative support and faculty buy-in;
2. Establishing a foundation for collaboration and operation;
3. Building faculty involvement/professional development;
4. Developing, identifying, or planning effective programs;
5. Program implementation/technical assistance;
6. Establishing a data-based decision-making system/data collection;
7. Program evaluation;
8. Program improvement;
9. Sustainability of programs; and
10. Capacity building.

Phase 4: Implementing the School Intervention Framework

The Dropout Prevention School Intervention Framework is a framework for decreasing dropout through focused planning and implementation of research-validated practices. This four-phase process involves careful analysis of school district and specific school data to identify target areas for intervention (e.g.

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reading, mathematics, behavior, attendance, etc.) and to identify or select specific interventions to address the documented needs of the school/ students that undermine school completion. An intervention framework and improvement plan is developed in phase 3 of the school intervention framework that captures the approach that the school and the school intervention team will use to meet their dropout targets. A system to monitor the efficacy and effectiveness of the selected interventions and approach is a critical part of the school intervention framework. A visual representation of the intervention framework is depicted in Figure 1.

NDPC-SD Dropout Prevention Intervention Framework

Phase 1: Analyze Data

- ★ District and school demographics
- ★ Student performance (graduation, dropout, course completion, AP)
- ★ District school infrastructure
- ★ Assessment, curriculum, and instructional systems
- ★ Current initiatives and partnerships
- ★ Professional development
- ★ Parent/family engagement

Phase 2: Identify Target Areas for Intervention

- ★ Academic content and instruction (reading, math, science, writing)
- ★ Behavior (classroom management, behavior support)
- ★ Attendance and truancy prevention
- ★ School climate
- ★ Self-management (self-determination, problem solving)
- ★ Mentoring (employment, service learning)
- ★ Family engagement

Phase 3: Develop Improvement Plan

- ★ Select evidence-based practices (e.g., Check & Connect, Positive Behavior Support, Cognitive Behavior Interventions, Content Enhancements)
- ★ Determine level of intensity (Universal, Selected, Targeted)
- ★ Contextualize to setting
- ★ Establish timelines
- ★ Deliver initial staff training (Training Modules 1 – 6)

Phase 4: Implement, Monitor, and Evaluate

- ★ Conduct baseline measures
- ★ Implement strategies: on-site coaching, consultation & feedback, progress monitoring, fidelity checks
- ★ Measure results
- ★ Evaluate outcomes
- ★ Celebrate success!
- ★ Disseminate

School District: _____ Date: _____

Standards for Implementing a High Quality School Completion Program

Directions: Read each of the standards, which have been identified as mechanisms for judging high quality progress monitoring. The checklist is formatted so that you can indicate current and planned implementation.

- If the practice has been implemented, indicate that with a checkmark (√).
- If the practice is being developed, rank by priority: 1=highest priority through 3 = lowest priority.

Standard	Status	
	In Place (√)	Priority (1-2-3)
Data has been collected and analyzed.		
• District and school demographics		
• District and school policies and procedures		
• School climate (behavior supports, discipline, attendance, extra-curricular activities)		
• Student performance (graduation, dropout, course completion, AYP, EOC tests, other test data, grade retentions)		
• Characteristics of assessment, curriculum, and instructional systems		
• Current initiatives and partnerships		
• Transition and post-secondary outcomes		
• Professional development		
• Parent/family engagement		
• Interviews with cohort of youth who dropped out of school		
Interventions have been matched to prioritized needs. Interventions selected are evidence-based practices for which citations can be provided.		
• Academic content and instruction (reading, math, science, writing)		
• Behavior (classroom management, behavior support)		
• Attendance and truancy prevention		
• School climate		
• Self management (self determination, problem solving)		
• Family engagement		
Implementation plan has been developed and clearly communicated to all stakeholders.		
• Select evidence-based practices		
• Identify levels of intensity (universal, selected, targeted)		
• Contextualize to setting		
• Establish timelines		
Professional development needs and continuing professional development support have been determined.		
• Individuals involved in the implementation of the intervention have received appropriate professional development.		
• Additional training and support has been provided as needed.		

School District: _____ Date: _____

Standard	Status	
	In Place (√)	Priority (1-2-3)
Proactive practices are in place to ensure fidelity of implementation.		
• Responsibilities for implementation have been clearly defined.		
• Implement on-site coaching		
• Provide consultation & feedback		
• Conduct progress monitoring and fidelity checks		
• Celebrate and communicate results		

Data Has Been Collected and Analyzed

1. District and school demographics:

2. District and school policies and procedures:

5. Characteristics of assessment, curriculum, and instructional systems:

6. Current initiatives and partnerships:

7. Transition and post-secondary outcomes:

8. Professional development:

9. Parent/family engagement:

10. Interviews with cohort of youth who dropped out of school:

Essential Questions for School Data Analysis

Probe	Response
<p>Do you have sufficient data to determine why students are dropping out?</p> <p>If not, what else do you need?</p>	
<p>What strategies, measures, or activities did you employ to improve the accuracy and reliability of your data?</p>	
<p>Did the school meet each of its targets?</p>	
<p>By how much was each target achieved or missed?</p>	

Probe	Response
Do you see trends in the data across time?	
Do you see patterns in the data within or across groups of students?	
Can you identify one or more specific areas that appear to be a problem?	
What were the top four major factors associated with dropout?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1.2.3.4.
What criteria did your team use to prioritize these factors?	
What initiatives or partnerships are already in place to address these issues?	

Essential Tasks and Timeline for Implementing a High Quality School Completion Project

Task	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline
Identify team members for the school.		
Participate in overview training.		
Participate in data training.		
Collect and analyze data.		
Participate in overview of effective practices that increase student engagement and school completion.		
Examine causes and prioritize needs based on school & system data.		
Select intervention framework that best matches prioritized need.		
Develop a reasonable plan of action.		
Provide training for appropriate school staff on the selected intervention.		
Develop a timetable for coaching and feedback to ensure fidelity of implementation.		
Establish checkpoints to evaluate implementation of intervention.		
Communicate results of implementation.		

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