# ESSA Consolidated State Plan Development CoP – Pre-Work Learning Cycle 1: Frameworks for Evidence-based Interventions (February 23 webinar)

**Instructions:** Before the webinar, please read two selected blog entries (see links below) from the American Youth Policy Forum. These readings concisely present substantive information that can inform your team’s thinking—and prompt rich discussion during the webinar. Your team may choose to do this individually or as a team.

**Estimated time required for reading and reflection:** 30 minutes

## Reading #1

**Read** [*Collaborating within State Agencies to Ensure the Effective Use of Evidence*](http://www.aypf.org/school-turnaround/collaborating-within-state-agencies-to-ensure-the-effective-use-of-evidence)

**Reflect** on the following questions, and **be prepared** to discuss them:

* When the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education looked at School Improvement Grant (SIG) and non-SIG schools that did and didn’t improve, it identified four practices that, when well implemented, led to improvements: (1) leadership, shared responsibility, and professional collaboration; (2) intentional practices for improving instruction; (3) student-specific supports and instruction for all students; and (4) school climate and culture. How does the experience of school improvement in your state align with Massachusetts’ conclusion about the importance of these four practices?
* One of the “lessons learned” in Massachusetts was that gathering evidence on effective practices doesn’t guarantee success; the state education agency (SEA) had to create structures to reinforce the use of findings throughout the SEA. If you had to summarize three lessons learned from your experience with the School Improvement Grant program in your state, what would they be?

## Reading #2

**Read** [*5 Ways States Can Support Evidence-informed School Improvement*](http://www.aypf.org/assessment/5-ways-states-can-support-evidence-informed-school-improvement/)

**Reflect** on the following questions, and be prepared to discuss them:

* The blog entry identifies five key areas where SEAs can support evidence-informed school improvement: (1) needs assessment, (2) knowledge of evidence-based interventions, (3) professional development, (4) use of funds, and (5) supporting and evaluating implementation. What investments is your SEA prioritizing to support school improvement?
* In what ways is ESSA’s language on evidence-based interventions influencing your state’s school improvement priorities and investments—e.g., technical assistance, tools, incentives, infrastructure?

## Learn More

AIR’s [Spotlight on School Turnaround](http://www.air.org/resource/spotlight-school-turnaround) provides links to research on what works in school improvement. Your team can use this resource to take a “deeper dive” into studies on Race to the Top, SIG, and other school improvement initiatives.

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