



**State Support Network**

Partnering for School Improvement

# **Building Strategic Partnerships: State and District Collaboration Mapping Process**

## **Facilitator's Guide**

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# About This Tool

Local school improvement efforts can be strengthened through stakeholder input and collaboration. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), requires states to identify schools in need of improvement and to develop processes by which to support those schools. Likewise, the U.S. Department of Education strongly recommends that districts design processes that allow stakeholders to provide meaningful feedback throughout the implementation of ESEA.

This tool presents a process to support states and districts in engaging stakeholders in local school improvement efforts. Through facilitated sessions, state, local, and community stakeholders can define meaningful approaches to stakeholder collaboration and engagement in local school improvement efforts. This tool was conceptualized at a December 2016 meeting of state and local stakeholders convened by the State Support Network (the Network) to identify critical challenges in supporting school-based improvement, where local stakeholders shared that a common critical issue was that local staff often did not feel they were authentically included in state discussions and decisions around state improvement policies and systems. State and local leaders expressed the need for a strategic and authentic process for involving local leaders, intermediaries, and other stakeholder groups in school improvement efforts.

This tool is designed to help states, school-district teams, and regional staff to facilitate a collaborative process to define and plan for meaningful stakeholder engagement in local<sup>1</sup> school improvement efforts. Specifically, this tool is designed to guide these staff through a “mapping” process in which they map the roles and responsibilities for different stakeholder groups to authentic collaboration and communication opportunities at different stages of implementation.

## The Mapping Process

**Figure 1. Mapping Stakeholder Activities to Stages of Implementation**

Implementation Continuum			
Beginning	Progressing	Implementing	Innovating

During the mapping process, leaders from diverse stakeholder groups (i.e., states, districts, and intermediaries) outline the key roles and responsibilities (i.e., actions) that they will take across different stages of implementation.

By engaging in this mapping process, states, districts, and stakeholders can create a common language and establish a systemic, meaningful approach to stakeholder collaboration and engagement in school improvement efforts. In addition, this mapping process can help create a descriptive and specific vision of what authentic stakeholder engagement looks like in action. What makes this process unique is that it is designed to involve both local and state stakeholder

<sup>1</sup> Local school improvement may mean improvement efforts at the school or district level.

groups [including state educational agency (SEA) staff] in defining collaboration and meaningful engagement together and creating actionable descriptions of behaviors for all roles.

## Components of This Tool

This tool includes the following three components:

1. **Facilitator’s guide:** This guide outlines the process and activities needed to engage in the mapping process. The guide provides pacing suggestions, instructions for facilitators to guide each of the mapping activities, and notes.
2. **Sample slide presentation:** The presentation provides suggested slides the facilitator may use to guide participants through the mapping process.
3. **Meeting handouts:** These handouts provide the materials participants will use for reflection, note-taking, and documentation during the mapping process.

This tool (i.e., this facilitator’s guide, sample slide presentation, and meeting handouts) may be used at multiple points during the local school improvement planning process to design or refine processes for continual, authentic stakeholder engagement. This tool may also be used to create, clarify, and communicate expectations across multiple stakeholder groups and staff.

## Using This Tool

To use this tool, facilitators should first read through this facilitator’s guide and review the sample slide deck and handouts. Facilitators may then modify these materials as needed for their local context and develop an appropriate schedule for local use with identified stakeholders.

This tool includes two main sections:

1. Building Understanding and Preparing for Mapping (approximately 30 minutes prework + 3 1/2 hours collaborative work)
2. Mapping Stakeholder Engagement (approximately 3 hours collaborative work)

This tool is designed to be used over the course of an all-day meeting (approximately six hours of work); however, each section may also be completed across a series of shorter meetings. The meeting(s) may be facilitated by state staff, regional service agency staff, or other technical assistance providers. Stakeholders included in the process should include, as appropriate, district superintendents, district school board members, principals, teacher leaders, teacher association representatives, other state and regional service agency staff, and other decision makers.

By using this tool, states, districts, and other stakeholders can develop a clear and specific plan for stakeholder engagement throughout the entire implementation process of local school improvement efforts. This plan for stakeholder engagement can help all stakeholders effectively plan for engagement over time and help ensure fidelity of implementation.

## Part 1: Building an Understanding and Preparing for Mapping

Facilitator notes: This series of activities is designed to take approximately 3 1/2 hours. These activities are best conducted in person but may be modified for a virtual setting. The meeting facilitator should review the topics and activities described below, review the slide presentation, make note of the intended duration and materials needed, and modify as needed for their setting.

- Slides 1–26
- Handouts 1–3
  - Handout 1: Principles for Effective Stakeholder Engagement (11 pages)
  - Handout 2: Public Participation Spectrum (one page)
  - Handout 3: Case Study Assignments (six reading options, six-to-eight pages each; 38 pages total)

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials and Resources
<b>Preparation Assignment</b>	30 min (prior to meeting)	Ask participants to read Handout 1: Principles for Effective Stakeholder Engagement and respond to the reflection questions prior to attending the meeting. Consider asking participants to share their reflections virtually prior to the meeting (e.g., via email or a shared document).	Handout 1: Principles for Effective Stakeholder Engagement
<b>Introduction, Overview, and Purpose</b>	20 min	Optional: Set up a poll (using polling software of your choice) using a word-cloud function with the following prompt: <i>What words come to mind when thinking of stakeholder engagement as it relates to school improvement work?</i>	Slides 1–7 Polling software with word-cloud feature (poll set up in advance) OR sticky notes for a manual word cloud

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials and Resources
		<p>As participants enter the room or meeting, ask participants to fill out the poll OR write their word on a sticky note, placed on the wall to create a manual word cloud. When starting the meeting, share the word cloud results with participants.</p> <p>Ask participants to introduce themselves by sharing their name, organization, and role. Optional: Ask participants to share one reflection from looking at the word cloud.</p> <p>Highlight the purpose for this work, which is to identify authentic and innovative ways to engage stakeholders in school improvement work. Highlight how the mapping process will strengthen and support efforts to engage stakeholders in local school improvement implementation.</p> <p>Review the purpose, outcomes, objectives, agenda, and norms.</p> <p>Optional: It may be helpful to collaboratively define stakeholder engagement as a group, depending on participant interest.</p> <p>Optional: It may be helpful to note that the mapping process</p>	

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials and Resources
		<p>participants will be going through later in the work is informed by the Innovation Configuration<sup>2</sup> process, which is a step in a broader strategic planning process called the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM). Ask if any participants are familiar with this model or have used this type of planning process in the past.</p> <p>Optional: It may be helpful to review Optional Handout 5: Innovation Configurations prior to facilitation or it may be helpful to have printouts of Handout 5 available for participants who want to learn more or have detailed questions about the process. If the group includes teachers and other school-based practitioners, then it may be helpful to review the instructional example in Handout 5 for context. However, it is important to note that participants do not need to understand the Innovation Configuration process or CBAM to engage in the activities presented in this tool. If participants have further questions</p>	

<sup>2</sup> The Concerns-Based Adoption Model was developed in the 1970s and 1980s by a team of researchers at the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education at the University of Texas at Austin. More information may be found at <https://www.air.org/resource/concerns-based-adoption-model-cbam> and [https://www.sedl.org/cbam/innovation\\_configurations.html](https://www.sedl.org/cbam/innovation_configurations.html).

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials and Resources
		<p>or want to learn more information, stress that participants can engage in the planned activities equally effectively without any contextual knowledge of CBAM and point them to this website:  <a href="https://www.air.org/resource/consensus-based-adoption-model-cbam">https://www.air.org/resource/consensus-based-adoption-model-cbam</a>.</p>	
<p><b>Understanding the Context</b></p>	<p>20 min</p>	<p>Review the background and purpose for engaging stakeholders in local school improvement implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transparency and opportunity for stakeholder engagement in state and district school improvement efforts are priorities across the country.</li> <li>• The goal of mapping stakeholder engagement across implementation is to involve key stakeholders in meaningful, strategic, and ongoing dialogue that informs school improvement policies and processes.</li> <li>• To address this goal, we need to better understand the types of stakeholder engagement in implementation efforts, the stakeholders, the desired and current state of engagement, and the research and best</li> </ul>	<p>Slides 8–14</p> <p>Handout 2: Public Participation Spectrum</p> <p>Prior to the meeting, place signs around the room in different places:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inform</li> <li>2. Consult</li> <li>3. Involve</li> <li>4. Collaborate</li> <li>5. Empower</li> </ol>

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials and Resources
		<p>practices happening in the field.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We can use this information to build a tool to help participants design a more authentic, innovative system for engagement focusing on school improvement. The first step is to better understand the types and purposes for engagement.</li> </ul> <p>Ask participants the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is engagement important?</li> <li>• Who are your stakeholders?</li> <li>• What do you hope to learn by engaging with your stakeholders?</li> </ul> <p>Share Handout 2: Public Participation Spectrum. Summarize each of the engagement types and ask participants to consider where they fall according to current practice. Then, ask participants to move near the word that best describes their current type of engagement in school improvement work. (Note: If the meeting is conducted virtually, consider using polling for this</p>	

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials and Resources
		<p>activity.) Ask participants to share with each other why they chose that type of engagement; depending on the size of the group, this may be a pair-share activity, small-group discussion, or whole-group discussion. Ask participants to move to the type of stakeholder engagement they would prefer to see in their local context.</p> <p>Engage participants in large- or small-group discussions (depending on the size of the group) about the reasons for the current state of stakeholder engagement in school improvement. Share with participants that this will help them identify how to move toward a more intentional mix of types of engagement.</p>	
<p><b>Identifying the Desired State of Engagement</b></p>	<p>30 min</p>	<p>Share the objective of this activity with participants: to identify participants’ ideas about what the desired state of stakeholder engagement in school improvement work should look like.</p> <p>Share the following scenario with participants:</p> <p>“In 2025 the (major state newspaper) headline states</p>	<p>Slides 15–21</p> <p>Blank chart paper</p> <p>Markers</p> <p>“Desired State” sign</p>

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials and Resources
		<p data-bbox="1060 264 1392 326"><i>Students Benefit from State-District Collaboration.</i>”</p> <p data-bbox="1060 345 1436 443">Review the following questions about the possible article that might follow the headline:</p> <ul data-bbox="1060 467 1436 951" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1060 467 1436 597">• What might be the authentic, collaborative approach for state-district collaboration described in the article?</li> <li data-bbox="1060 621 1436 719">• Why might the state and district have built this approach?</li> <li data-bbox="1060 743 1436 841">• How might the state and district have built this approach?</li> <li data-bbox="1060 865 1436 951">• How might they know the approach impacts student achievement?</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="1060 976 1436 1170">Write each of these questions on separate large pieces of chart paper. Separate participants into four groups. Ask groups to brainstorm potential answers to these questions in five steps:</p> <ul data-bbox="1060 1195 1436 1414" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1060 1195 1436 1373">• Step 1: Give each group one of the questions (and a different colored marker for each table). Ask the group to jot down their ideas (10 min).</li> <li data-bbox="1060 1382 1436 1414">• Step 2: Have each group pass</li> </ul>	

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials and Resources
		<p>their question one table to the right. Groups review the comments and add any other thoughts they have (7–8 min).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steps 3–5: Repeat step 2 three times, until all groups receive their original question back.</li> </ul> <p>Ask participants to reflect on the additional comments that were made in response to their question, as a group, and then ask each group to share out a summary of the responses to the questions. Engage in a brief large-group discussion on the results (about 5 min).</p> <p>Place all these posters on one wall and add a sign marked “Desired State.” Emphasize that this is the summary of where the state may want to be in the future.</p>	
<b>Identifying the Current State of Engagement</b>	30 min	<p>Share the objective of this activity with participants: to describe the current state of stakeholder engagement in school improvement work (i.e., compared with the desired state identified in the previous activity).</p> <p>Place chart paper in different places on the walls or tables</p>	<p>Slides 20–22</p> <p>Markers</p> <p>Chart paper titled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengths</li> <li>Weaknesses</li> <li>Opportunities</li> <li>Threats</li> </ul>

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials and Resources
		<p>around the room. Explain to participants they are going to discuss the current state of stakeholder engagement for school improvement. Explain they will walk around the room and fill in the charts on the wall. Clarify that strengths and weaknesses are internal, whereas opportunities and threats (i.e., potential challenges) are external.</p> <p>Split participants into four groups and assign each group to one of the chart papers. Ask participants to share ideas in four rounds:</p> <p>Step 1: Ask each group to write down their ideas regarding what the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, or threats are regarding stakeholder engagement in local school improvement. For example, a strength may be existing engagement strategies that are working well.</p> <p>Steps 2–4: Have each group move to the next category and continue to add their ideas on current state and local engagement practices for school improvement.</p>	

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials and Resources
		<p>Note that participants only have about seven minutes per category for this activity. Participants can promote efficiency in this exercise by using a timer.</p> <p>Place all the posters on one wall and add a sign marked “Current State.” Share with participants the rest of the day will support them in moving toward the desired state while honoring some of the strengths and opportunities that currently exist.</p>	
<p><b>Reviewing Case Studies and Effective Practices</b></p>	<p>40 min</p>	<p>Share the objective of this activity with participants: to learn about how other local leaders have approached involving stakeholders in local school improvement work.</p> <p>Explain to participants that they now have an opportunity to review how others are approaching authentic stakeholder engagement. Ask participants to access their notes from Handout 1: Principles for Effective Stakeholder Engagement.</p> <p>Next, share Handout 4: Stakeholder Engagement Case Studies. Assign each participant one case study from the list to</p>	<p>Slides 23–26</p> <p>Handout 1: Principles for Effective Stakeholder Engagement</p> <p>Handout 3: Stakeholder Engagement Case Studies</p> <p>(Note: It is recommended that the cases studies are shared virtually via a shared drive, email, or a flash drive to reduce printing.)</p> <p>Blank chart paper</p> <p>Markers</p>

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials and Resources
		<p>read and review (e.g., by counting off by 6). Ask participants to make notes on the strategies and approaches others have used that resonate with them (e.g., those that might also be successful in their context, factors that led to success in the case studies).</p> <p>After approximately 15–20 minutes, ask participants to share their notes with others who read the same case study. Depending on the size of the group, this may be a pair-share activity or small-group discussion. Ask participants to capture these notes on chart paper. Ask each group to identify one person per case study to share out with the large group after discussion.</p> <p>Post the chart papers for each case study to one wall and add a sign marked “Promising Practices.” Review all the walls around the room. Start with the “types of engagement.” Remind participants where they started, where they moved to, and that this process is going to help them make those moves. Next, point to the “Desired State” wall and remind participants to keep these ideas in mind as they engage in</p>	

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials and Resources
		<p>the process. Then, point to the “Current State” wall and remind participants that it is beneficial to build off the good work already happening. End with the “Effective Practices” wall and mention that participants can visit these as examples or guidance as needed.</p>	
<p><b>Introducing the Mapping Process</b></p>	<p>20 min</p>	<p>Share that participants will identify the specific ways that states and districts can collaborate effectively to support school improvement, determine discrete collaboration practices, and articulate components of these practices. Share that the purpose is to develop an innovative, authentic process for collaboration among all stakeholder groups.</p> <p>Share that the rationale for this approach is that leaders need to have a concrete and practical understanding of the practices related to school and district improvement. Note that participants have the experience and the expertise to develop a rich description of the desired stakeholder behaviors and actions</p>	<p>Slides 27–33</p>

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials and Resources
		<p>that support authentic engagement.</p> <p>Briefly review the Implementation Continuum and preview that it will be part of the mapping process.</p> <p>Note that the desired outcomes of mapping stakeholder engagement are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear, specific, and shared descriptions of what a desired implementation practice should look like for states, districts, and intermediaries. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– For example, should states or districts (or both) reach out to advocacy organizations?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Variations of a desired implementation practice in terms of the actions and behaviors across the implementation spectrum (i.e., beginning, progressing, implementing, and innovating). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– For example, should states and districts both reach out to advocacy organizations but at different stages of</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials and Resources
		<p>implementation? At which stages?</p> <p>Note that the mapping process is designed to produce flexible documents that can evolve as the use of a practice matures.</p> <p>Introduce the mapping process and define the purpose and components of the map.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Key attributes of effective engagement:</b> The factors linked to effective engagement and collaboration based on evidence or participant experiences.</li> <li>• <b>Desired outcomes:</b> The goal or potential impact of engagement efforts.</li> <li>• <b>Implementation continuum:</b> Stakeholder actions and behaviors at each level of implementation</li> </ul> <p>Introduce the Engagement Map and preview the upcoming mapping activity.</p>	
<b>Identifying Key Attributes of Engagement</b>	20 min	<p>Ask participants, in small groups, to identify the <b>key attributes</b> for authentic, innovative, and effective engagement in their context. Participants can share reflections</p>	<p>Slides 34–38</p> <p>Chart paper</p> <p>Markers</p>

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials and Resources
		<p>from the case studies, personal experiences, or other sources to identify key attributes. Participants should focus on brainstorming rather than trying to identify the “right” answers. Create a master list of these key attributes on chart paper, with no more than three per piece of paper.</p> <p>Give each participant three stickers in different colors. Assign each color a ranking (first, second, or third). Ask participants to place their stickers next to the key attributes based on which they would most prefer to focus on in today’s meeting (based on which attributes participants feel are most important in their context or immediately actionable). Review the key attributes that received the most votes. Tell participants that to be manageable, this work should likely focus on the top three key attributes for now.</p>	Stickers
<p><b>Identifying Desired Outcomes of Engagement</b></p>	30 min	<p>Divide participants into three groups, assigning each group one of the top three key attributes previously identified. Share Handout 4: Mapping Template (using electronic copies if possible) and review the</p>	<p>Slides 39–44 Handout 4: Mapping Template</p>

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials and Resources
		<p>definition of desired outcomes: <i>“The goal or potential impact of the key attribute”</i> located at the top of the page. Note the example of a desired outcome in the sample map.</p> <p>Ask participants to fill out their assigned key attribute in their mapping template, then ask each group to brainstorm at least three-to-four desired outcomes for their key attribute. Offer guiding questions or prompts such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What outcome would you expect to see if this attribute were addressed?</li> <li>• What are the key actions that need to be taken to achieve that outcome?</li> </ul> <p>Ask each group to share their draft desired outcomes. Ask the group clarifying questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the desired outcomes clear and easily understood?</li> <li>• Do they describe ideal implementation (as opposed to how things may have been done in the past)?</li> </ul> <p>Break prior to the second session.</p>	

## Part 2: Mapping Stakeholder Engagement

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials/Resources
<p><b>Mapping Stakeholder Engagement at the Innovating and Beginning Levels</b></p>	<p>100 min</p>	<p>Share the objective of this activity with participants: To map the actions and behaviors the state and district will take at the innovating and beginning levels to achieve the desired outcomes for stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>Explain that each level in the implementation continuum within the map includes the observable actions and behaviors related to the desired outcomes. Explain that a completed map should describe the full array of variations of practice among states, districts, and other stakeholders in support of school improvement. Share examples of actions and behaviors using the slide presentation and sample map.</p> <p>Within each of the three groups from the previous activity, have participants work in pairs or groups of three. Have each group focus on the desired outcome for the key attribute on which they previously focused and develop possible descriptions of behaviors and actions of innovating implementation, starting with</p>	<p>Slides 45–52</p> <p>Handout 4: Mapping Template</p>

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials/Resources
		<p>local staff then moving on to state staff. Encourage participants to think ideally for the innovating level, focusing on potential behaviors and actions that go above and beyond requirements or previous efforts. Participants may also think about the actions and behaviors that would help reach the desired outcomes previously developed. Tell participants that they will be able to adjust these descriptions of actions and behaviors in the next activity as they build out the other levels as needed, so it is ok if they aren't exactly right the first time.</p> <p>Use the following prompts as needed to assist participant thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What if actions showing [name of desired outcome] are not present or are only minimally implemented?</li> <li>• What are some other ways to approach stakeholder engagement activities that we have not done in the past?</li> </ul> <p>Ask participants to review their descriptions of innovating actions and behaviors with their group</p>	

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials/Resources
		<p>and make any changes and clarifications needed.</p> <p>Ask participants to use a similar process to develop descriptions for actions and behaviors at the beginning level. For the beginning level, encourage participants to think about the first steps needed to establish the scope of engagement efforts (e.g., making a list of specific stakeholder contacts).</p> <p>Ask participants to review their descriptions of beginning actions and behaviors with their group and make any changes and clarifications needed.</p>	
<b>Reflecting through World Café model</b>	20 min	<p>Share the objective for this activity with participants: to refine the innovating and beginning descriptions they previously developed through collaborative feedback.</p> <p>Provide participants with small sticky notes to share comments on each other's work. Assign each group a different key attribute on which to provide feedback. Ask participants to individually reflect on the following prompts:</p>	<p>Slide 52</p> <p>Sticky notes</p>

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials/Resources
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What can be added?</li> <li>• What might a variation look like?</li> <li>• Is anything unclear?</li> </ul> <p>Ask participants to reflect and provide feedback via sticky notes. After approximately five minutes, ask groups to switch and repeat the activity.</p> <p>After providing feedback, ask each group to review the feedback together and revise or expand their descriptions based on feedback.</p>	
<p><b>Completing Engagement Mapping</b></p>	<p>30 min</p>	<p>Share the objective for this activity with participants: to develop interim descriptors between innovating and beginning (i.e., for the implementing and progressing levels).</p> <p>Ask participants to return to their previous pair or group of three and develop descriptors for the implementing and progressing levels, based on the gap between the innovating and beginning levels. Explain that the progressing level includes planning or development activities beyond the initial, basic</p>	<p>Slides 53 and 54 Handout 4: Mapping Template</p>

Topic	Duration	Activity	Materials/Resources
		<p>activities for the beginning level. Explain that the implementing level includes typical external outreach activities. Participants can sort or adjust the descriptors they previously developed for innovating and beginning levels as needed based on this activity.</p>	
<p><b>Planning Next Steps</b></p>	<p>30 min</p>	<p>Share the objective for this activity with participants: to identify how participants will share this map and put it into action following this session.</p> <p>Explain the most critical part of the mapping process is taking action and using the map. Ask participants to reflect on and answer the following questions to the best of their ability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify one concrete next step to help you move toward the type of activity or behavior you identified in the beginning of the day.</li> <li>• With whom will you share the engagement map? How?</li> <li>• How will you get feedback on how the actions and behaviors outlined in the engagement map impact actual stakeholder engagement?</li> </ul>	<p>Slides 55 and 56</p>

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Materials/Resources</b>
<b>Wrap-Up and Adjourn</b>	5 min	Ask participants to share feedback and next steps.	Slide 57

## Resources

### **ESEA Priorities and Flexibilities**

#### **Office of Elementary and Secondary Education Technical Assistance**

U.S. Department of Education

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/oss/technicalassistance/index.html>

This webpage provides links to technical assistance resources and supports available through the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE). These technical assistance opportunities and resources are organized by priority and content areas.

#### **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**

U.S. Department of Education

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/index.html>

This website provides, along with an overview of ESEA as amended by ESSA, links to informational resources about ESSA implementation from the U.S. Department of Education (e.g., non-regulatory guidance, regulations, webinars).

#### **Understanding the Every Student Succeeds Act: A Parents' Guide to the Nation's Landmark Education Law**

U.S. Department of Education

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essa-flex.pdf>

This guide aims to help families understand the regulations and flexibility provided to states and school districts through ESEA as amended by ESSA. This guide is designed to empower families with the information needed to advocate for and make informed choices for their children.

#### **Decision Guide for Implementing ESSA: State Considerations for Effective Grant Programs**

Council of Chief State School Officers

<https://ccsso.org/resource-library/decision-guide-implementing-essa-state-considerations-effective-grant-programs-0>

This resource highlights changes under the ESEA for Title I, Title II, and Title IV. This resource also includes guiding questions for states to consider around how these changes will impact state policies, procedures, practices, organizational structure, and staff roles and responsibilities.

#### **A Summary of the Flexibilities**

U.S. Department of Education

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essa-flexibilities-document-for-publication.pdf>

This resource describes key flexibilities in the ESEA as amended by ESSA. This information is intended to help states and districts communicate about these flexibilities with stakeholders.

## **States Leading for Equity: Promising Practices for Advancing Equity Commitments**

Council of Chief State School Officers

<https://ccsso.org/resource-library/states-leading-equity-promising-practices-advancing-equity-commitments>

This resource provides examples of state practices and policies to promote equitable access to educational resources for all students.

## **Gathering and Using Evidence for School Improvement**

### **Understanding Federally Required Education Policy Needs Assessments and Maximizing Their Impact from the Council of Chief State School Officers**

<https://ccsso.org/resource-library/understanding-federally-required-education-policy-needs-assessments-and-maximizing>

This resource, which includes a summary of the federal requirements for needs assessments, can help states in designing and promoting a comprehensive and aligned needs-assessment process.

### **Principles of Effective School Improvement**

Council of Chief State School Officers

<https://ccsso.org/resource-library/ccsso-principles-effective-school-improvement-systems>

This resource provides 10 principles regarding effective systems to improve low-performing schools.

### **Roadmap to the Principles of Effective School Improvement Systems**

Council of Chief State School Officers

<https://ccsso.org/resource-library/roadmap-implementing-ccsso-principles-effective-school-improvement-systems>

This resource articulates the core components of effective school improvement systems.

### **Needs Assessment Guidebook**

State Support Network

<https://statesupportnetwork.ed.gov/resources/needs-assessment-guidebook>

This guidebook can help state and local leaders develop and facilitate a needs-assessment process. The guidebook includes a review of the major school improvement-related needs-assessment requirements found in ESEA and the elements of a successful needs assessment.

## **Engaging Stakeholder Groups**

### **A Handbook for Meaningful Stakeholder Engagement: A Tool to Support State Education Agencies in Planning and Implementation of ESSA**

Partners for Each and Every Child

[http://partnersforeachandeverychild.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/P4\\_EngagementHandbook\\_ESSA\\_0616.pdf](http://partnersforeachandeverychild.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/P4_EngagementHandbook_ESSA_0616.pdf)

This resource is designed to support states in meaningfully engaging stakeholders, complementing the Council of Chief State School Officers' Let's Get This Conversation Started

resource (<https://ccsso.org/resource-library/lets-get-conversation-started>) on guidelines for stakeholder engagement.

### **Communications and Engagement Assessment Rubric**

Reform Support Network

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/communications-and-engagement-assessment-rubric.pdf>

The goals of this rubric are to help state education leaders confirm areas of strength, identify areas of need, and provide suggested steps for sharpening strategies, building capacity and enhancing reach. The rubric is divided into five sections, representing the five core areas of focus SEAs should consider when assessing communications and engagement efforts: overall strategy, audience segmentation, audience-specific messages and diverse tactics, stakeholder engagement and coalition building, and SEA communications capacity. Each section can be used individually or in tandem, depending on the state's unique needs.

### **State Facilitator's Guide for the Reform Support Network Communications and Engagement Assessment Rubric**

Reform Support Network

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/state-facilitators-communications-engagement-assessment-rubric.pdf>

This guide, which can be used during a comprehensive two-day workshop or individual meetings, can help state teams self-assess their communications and engagement strategies.

### **Social Media Tip Sheets**

Reform Support Network

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/stakeholder-communications-social-media.html>

These tip sheets are designed to help states and districts expand and refine engagement strategies using social media. The four tip sheets cover the following topics: innovative engagement, building capacity, driving success through smart policies, and measuring success.

### **Strategies for Community Engagement in School Turnaround**

Reform Support Network

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/implementation-support-unit/tech-assist/strategies-for-community-engagement-in-school-turnaround.pdf>

This report summarizes the findings from a 2013 study of districts working to engage communities around low-performing schools, identifying the major takeaways for effective engagement strategies.

### **Strategies for Equitable Family Engagement**

State Support Network

<https://statesupportnetwork.ed.gov/resources/strategies-equitable-family-engagement>

This resource outlines guidance and provides real-world examples across five major categories of evidence-based, equitable family engagement strategies.

### **How Is My Child Doing? What Assessment Can Tell Parents About Their Child’s Learning**

Center on Standards and Assessment Implementation

[https://www.csai-online.org/sites/default/files/CSAI%20Update\\_Parent\\_Guide\\_on\\_Assessment.pdf](https://www.csai-online.org/sites/default/files/CSAI%20Update_Parent_Guide_on_Assessment.pdf)

This guide is designed to help families and other stakeholders interpret assessment results.

### **State Approaches to Family Engagement in Pre-K Programs**

Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes

[http://ceelo.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/ceelo\\_policy\\_brief\\_family\\_engagement\\_2016\\_03\\_final\\_web\\_updated\\_2016\\_11.pdf](http://ceelo.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/ceelo_policy_brief_family_engagement_2016_03_final_web_updated_2016_11.pdf)

This resource summarizes strategies developed through technical assistance efforts with states for engaging stakeholders in early education.

### **Preparing Educators to Engage Parents and Families**

Center on Innovations in Learning

[http://centeril.org/2016handbook/resources/Horvat\\_chapter\\_web.pdf](http://centeril.org/2016handbook/resources/Horvat_chapter_web.pdf)

This resource, which is part of the *Handbook on personalized learning for states, districts, and schools*, discusses strategies for engaging families and the community in personalized learning efforts.