This Series

Similar to the U.S. Department of Education (ED), State education agencies (SEAs) are required to monitor State agency (SA) and local education agency (LEA) subgrantees' implementation of Title I, Part D (Part D)-funded programs, per the Federal statute and regulations. SEAs must implement a monitoring process that involves conducting reviews on a set schedule and developing related monitoring protocols and tools. In turn, SAs and LEAs are responsible for monitoring the facilities and programs to which they allocate funds. In this series, we will: (1) develop familiarity with subgrantee monitoring tools designed to evaluate teaching and learning environments in neglect, detention or correctional settings, (2) practice administering the tools using fictional data, scenarios and videos of classroom practice, (3) practice analyzing the data collected by the tools, and (4) discuss how to adapt the tool to participants' local contexts to support subgrantee and facility training and technical assistance activities.

- Call 1: Meeting Civil Rights Obligations (Activity: Program Performance Data)
  - Teacher equity
  - College and career readiness
  - School discipline
- Call 2: Special populations (Activity: Documentation (instructional artifacts) and Focus Group Data)
  - Cultural and linguistic competence (e.g., racial and ethnic minorities, limited English proficient students)
  - Students with disabilities
  - Gender-specific programming
  - Youth of transition age
- Call 3: Conditions for Learning (Activity: Observation Data)
  - Safety
  - Support
  - Social and Emotional Learning
  - Engagement and Challenge

Monitoring Responsibility: Who Does It and Why

Title I, Part D, programs are monitored to ensure compliance with applicable State and Federal laws. Monitoring occurs at three different levels (see NDTAC's *A Guide to Meeting Compliance Requirements for the Title I, Part D, Program,* http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/resource/guide-meeting-compliance-requirements-title-i-part-d-program). Although there has been some reduction in the frequency of monitoring in recent years, the U.S. Department of Education typically monitors state education agencies (SEAs) every 3 to 5 years. In turn, as the SEA, you are responsible for monitoring state agency (SA) and local education agency (LEA) subgrantees, which are then responsible for monitoring their respective programs and facilities (not less than once every 3 years). Monitoring visits are often scheduled in advance; however, unannounced visits are not prohibited and generally occur in reaction to issues raised during onsite or desk audits.

There are many reasons why monitoring activities are important across all levels of programming. As outlined in the presentation given by Dr. Peter Leone at the 2012 NDTAC Conference (*Monitoring & Evaluation: Best Practices,* http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/2012_Conf_Presentation-Monitoring_Eval-Best_Practices.pdf), results of effective monitoring might include: accountability, support to programs and facilities, improved outcomes for youth who are system-involved, and the technical assistance that you as a State Title I, Part, D, coordinator can provide.

Poll: How frequently do you monitor your subgrantees (desk and/or on-site)?

- Annually
- Every two years
- Every three years
- Every four to five years
- Rarely/Never

Poll: How often do you conduct site visits?

- Annually
- Every two years
- Every three years
- Every four to five years
- Rarely/Never

Discussion: Describe your current monitoring activities.

Poll: In a given year, do you typically monitor:

- All of your subgrantees?
- Some of your subgrantees?

Discussion: If some, why and how do you decide which subgrantees to monitor?

Challenges to Successful Monitoring

To engage in successful monitoring, it is important to be consistent in what is monitored, which serves to remove the subjectivity of monitoring and has a leveling impact on the field. It is also important that you strategically plan and review existing documentation. For example, as outlined in the presentation by Dr. Leone, you have to determine whether onsite review, desk review, or both processes are appropriate for your monitoring process. You must prepare in advance for monitoring visits to the SEA by the Office of Student Achievement and School Accountability Programs (SASA) and for your monitoring review of SAs and LEAs. Part of this preparation includes gathering information to facilitate your monitoring review. You can effectively gather information through various means. For example, you can use one-on-one interviews during onsite visits with youth or staff; disseminate Web-based or pen and paper questionnaires to large groups of staff and/or youth; and hold focus groups or interviews with a small number of individuals simultaneously. With any of these particular methods, it is necessary to keep in mind the importance of language, which, when used as a mechanism for cooperation, can establish relationships and create a positive environment for the soliciting and sharing of information. Additionally, it is critical to include a range of respondents and examine patterns across responses to avoid biased data or collection of skewed information.

Discussion: What challenges have your experienced?

Language of Cooperation

- Tell me about…

- Help me understand how…

- What are your greatest challenges?

- What are you most proud of?

- How can I help? What support such as training and technical assistance can I offer?

- What questions do you have?

- Here's what I learned. Did I get it right?

- Are there questions I should have asked but didn't?

Discussion: What techniques have you employed to encourage openness and cooperation with subgrantees?

Sample Subgrantee Monitoring Tools

- Vary in rigor, content, data source, and depth across states
- Should minimally address compliance with statute

Discussion: What do you like/ not like about your current subgrantee monitoring tools?

Poll: Which data sources do you use when monitoring?

- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Observations
- Documentation
- Program Performance Data (e.g., course passage rates, grades, attendance, pre-post test scores)
- Other

Discussion: Which data sources have been most informative for you? Which data sources have been the least informative? Which data sources have been most challenging to collect? What program performance data do you collect beyond the data required for the CSPR?

Meeting the Civil Rights Obligations to Students: The Tool

- Modular (pick and choose dimensions that suit you)
- Formative, staff-centered instrument
- Quantitative and qualitative measures
- Dimensions
    - Teacher equity
    - College and career readiness
    - School Discipline

Using the Tool

1. Collect performance data
2. Collect supporting evidence
   a. What questions arise from the performance data?
   b. What data sources can help you answer those questions?
3. Jointly analyze quantitative and qualitative data
   a. How has the subgrantee/facility performed over time? Any significant changes?
   b. How does the subgrantee/facility compare to national averages?
   c. How does the subgrantee/facility compare to its peers in the State?
4. Jointly rate the subgrantee/facility and discuss next steps

Discussion: How might you adapt this tool to your existing subgrantee monitoring tools?

Resources

- Tip Sheet: Tip Sheet: Subgrantee Monitoring
- 2012 NDTAC Conference Presentation: Monitoring & Evaluation: Best Practices (Dr. Peter Leone)
- Office of Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Education
- Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC)
- CRDC Data Snapshot: Teacher Equity
- CRDC Data Snapshot: College and Career Readiness
- CRDC Data Snapshot: School Discipline
- Great Teachers & Leaders
  - Guide to Evaluation Products
  - Online Database of State Teacher and Principal Evaluation Systems
- Sample Subgrantee Monitoring Tools