Recommendation 2: Incorporate Needs Assessments and a Shared Vision in Delivery of TA

- Collaboration
- CQI
- TA
- PD
- Grant Requirements

Target Audience

- SSEL
- TA Providers

Suggested Timeline

- To begin in Q1 FY18–19

Additional Considerations

- Create an action plan template. An action plan between SSEL and grantee clearly outlines the issue to be addressed, is based on a needs assessment, and outlines the possible ways to address the challenges.
- A readiness assessment is part of the work of the grantee outlining how they are set with resources, staffing, materials, staff development and other elements critical to successful implementation of solutions.
- TA planning needs readiness/assessment tools such as surveys, questionnaires, or interviews that will assure systematic collection of data to inform support strategies and content.
- Discussions between TA provider and the grantee should incorporate co-created solutions.
- The TA provider and recipient agency will work to deepen their relationship so that feedback can be authentic and meaningful in moving the work forward.
- Both SSELs and grantees understand the barriers and explore solutions to effective communication and using shared language.
- The EXLD supports pursuit of reasonable, locally-based solutions taking into consideration the resources available to the local Regional Team and the overall SSEL.
- Discussions between the parties should demonstrate a commitment to the appropriate fit of the solutions offered and those required by the local agency. These discussions should be documented.

Recommendation 3: Provide Web-based Technical Assistance

Recommendation

TA providers (including the SSEL) with content expertise develop or expand a library for web-based TA and support for Site Coordinators and program staff.

Rationale

Equitable TA includes easy and timely access to TA. One manner of addressing these issues is by making staff development accessible via online training. Staff can have access to specialized information at convenient hours. Given the budgetary constraints among local programs, as well as staff turnover, web-based training is a way to ensure that grantees receive basic to advanced training via a vehicle most accessible to them.

Several expanded learning organizations have online trainings as part of their staff development strategies already. Additionally, the EXLD has been developing videos to showcase the Point-of-Service Quality Standards[9] and how these look and sound like in action. Other content for the trainings can address the development of competencies critical to providing high quality programming, e.g., managing the learning environment, developing action plans, planning with youth, etc.

A team made up of SSEL members and staff development professionals from grantees could be formed to review and vet content that results in an 'officially sanctioned' status for trainings submitted to the committee.

Resources

- Available data on field needs and challenges
- Online Platform Account (i.e. Zoom, Skype, Lynda, etc.)
- Committee of EXLP experts and others with content-specific knowledge

Category

- TA
- PD

Target Audience

- Expanded Learning Staff/Stakeholders
- Site Coordinators
- Front Line Staff

Suggested Timeline

[9] The Quality Standards are split into Point-of-Service Quality Standards and Programmatic Quality Standards. Point-of-Service standards are focused on the quality of service directly provided to students while Programmatic standards typically occur at the program management level.

Recommendation 3: Provide Web-based Technical Assistance

- FY 18–19 Q1: Establish committee to plan
- FY 19–20 Q1: Implement launch plan to create web-based TA

Additional Considerations

- Available data on field needs and challenges can inform the development of web-based TA and supports. Needs assessment data can inform content for TA. Online platforms such as Zoom and Skype can be used for coaching.
- Providing web-based TA increases access, but it is important to ensure investment in the creation and curator of content, not the creator of a platform. Use existing platforms such as Skype, Lynda, Zoom, Safe Schools, etc.
- YouTube might be a logical place to house much of this content. Parallel to existing prospects such as "The WEL", these trainings could be easily accessed by anyone.
- The EXLD should identify and convene a committee of expanded learning and content experts to participate in vetting the training content and delivery strategies prior to final posting for use by grantees.
- Grantees themselves may already have online training systems that can form part of a staff development collaborative in support of this effort.
- This could be very costly and requires a consideration of cost vs impact.
- The concept could be shopped around to a variety of funders (Gates Foundation; Packard; federal government, etc.) interested in workforce development.

Recommendation 4: Improve Current Data Collection Methods for Reporting TA

Recommendation

The Statewide Technical Assistance Tracker (STAT) reporting requirements be simplified, streamlined, or better supported; ensuring their regular use for continuous quality improvement (CQI) processes.

Rationale

Currently, Regional Teams are expected to report TA activity in STAT[10] and Teamwork[11]. The STAT system is labor intensive but has the potential to provide informative data on the equitable distribution of TA, within a region and across the state. We recommend that the STAT reporting requirements be simplified, streamlined, or better supported.
Strong data on TA activity will support equitable TA and inform the future provision of equitable TA. We want to ensure that adequate resources and support for data gathering and tracking.

[10] Statewide Technical Assistance Tracker (STAT) is a "log" of TA provided to EXLPS.
[11] Teamwork is a project management software that the Regional Teams utilize to develop annual work plans.

Recommendation 4: Improve Current Data Collection Methods for Reporting TA

Resources

- Regional Team Staff Time
- Guidance/Resources for Regional Teams

Category

- TA
- Data
- CQI

Targeted Audience

- Regional Teams

Suggested Timeline

- FY 18–19 Q1: Simplify or streamline STAT
- FY 19–20: Identify additional resources to support data entry

Additional Considerations

- Since the STAT system is labor intensive, there are at least three possible approaches:
    - Simplify data reporting requirements so that Regional Teams do not have to report **all** activity. For example, they might only report critical TA.
    - Streamline data reporting requirements by simplifying the form itself to have fewer fields. For example, the form might have grantees, sites, and their corresponding codes in a dropdown decreasing the time for data entry.
    - Supplement data reporting requirements with additional financial support since the current requirements impact staff time. For example, with additional financial resources, a Regional County Lead/Staff might elect to increase the capacity of either their TA providers or their administrative support.
- The data entered into STAT might be better suited to enter in Teamwork, reducing the number of concurrent systems and repetitive tasks.
- Since many resource allocation decisions in the SSEL focus on the need for Critical TA, the reporting requirements could also be shifted to focus on Critical TA.
- The EXLD should consider asking each Regional Team to review data on a quarterly and annual basis for the purpose of CQI and data-driven reflection. One possible venue for such activity would be the recommended CoP for the SSEL. This would allow these collaborative gatherings to be data driven, provide Regional Teams with a deadline for data entry, and ensure that support and guidance is provided on the reflection process that focuses on locally controlled improvement, not accountability.