

Questions and Prompts

Each focus group participant will be asked questions and prompted based on whether he or she answered the survey (Part I of the Needs Assessment). For those who completed the survey, we will ask them to keep the report with their individual results nearby for reference during the focus group. We anticipate each focus group lasting at least 30 minutes, but no more than 60 minutes.

Introduction for Both Sections

Thank you all so much for joining our group for a brief conversation. My name is _____, and I am a member of the Title IV, Part A Technical Assistance Center (T4PA Center) team. The T4PA Center operates within the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Supportive Schools, and provides State education agencies with dedicated support for implementing the Title IV, Part A Student Support and Academic Enrichment program.

Today's conversation will provide us with valuable feedback on your experiences to date in the Title IV, Part A program; help us to understand what types of training and technical assistance you need to effectively manage (or "administer") the grant program; and assist us to better help your local education agencies (LEAs) with their Title IV, Part A activities moving forward. Before we begin, I'd like to review with you what's involved in this focus group and ask for your consent to record the group discussion.

1. We anticipate that this group discussion will take no more than 30 to 60 minutes.
2. Participation in this focus group is voluntary.
3. You can skip any question and can stop at any point during the discussion.
4. There are no right or wrong answers. We really appreciate your honest responses.
5. Please feel free to ask questions at any point. Also, feel free to ask me/us to rephrase or clarify a question.
6. The T4PA Center is aware of your participation in this interview. Although we will not attribute any of your comments to you personally in our report, it is possible that the T4PA Center may be able to guess the identity of the individuals making specific comments described in our report.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

Once questions have been asked/answered: Please respond with an affirmative to the following question: **Do I have your permission to record this conversation? We are recording to make our report preparation easier and as a backup for our note-taking.**

If one or more participants do NOT consent to recording: **INSERT LANGUAGE: As there are objections to recording, we will be writing notes to assist with our report preparation.**

Before beginning: **INSERT LANGUAGE: As we review the transcripts and/or our notes, we may contact you for clarification.**

Once everyone has given permission — Introductions: To begin, could we all go around and introduce ourselves? Please say your name; what State education agency you represent; your role in the Title IV, Part A administration in your state; and how many years you have worked with Title IV, Part A.

Let's begin.

Overall Prompts: These prompts will be used, when needed, to encourage participants to expand upon their stated answers.

1. Can you expand on what is behind your answer?
2. Why do you not need the support in X area?
3. You indicated that you need additional support in X. Can you elaborate as to why?

For Those State Coordinators Who Completed the Survey (Part I)

1. The survey asked if you were already providing training or technical assistance to LEAs in four main areas, and what levels of support you thought you needed in those areas. As a reminder, the four areas were *Administrative*, including Fiscal, Management, Evaluation, and LEA-based, and the implementation areas of *Well-Rounded Education*, *Safe and Supportive Schools*, and *Effective Use of Technology*.

- o Please list the areas in which you recall stating you needed support.

[Note: We ask in the invitation that they have their individual report in front of them during the focus group for reference. Additionally, we will be polling participants using the polling feature of Adobe Connect™ to jog their memory.]

2. Thinking about all the areas in which you stated you needed support, in which areas do you have the most *immediate* or *urgent* need?
 - o Prompt: If you have multiple areas of immediate or urgent need, feel free to name more than one.
 - o Prompt: Why did you identify these areas?
 - o Prompt: If someone lists any of the priority implementation (not Administrative) areas, then ask: In which specific areas do you need the most support? (*Moderator can read the list of subtopics for that area.*)
 - o Prompt: Why did you identify these specific areas?
 - o Prompt: If someone lists Administrative, then ask: In which specific Administrative area do you need the most support? (Fiscal, Management, Evaluation, LEA-Based.)
 - o Prompt: Why did you identify these areas?
3. What is your understanding of the role of the T4PA Center and the support that we can provide?
 - o Prompt: Can you be more specific?
4. A primary goal of the T4PA Center is to help you provide the best advice, training, and technical assistance you can to your LEAs. We are positioned to provide a wide range of training and technical assistance to help you do your job better.
 - a. If you have participated in an event, what were some of your takeaways? What event(s) did you attend? What did you like about it? What didn't you like about it?
 - b. If you haven't participated in an event, why not?
 - c. Prompt: Some examples of technical assistance events are the following:
 - i. Virtual and in-person meetings;

- ii. Technical assistance events like the evaluation guide or the LEA Needs Assessment Tool Webinar; and
 - iii. The specific emails/phone calls with Technical Assistance Liaisons and/or their peers.
5. How do you most prefer to receive training and technical assistance?
 - o Prompt: For example, some of modes of training or technical assistance include the following:
 - Regular or ad hoc technical assistance check-in and consultation calls with your Technical Assistance Liaison, Federal Project Officer, and/or others (e.g., subject matter expert);
 - Webinars scheduled at a specific time on a specific topic;
 - One-on-one training or technical assistance (including monthly check-in calls with your Technical Assistance Liaison);
 - Online tutorials you can watch at your convenience;
 - Frequently Asked Questions or other materials that can be printed and distributed;
 - Peer sharing through the State coordinators' discussion portal;
 - Internet-based resources;
 - Virtual and/or in-person large-group meetings to which all state counterparts and U.S. Department of Education team members are invited; or
 - Other?
 - o Prompt: In what ways does your preferred mode vary by subject matter?
 - o Prompt: Compared to other modalities, how appealing to you would small-group classes or sessions with a subject matter expert be as a form of training or technical assistance?
6. What technical assistance needs that have surfaced during the past year from LEAs/consortia that are implementing Title IV, Part A programs surprised you?
 - o Follow-up question: How did you respond?
 - o Follow-up question: In such circumstances, how would you like the T4PA Center to learn about, and help you to respond to, such unexpected needs?
7. In closing, based on your experiences so far, what is the one piece of advice you would pass along to a new State coordinator about working on Title IV, Part A?
 - o Prompt: This could be related to grant administration or considerations on the programming side of your work.

For Those State Coordinators Who **Did Not** Complete the Survey (Part I)

1. In what areas of Title IV, Part A, do you find that LEAs need the most support? Is it in Administrative areas? The topic area of Well-Rounded Education? The area of Safe and Supportive Schools? Or the area of Effective Use of Technology?
 - o Prompt: If you have multiple areas, feel free to name more than one.
 - o Prompt: Why did you identify these areas?
 - o Prompt: If someone lists one or more of the three implementation areas (not Administrative), ask: In which specific areas do you need the most support? (Moderator can read the list of subtopics for that area.)
 - o Prompt: Why did you identify these specific areas?
 - o Prompt: If someone lists Administrative, ask: In which specific Administrative area do you need the most support? (Fiscal, Management, Evaluation, LEA-Based.)
 - o Prompt: Why did you identify these areas?
2. What is your preferred format for receiving training or technical assistance and why?
 - o Prompt: For example, some of modes of training or technical assistance include the following:
 - Regular or ad hoc technical assistance check-in and consultation calls with your Technical Assistance Liaison, Federal Project Officer, and/or others (e.g., subject matter expert);
 - Webinars scheduled at a specific time on a specific topic;
 - One-on-one training or technical assistance (such as your monthly calls with your Technical Assistance Liaison);
 - Online tutorials you can watch at your convenience;
 - Frequently Asked Questions or other materials that can be printed and distributed;
 - Peer sharing through the State coordinators' discussion portal;
 - Internet-based resources;
 - Virtual and/or in-person large-group meetings to which all state counterparts and U.S. Department of Education team members are invited; or
 - Other?
 - o Prompt: In what ways does your preferred mode vary by subject matter?
 - o Prompt: Compared to other modalities, how appealing to you would small-group classes or sessions with a subject matter expert be as a form of training or technical assistance?
3. What is your understanding of the role of the T4PA Center and the support that we can provide?
 - o Prompt: Can you be more specific?

4. A primary goal of the T4PA Center is to help you provide the best advice, training, and technical assistance you can to your LEAs. We are positioned to provide a wide range of training and technical assistance to help you do your job better.
 - o If you have participated in an event, what were some of your takeaways? What event(s) did you attend? What did you like about it? What didn't you like about it?
 - o If you haven't participated in an event, why not?
 - o Prompt: Some examples of technical assistance events are the following:
 - Virtual and in-person meetings;
 - Technical assistance events like the evaluation guide or LEA Needs Assessment Tool Webinar; and
 - The specific emails/phone calls with Technical Assistance Liaisons and/or their peers.
5. What technical assistance needs that have surfaced during the past year from LEAs/consortia that are implementing Title IV, Part A programs surprised you?
 - o Follow-up question: How did you respond?
 - o Follow-up question: In such circumstances, how would you like the T4PA Center to learn about, and help you to respond to, such unexpected needs?
6. Based on your experiences so far, what is the one piece of advice you would pass along to a new State coordinator about working on Title IV, Part A?
 - o Prompt: This could be related to grant administration or considerations on the programming side of your work.