National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments

Safe Supportive Learning
Engagement | Safety | Environment

FY 2018 OSHS Grantee
Needs Assessment Form

November 2017

Introduction & Instructions

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Education (ED), Office of Safe and Healthy Students (OSHS), the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE; the Center) administers a needs assessment to grantees it serves on an annual basis. The needs assessment involves each grantee providing information that will guide NCSSLE in planning training and technical assistance (TTA)—including individual TA assistance, group-based TA assistance via grantee forums or communities of practice and the like, and cross-grantee webinars—for all [P2/PSR] grantees during FY 2018 (school year 2017-18). The TTA will be designed to help build your capacity and address your needs as you implement your grant and prepare to sustain it after the life of the award.

Instruction

NCSSLE requests that you complete the following FY 2018 needs assessment form by [DATE]. This needs assessment form includes a series of questions focused on seven factors that research has shown to support and sustain meaningful change:

1) stakeholder engagement;
2) partnerships;
3) programmatic intervention selection and implementation;
4) staffing support, training and skills;
5) monitoring and continuous quality improvement;
6) grants management; and
7) sustainability.

Each section starts with a description of why the respective factor is important and how NCSSLE will use your information to plan TTA, followed by questions to help us learn more about the status of your implementation and needs. Most items are closed response (e.g., multiple choice). A few questions request a written response. The final section of this assessment seeks your preferences for receiving TTA.

Throughout this needs assessment we frequently reference "the goals of your grant." "Goals" refers to the Government Performance Results Accountability (GPRA) measures established for your grant program. The terms "goals" and "priorities" may be used interchangeably to refer to your work on the GPRA measures.

Please answer each of the questions candidly and to the best of your ability. We have pre-populated the Basic Information of this form. Please update and add to this information as needed.

Basic Information

Name:

Title:

Email:

Phone:

Section 1: Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement and buy-in from a range of stakeholders can support grant implementation by (a) helping you secure resources, (b) encouraging participation in activities, (c) inviting feedback that can strengthen your program, and (d) allowing stakeholders to advocate on your behalf. However, stakeholders may benefit from different engagement approaches.

These questions will help the NCSSLE TTA team learn about the stakeholder groups you are engaging so NCSSLE can provide guidance on how to enhance your connection with them.

1. How engaged are each of the following stakeholder groups with your [P2/PSR] grant work? [Fill in the appropriate rating for each group.]

	1 We have not attempted to engage these stakeholders.	2 We have contacted these stakeholders, but they have not responded to our outreach.	3 These stakeholders are aware of our work, but are not actively engaged.	4 These stakeholders actively support our grant activities.
a. Community-based service providers				
b. Family and youth support agencies				
c. District administration/ leadership				
d. School leadership				
e. Teachers				
f. Non-instructional staff				
g. Families				
h. Students				

	1 We have not attempted to engage these stakeholders.	2 We have contacted these stakeholders, but they have not responded to our outreach.	3 These stakeholders are aware of our work, but are not actively engaged.	4 These stakeholders actively support our grant activities.
i. Other (fill in)				

2. What **three** stakeholder groups are most essential to engage for your work in the coming year? [Pick three.]

- Community-based service providers
- Family and youth support agencies
- District administration/leadership
- School leadership
- Teachers
- Non-instructional staff
- Families
- Students
- Other _____ [Free response.]

Section 2: Partnerships

Partners may include community-based agencies, consultants, research institutions, and others you have engaged to formally help perform the work of your grant. Partners are also stakeholders, and may be reflected in your responses to the previous section. Partners can fill gaps or supplement capacity offered by the school system across a variety of functions including training, services, technology, evaluation, and more. They may be compensated through a contract, may receive funding through other systems (e.g. Medicaid), or may offer their services in-kind.

These questions will help the NCSSLE TTA team learn about the partners you rely on to perform your work, so we can help you integrate and align efforts to achieve the best outcomes possible.

3. List up to **three partners** that are most critical to implementing your current work and sustaining your work after the grant ends. [Free response; 3 form fields provided.]

4. For [PARTNER NAME]: How accurate are each of the following statements? This community partner… [Fill in the appropriate rating for the partner named.]

	1 Not at all accurate	2 Somewhat accurate	3 Very accurate
a. Understands the importance of school climate.			
b. Knows how their work fits in with our grant priorities (e.g. [LIST THE PRIORITIES OF THE GRANT]).			
c. Is incorporated in our grant's logic model.			
d. Communicates with us about their work around our grant priorities (e.g. [LIST THE PRIORITIES OF THE GRANT]) at least monthly.			
e. Provides data (such as service logs, referrals from the school, etc.) around their work related to our grant priorities (e.g. [LIST THE PRIORITIES OF THE GRANT]).			
f. Follows through on requests in a timely manner and consistent with agreed upon plans.			
g. Advocates for our work with other stakeholders.			
h. Is willing to work with us in establishing a long-term partnership or seeking additional funding opportunities that will sustain our work.			

Section 3: Programmatic Intervention Selection and Implementation

Programmatic interventions refer to the programs schools are implementing to achieve the goals of your grant. Following implementation best-practices – i.e. using programmatic interventions that fit your students, their needs, their environment, and the resources available – serves as the foundation for achieving the goals of your grant

These questions will help the NCSSLE TTA team understand how you/your [P2/PSR]-funded schools selected and are implementing your grant's programmatic interventions.

5. How much did/does each of the following factors affect your selection of the programmatic interventions used in your schools? [Fill in the appropriate rating for each factor.]

	1 We do not consider this factor.	2 We consider this factor, but it does not drive how we select programmatic interventions.	3 This factor drives how we select programs programmatic interventions.
a. How well programmatic intervention is aligned with grant GPRA priorities			
b. Cost of the programmatic intervention			
c. Familiarity/buy-in from staff			
d. Evidence base for programmatic intervention's effectiveness with target population or issue			
e. Length of time needed to implement programmatic intervention			
f. Direction from district leadership			
g. Level of programmatic intervention (universal, indicated, targeted)			
h. Other [Free response.]			

6. List up to **three programmatic interventions** you/your schools are implementing that are aligned with your [P2/PSR] logic model and specifically target the goals of your grant. Please list programmatic interventions that are being used by a majority of participating schools. [Free response; up to three form fields offered for each intervention listed.]

7. For [INTERVENTION NAME], how accurate are these statements?

	1 Not at all accurate	2 Somewhat accurate	3 Very accurate
a. This programmatic intervention is a good fit for the age of our students.			
b. This programmatic intervention suits the demographics of our students that it serves.			
c. Staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to implement this programmatic intervention.			
d. Teaching staff received all required trainings to implement this programmatic intervention.			

	1 Not at all accurate	2 Somewhat accurate	3 Very accurate
e. Support staff received all required trainings to implement this programmatic intervention.			
f. There is sufficient time available to implement this programmatic intervention.			
g. Adequate financial resources are available to support implementation.			
h. Fidelity of implementation is monitored (i.e. whether the programmatic intervention is being delivered in the same way it was designed to be used and delivered).			
i. This programmatic intervention is successfully being implemented with fidelity.			
j. This programmatic intervention is a good fit for our grant goals and priorities.			

Section 4: School Staffing Support, Training and Skills

Staff are a key resource for implementing programmatic interventions. Hiring, training, supporting, and retaining staff are essential activities to facilitate grant success.

These questions will help the NCSSLE TTA team determine how to support you as you hire, train, and oversee staff and manage performance.

8. How accurate are the following statements about **school support staff/non-teaching personnel** (e.g., counselors, administrators, office staff, coaches, etc.) who work to perform **grant activities?**

	1 Not at all accurate	2 Somewhat accurate	3 Very accurate
a. School support staff received training at the beginning of the most recent school year that explained grant activities.			
b. New school support staff who entered after the start of the school year received training on grant activities within two months of being hired.			

9. How accurate are the following statements about your success in providing both initial and continuous training to **teaching staff** to perform **grant activities**?

	1 Not at all accurate	2 Somewhat accurate	3 Very accurate
a. School teachers received training at the beginning of the most recent school year that explained grant activities.			
b. New school teachers who entered after the start of the school year received training that explained grant activities within two months of being hired.			

10. The following skills relate to the implementation of programmatic interventions and ensuring students' needs are met. Thinking about "staff on the ground" (e.g. those with direct contact with the students your grant aims to support), rate how staff are doing overall on the following activities.

	1 Overall staff have not been trained in this area.	2 Overall, staff have been trained in this area, but have not yet incorporated it into practice.	3 Overall, staff have been trained in this area, have incorporated it into practice, but require support to implement well.	4 Overall, staff have been trained in this area, have incorporated it into practice, and are implementing well independently.
a. Identifying students (screening) and making referrals for targeted or intensive services				
b. Providing mental health consultation				
c. De-escalating behavioral problems				
d. Promoting positive relationships between staff and students				

	1 Overall staff have not been trained in this area.	2 Overall, staff have been trained in this area, but have not yet incorporated it into practice.	3 Overall, staff have been trained in this area, have incorporated it into practice, but require support to implement well.	4 Overall, staff have been trained in this area, have incorporated it into practice, and are implementing well independently.
e. Incorporating programmatic interventions into other school functions (e.g., curriculum, campus culture, before & after-school activities, etc.)				
f. Practicing cultural competence				
g. Practicing trauma-informed and/or trauma-sensitive care				
h. Using alternative discipline models (e.g., non-punitive approaches, such as restorative practices)				

Section 5: Monitoring and Continuous Quality Improvement

Collecting data on the implementation and impact of your programmatic interventions can help you monitor progress towards meeting your goals and guide continuous quality improvement efforts, including making mid-course adjustments to better fit students' and staff needs.

These questions will help the NCSSLE TTA team identify ways to support your use of data over the life of your grant, to inform and improve your efforts each year.

11. Do you have a team dedicated to managing continuous quality improvement (i.e., who uses data to inform programmatic intervention selection, training needs, and other decision-making)?
    - Yes
    - No

12. What data sources do you use routinely to **monitor the implementation of your programmatic interventions and make continuous quality improvements**? [Check all that apply.]
    - Administrative data (attendance sheets, sign-ins, school disciplinary actions, incident data, referral counts, etc.)
    - Student surveys
    - Instructional staff surveys (e.g. teachers)
    - Non-instructional school staff surveys (e.g., administrators, counselors, coaches, bus drivers, school nurses, etc.)
    - Family surveys
    - Program observation checklists/records
    - Partner/Community surveys/feedback forms
    - Other [Free response.]

13. Which data sources do you rely upon to **calculate and report your GPRA data results** and any other performance measures? [Check all that apply.]
    - Administrative data (attendance sheets, sign-ins, school disciplinary actions, incident data, referral counts, etc.)
    - Student surveys
    - Instructional staff surveys (e.g. teachers)
    - Non-instructional school staff surveys (e.g., administrators, counselors, coaches, bus drivers, school nurses, etc.)
    - Family surveys
    - Program observation checklists/records
    - Partner/Community surveys/feedback forms
    - Other [Free response.]

14. How often do you discuss data with the intention of shaping decisions to improve your efforts to fulfill the goals of this grant? [Multiple choice.]
    - Never/We don't use data for this purpose.

- Once a year
- Twice a year
- Quarterly
- Monthly
- Weekly

15. Please select the rating that best reflects your current practices regarding data collection, storage, and analysis.

	1 No plan yet	2 Plan in development	3 Plan partially implemented	4 Plan fully implemented
a. We have a plan to ensure **administrative data quality** (e.g. completeness, accuracy).				
b. We have a plan to ensure **survey data quality** (e.g. limited missing data, sufficient sample sizes, high response rates).				
c. We have a plan to ease the burden of data collection for non-administrative data, including surveys, observation tools, focus groups, etc. (e.g. using computer labs, minimizing data entry burden, integrating data collection into regular school activities).				
d. We have a plan to store non-administrative data securely (e.g., surveys, observation tools, focus groups, etc.).				

	1 No plan yet	2 Plan in development	3 Plan partially implemented	4 Plan fully implemented
e. We have a plan to analyze data for continuous improvement and/or evaluation (i.e., technical/coding skills to run analyses).				
f. We have a plan to interpret data results.				
g. We have a plan to report data to stakeholders.				
h. We have a plan to create buy-in for data collection, analysis, and continuous quality improvement processes.				

16. Which would help you use data more, or better, to improve your work? [Check all that apply.]
   - Interactive webinars on **collecting** GPRA data.
   - Interactive webinars on **reporting** GPRA data.
   - One-on-one assistance with **collecting** GPRA data.
   - One-on-one assistance with **reporting** GPRA data.
   - Guidance documents on **administering** school climate surveys.
   - Guidance documents on **analyzing** school climate surveys.
   - Guidance documents on **reporting** school climate survey data.

Section 6: Grants Management

Successful grants management helps you efficiently handle administrative requirements of maintaining your grant without adversely affecting the implementation of your programmatic interventions and related activities.

These questions will help the NCSSLE TTA team determine how to better support you in managing your grant effectively.

17. How accurate are each of the following statements?

	1 Not at all accurate	2 Somewhat accurate	3 Very accurate
a. We understand what is expected for the annual performance report (APR) due each year.			
b. We have a team, plan, and timeline established to support annual GPRA data collection.			
c. We are on track to meet our goals for GPRA #1 (INSERT DETAIL)[1] by the end of the grant.			
d. We are on track to meet our goals for GPRA #2 (INSERT DETAIL)[2] by the end of the grant.			
e. We are on track to meet our goals for GPRA #3 (INSERT DETAIL)[3] by the end of the grant.			
f. We would like more guidance on how to complete our APR report.			
g. We are successfully expending funds for grant activities as planned.			
h. We have questions we would like to discuss with the federal project officer about our grant spending or activities.			
i. We have recruited and hired the appropriate staff for **all positions** to manage and support grant activities (e.g. project director or manager, trainers, etc.).			
j. There has been turnover during the past year among key staff hired to oversee or deliver grant activities and programmatic interventions.			

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[1] GPRA 1: Violence reduction (P2), Student/mental health professional ratios (ESSC), School-based and community mental health to address trauma (PSR)
[2] GPRA 2: Mental health supports (P2), Discipline referrals (ESSC), Community-based organization partnerships (PSR)
[3] GPRA 3: School engagement (P2); N/A for ESSCs and PSRs which have only two GPRAs

Section 7: Sustainability

Grants end and school initiatives change. Creating processes and structures to sustain key activities and functions ensures that your work will continue to reach students and meet their needs.

These questions will help the TTA team understand how to support you as you make efforts to sustain your work beyond the life of the grant.

18. Please select the rating that best reflects your current practices regarding sustainability.

	1 We have not thought about this.	2 We are developing a plan for this.	3 We have begun to work on this.	4 We have plans and systems solidly in place.
a. We have a sustainability action plan.				
b. We have plans in place to handle a significant shift in priorities by our district.				
c. We have additional long-term funding or school and community-partner commitments to continue our work after the end of our grant.				
d. We have sufficient school-based services to meet student needs.				
e. We have sufficient service partnerships to fulfill our referral needs.				
f. We have routine professional development on grant-related topics.				
g. Grant activities and practices are manualized and incorporated into routine district and school procedures.				
h. We can find tools and products to answer our questions about improving school climate.				

	1 We have not thought about this.	2 We are developing a plan for this.	3 We have begun to work on this.	4 We have plans and systems solidly in place.
i. We have created tools and products to train new staff and/or help staff learn new skills.				
j. We have a communications plan to share our work.				

Preferences for Receiving Training and Technical Assistance (TTA)

Now that you have considered the factors that support or impede your work, the NCSSLE TTA team would like to know your priorities for the coming year, the ways that you would like to receive information, and your general availability.

19. What are your two most high priority TTA needs to be addressed before the end of the school year? [Free response.]

20. Below are some options for TTA activities and supports offered by OSHS and NCSSLE. How beneficial do you find each option?

	1 Not at all beneficial	2 Somewhat beneficial	3 Very beneficial
a. Calls with TA Specialists (TAS)			
b. In-person training (e.g., OSHS PD meeting and Grantee training)			
c. Grantee forums or Communities of Practice			
d. Affinity groups (e.g., small groups of peers) addressing specific topics of mutual interest			
e. Online learning events for grantees (OLEs) (e.g., conference calls with subject matter experts or evidence-based program developers)			
f. NCSSLE webinars for the field at large			
g. Grantee Gateway online workspace			
h. OSHS grantee news and information e-mail summarizing the latest research and resources			

	1 Not at all beneficial	2 Somewhat beneficial	3 Very beneficial
i. NCSSLE website			
j. "Voices from the Field" section of the NCSSLE website			

21. Which days of the week are you likely to participate in virtual TTA events (e.g., conference calls, grantee forums/community of practice, affinity groups, or webinars)? [Check all that apply.]
    - Monday
    - Tuesday
    - Wednesday
    - Thursday
    - Friday

22. What time of day would you prefer to participate in virtual TTA events (e.g., conference calls, grantee forums/community of practice, affinity groups, and webinars)? (Fill in based on your time zone and NCSSLE will adjust when planning.) [Multiple choice.]
    - 8 am – 10 am
    - 10 am – noon
    - Noon – 2 pm
    - 2 pm – 4 pm
    - 4 pm – 6 pm