

Appendix A – Focus Group Protocol

T4PA SEA NA Focus Group Protocol

Introduction for both sections:

Thank you all so much for joining our group for a brief conversation. My name is Julia Callaway, and I am a member of the Title IV, Part A (T4PA) Technical Assistance Center team. The T4PA Center operates within the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Supportive Schools and provides State education agencies with dedicated support for implementing the Title IV, Part A (Title IV-A) Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) program. This conversation will provide us with valuable feedback on your experiences to date in the Title IV, Part A program, and, what types of training and technical assistance you need to better help your 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 will take no more than 60 minutes.
2. Participation in this focus group is voluntary.
3. You can skip any question and stop at any point during the group.
4. There are no right or wrong answers and we really appreciate your honest responses.
5. Please feel free to ask questions at any point and/or ask us to rephrase or clarify a question.
6. The T4PA Center is aware of your participation in this interview. We thus want to inform you that though 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 audio record this conversation? We are recording to make our report preparation easier and as a backup for our notetaking.**

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

Once everyone has given permission - Introductions: To begin, could we all go around and introduce ourselves? Please say your name, what SEA 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?
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For those State Coordinators who completed the survey (Part 1), the questions are:

- 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. Just as a reminder, the areas were administrative, including fiscal, management, evaluation, and LEA-based; and the three priority areas, well-rounded education; safe and supportive schools; and effective use of technology. **Please list the areas in which you recall stating you needed support.**
- 2) Thinking about all the areas in which you stated you needed support, which are the areas with the most immediate need?
 - a) Prompt: If you have multiple areas, feel free to name more than one.
 - i) Prompt: Why did you identify these areas?
 - b) Prompt: If someone lists one of the educational areas (not administrative), ask: In which specific areas do you need the most support? (*Moderator can read the list of subtopics for that area*).
 - i) Prompt: Why did you identify these specific areas?
 - c) Prompt: If someone lists administration, ask: In which specific administrative area do you need the most support? (Fiscal, management, Evaluation, LEA-based).
 - i) 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?
 - a) Prompt: Can you be more specific?
- 4) The 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. How do you most prefer to receive training and technical assistance?
 - a) Prompt: For example, some of modes of training or technical assistance include:
 - i) Webinars scheduled at a specific time on a specific topic
 - ii) One on one training or TA
 - iii) Online tutorials you can watch at your convenience FAQs or other materials that can be printed and distributed
 - iv) Internet-based resources
 - v) Other?
 - b) Prompt: In what ways does it vary by subject matter?
 - c) Prompt: Would small group classes or sessions with a subject matter expert appeal to you as a form of training or technical assistance?
- 5) 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?
 - a) Prompt: This could be related to grant administration, or considerations on the programming side of your work.
- 6) Finally, we regretfully omitted a question from the survey, and would therefore like to ask it now. Could you each please respond to the following question? The four response options are: no support, minimal support, moderate support, or substantial support: **“How much support do you need in disseminating promising practices related to technology instruction, data security, and the acquisition and implementation of technology tools and applications?”**

For those State Coordinators who did not complete the survey, the questions are:

- 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?
 - a) Follow-up questions:
 - b) *If needed, please ask for specificity.*
 - i) Prompt: If you have multiple areas, feel free to name more than one.
(1) Prompt: Why did you identify these areas?
 - ii) Prompt: If someone lists one of the educational areas (not administrative), ask: In which specific areas do you need the most support? (*Moderator can read the list of subtopics for that area*).
(1) Prompt: Why did you identify these specific areas?
 - iii) Prompt: If someone lists administration, ask: In which specific administrative area do you need the most support? (Fiscal, management, Evaluation, LEA-based).
(1) Prompt: Why did you identify these areas?
- 2) What is your preferred format for receiving training or technical assistance and why?
 - a) Prompt: For example, some of modes of training or technical assistance include:
 - i) Webinars scheduled at a specific time on a specific topic
 - ii) One on one training or TA
 - iii) Online tutorials you can watch at your convenience FAQs or other materials that can be printed and distributed
 - iv) Internet-based resources
 - v) Other?
 - b) Prompt: In what ways does it vary by subject matter?
 - c) Prompt: Would small group classes or sessions with a subject matter expert appeal to you 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?
 - a) Prompt: Can you be more specific?
- 4) What is the one piece of advice you would pass along to a new SC about working on Title IV, Part A?
 - a) Prompt: This could be related to grant administration, or considerations on the programming side of your work.

Public Burden Statement

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Appendix B – Draft Announcements, Invitations, and Scripts

For those who answered the survey

Initial Invitation from COR

Dear [State Coordinator],

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete the SEA Needs Assessment survey during the last few weeks of June. We are busily turning the answers you provided into an individualized report for your records and incorporating your responses into your T/TA plans.

I wanted to take a moment to invite you to participate in a short 60-minute conversation that will dive further into your T/TA needs for the coming year and how you would like the T/TA to be provided.

There will be three sessions during the weeks of August 26 and September 5 listed below. Please use the link below to sign up for a session. Sessions will be filled on a first come, first serve basis. If you cannot make any of the three dates, please reply to this email and your TA liaison will be in touch to set up a brief one-on-one conversation.

Thank you very much for your participation in this effort, we look forward to speaking with you soon,

Best,
Hamed

Confirmation to be sent within one day of sign-up from the T4PA Center

Thank you very much for your sign-up to participate in our group conversation on DATE and TIME. Please have available your individual results from the SEA Needs Assessment as we will be asking questions based on your answers to the survey. If you have any additional questions, please reach out to the T4PA Center at T4PACenter@seiservices.com.

Thank-you text for participants from the T4PA Center

Dear [State Coordinator],

Thank you for participating in the recent conversation with your T4PA Center partners. We appreciate the feedback and insight that you were able to provide. Your responses will be reflected in your T/TA plans that will be distributed this fall.

Kind regards,

Did not respond to emails from the T4PA Center

On XX (date) you received an invitation to participate in a 60-minute conversation with your T4PA Center partners regarding your training and technical assistance needs and how the T4PA Center could best support you. There is still time to sign up for a session using the links below. We hope to talk with you at one of the sessions. If you are unavailable at these times, please let us know by replying to this email and your TA liaison will reach out to you to schedule a one-on-one conversation.

Thank you,

For those who did not answer the survey

Initial invitation from COR

Dear [State Coordinator],

I hope you have had productive summer. As the school year approaches, I wanted to take a moment to invite you to participate in a short 60 minute conversation that will dive into your Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) needs for the coming year and how you would like the T/TA to be provided. The information discussed during these sessions will be used to inform your individual T/TA plan as well as guide our efforts to provide you with the best T/TA we can.

There will be three sessions during the weeks of August 26 and September 5 listed below. Please use the link below to sign up for a session. Sessions will be filled in a first come, first serve basis. If you cannot make any of the three dates, please reply to this email and your TA liaison will be in touch to set up a brief one-on-one conversation.

Thank you very much for your participation in this effort, we look forward to speaking with you soon,

Best,
Hamed

Confirmation to be sent within one day of sign-up from the T4PA Center

Thank you very much for your sign-up to participate in our group conversation on DATE and TIME. The conversation will cover your T/TA needs and how we can best provide T/TA to you. If you have any additional questions, please reach out to the T4PA Center at T4PACenter@seiservices.com .

Thank-you text for participants from the T4PA Center

Dear [State Coordinator],

Thank you for participating in the recent conversation with your T4PA Center partners. We appreciate the feedback and insight that you were able to provide. Your responses will be reflected in your T/TA plans that will be distributed this fall.

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Thank you,