State Education Agency Key Informant Interview Guide

I. INTRODUCTION AND CONSENT

Thank you for agreeing to speak with me today.

As you know, your state education agency was awarded funds to implement Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Healthy Schools Program, also known as the 1801 Healthy Schools Program. ICF is conducting an evaluation of the Healthy Schools Program to better understand how states are supporting local school districts and schools to create healthier school environments. The goal of this interview is to learn how your state is implementing infrastructure, professional development, and technical assistance activities to support healthy schools. The results of the evaluation will be used to improve support and implementation of school health programs.

Participation in this interview is voluntary and you may choose not to respond to any question. The interview should take about 60-75 minutes. Your name will not be associated with the information that you share for the purpose of this evaluation. You can stop the interview at any time and if you decide to not participate there will be no penalties of any kind. Taking part in the interview will cause no risk. You will receive no immediate benefit for participating in the interview other than the knowledge that you are helping to contribute information that will be used for program improvement. The results of the interview will be used to improve support and implementation of school health programs.

If you have questions about this evaluation please contact the evaluation team lead, Isabela Lucas, at 404-592-2155 or Isabela.lucas@icf.com. For questions regarding your rights related to this evaluation you can contact ICF's Institutional Review Board (IRB) representative at Carole.Harris@icf.com.

Do you agree to participate? **[If yes]** Thank you! With your permission, we would like to record the interview. The recording will be professionally transcribed to aid in summarizing the findings from the evaluation.

Do you agree to be recorded? **[If yes]** Thank you. Do you have any questions before we start?

 [If no] Okay, we will proceed with the interview but it will not be recorded. Do you have any questions before start?

***Note to interviewer**: *If the interviewee agrees to participate thank her/him and initiate the interview. If the interviewee does NOT agree to participate thank her/him and end the interview saying you will be in touch with the school to identify another person to participate in the interview.*

II. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

NOTE for interviewee: Whenever asking about "who" during this interview we are interested in the roles, titles, and/or organizations, and NOT in actual individual names.

SEA Characteristics and Organizational Structure

1. What is your role at the [state] department/agency?

   a. What is your role in the state's cooperative agreement with CDC to implement the Healthy Schools Program? As a reminder, my questions today are about the Healthy Schools Program unless otherwise noted.

2. Please describe the organizational structure of the state education agency (SEA)/department, particularly with regard to the Healthy Schools Program.

   a. What staff positions does the SEA have in place to support its Healthy Schools Program? School health coordinator? Nutrition specialist? PE/PA specialist? State school nurse consultant? Out-of-School-Time (OTS) coordinator? Others?

   b. What is the chain of command for those directly responsible for implementing the Healthy Schools Program? For those responsible for providing professional development and technical assistance to local districts?

   c. Does your SEA have the staff capacity you need to fully implement the program?

   d. Does your SEA have any position vacancies that are impacting implementation of the Healthy Schools Program? If so, please describe.

3. How are the state's school health priorities established?

   a. Who is responsible and what is the process for setting these priorities?

   b. What statewide policies or plans govern your school health priorities, if any?

   c. What state policies, laws, or regulations might serve as barriers or facilitators to implementing activities for the Healthy Schools Program? How so?

4. Who are the key stakeholders or partners of the Healthy Schools Program outside the state education agency? [Probe by health topic (nutrition, physical activity, management of chronic conditions, out-of-school time)].

5. CDC's model for school health is known as the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model, or WSCC. How does your state agency apply the WSCC model to your work?

   a. How has the model shaped your state's health priorities? Programmatic activities?

   b. How do you promote the WSCC model with local districts and schools, if at all?

Infrastructure Development

Now I would like to discuss your SEA's implementation activities. First, let's start with infrastructure development activities.

6. Please describe the work you are doing to establish (or strengthen) a statewide health coalition.

   a. Please tell me about the specific methods and activities used to develop (or strengthen) the coalition.

b.   What developments (or changes) have occurred in the statewide coalition since receiving the CDC award? [Probe: new partners recruited/added, new groups represented, established/changes in structure, changes in priorities and strategies, improved capacity]

c.   How is the coalition structured? What content-specific committees or subgroups are in place?

d.   When and how often does the coalition meet? How does the coalition function and perform tasks?

e.   What specific activities are being implemented by the coalition to support healthy schools? What has the coalition achieved so far since receiving the CDC award?

f.   What barriers or challenges were encountered with regard to establishing (strengthening) the statewide coalition?

g.   What facilitates your SEA's efforts to establish (strengthen) the statewide coalition?

7.   How is the SEA supporting the development of school health councils in districts and schools?

a.   What specific activities are being used to support district and/or school health councils?

b.   What barriers or challenges were encountered with regard to supporting development of district and/or school health councils?

c.   What facilitates your SEA's ability to support the development of district and/or school health councils?

d.   What changes have you seen in the number and quality of school health councils within the state? Within targeted districts and schools? Please provide an example.

8.   How is the SEA supporting the use of the *School Health Index* in targeted districts and schools?

a.   What specific activities are being used to support use of the School Health Index?

b.   What barriers or challenges were encountered when supporting the use of the School Health Index?

c.   What facilitates your SEA's ability to support the use of the School Health Index?

d.   What changes have you seen in the use of the School Health Index in the state? within targeted districts and schools? Please provide an example.

9.   How is the SEA using technology to improve and support communication, dissemination, training, and program implementation?

a.   What specific technologies are you pursuing or using?

b.   What barriers or challenges were encountered with regard to use of technology to support communication, dissemination, training, and program implementation?

c.   What facilitates your SEA's ability to use technology to support communication, dissemination, training, and program implementation?

Professional Development and Training to LEAs and Schools

***Now let's shift the discussion to your professional development and training activities...*

10. What training model(s) does your state use to design and deliver professional development and training to local districts and schools? (e.g., adult learning principles, ADDIE, active learning)

11. How does the SEA identify professional development and training needs or opportunities within your targeted school district and schools?

12. What partners are engaged in providing PD and training to targeted districts and schools?

    a. What topics do partners address in the trainings they provide?

13. Describe the SEA's progress in establishing a cadre of trainers to deliver PD in your state?

    a. What activities did the SEA use to establish the cadre?

    b. Which activities were most helpful in establishing the cadre? Least helpful?

    c. What training topics are provided by the training cadre (as compared to partners)?

14. What training methods or modes are used most frequently to deliver trainings? (e.g., Webinars, in-person trainings)

    a. In your observation, which training modes are most effective in your state and why? Which modes are least effective?

    b. Are certain training modes more effective for particular content areas? If so, please describe.

15. What barriers or challenges has the SEA encountered when planning and delivering PD or training, if any?

16. What facilitates the delivery of PD or training to districts and schools? (i.e., what makes it easier for your state to deliver PD or training to districts and schools?)

17. How does the SEA assess/track the impact of PD and training provided to districts and schools?

    a. How does the SEA follow up with training participants to see if they are using new skills? To provide additional support?

18. What changes or benefits are you seeing at district and school levels as a result of the PD and training received?

Technical Assistance to LEAs and Schools

***Now we will turn to the topic of technical assistance, or TA, provided to local education agencies and schools...*

19. What process or system is in place for providing TA to local education agencies and schools?

20. Who is eligible to receive TA from the SEA? How do you identify TA needs among local school districts and schools?

    a. Can districts and schools request TA? For what topics can they request TA?

21. Who from the SEA provides TA to districts and schools?

    a. Do any of your partners provide TA? If so, describe.

22. What modes of TA are provided to targeted districts and schools? (e.g., phone consultations, site visits, helpdesk)

    a. Describe any differences in the TA offered to districts versus schools, if any?

    b. What TA modes seem to be preferred by districts and schools?

    c. How often is technical assistance provided?

23. What barriers or challenges has the SEA encountered when planning or providing TA to districts and schools, if any?

24. What facilitates the delivery of TA to districts and schools? (i.e., What makes it easier to deliver TA to districts and schools?)

25. How does the SEA assess/track the impact of TA provided to districts and schools?

26. What changes or benefits are you seeing at district and school levels as a result of the TA received? Can you provide an example?

Tool Promotion

****Next, I want to ask you a few questions about how you are promoting specific school health tools...*

27. Besides PD/training and TA, what other ways do you promote specific tools and resources that support school health policies and practices? What promotion strategies do you find to be most effective?

28. What specific tools and resources do you commonly promote throughout the state? [Probe: CSPAP, HECAT, PECAT, SHI, WellSat 2.0]

29. How do you identify and share best practices for nutrition, PE/PA, OST, and health services that are happening at the district and school levels with other communities throughout the state?

Support from CDC

****Now I'd like to ask you about the support your agency receives from CDC to implement the Healthy Schools Program. These questions are about training and technical assistance (or TA) from CDC.*

30. Please tell me about the training and TA support your SEA receives from CDC.

    a. How does your SEA request support when needed?

    b. How has the training and TA your SEA received from CDC helped you and your colleagues implement your school health program? Describe any impacts that CDC TA has had on your school health program (e.g., able to train more staff, improved application of CDC tools, improved online resource bank, etc.).

    c. What training and TA needs does your SEA have, if any, that have not been addressed so far? (e.g., training on a specific topic or tool is not available or training was ineffective in meeting your needs)?

    d. What barriers has your SEA encountered when requesting and/or receiving TA from CDC or its partners, if any?

    e. What makes it easier to request and/or receive TA from CDC or its partners, if anything?

Sustaining Healthy Schools

****Finally, I'd like to learn about how your plans to sustain your state's efforts to promote healthy schools.*

31. What efforts are underway to sustain the work of the Healthy Schools Program?

    a. [Probes: sustainability plan, efforts to incorporate health and wellness language into state and district policies, ESSA state plans, etc.]

b. How are you engaging members of the statewide coalition and your partners to sustain healthy schools?

Those are all of the questions we have for you today. Do you have any questions for me?
Thank you very much for taking the time to participate in this interview!
Your responses will contribute greatly to the evaluation of the initiative. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Isabela Lucas, Team Lead for this evaluation, at Isabela.lucas@icf.com or 404-592-2155.