



Getting the Word Out:

Promoting Successful Title IV, Part A Programming

INFORMATION SHEET

Purpose

The purpose of this information sheet is to help State coordinators (SCs) share and promote local education agencies' (LEAs') successful programming funded by Title IV, Part A. SCs can use this information sheet to support the flow of information about success stories across LEAs, inspiring LEA peers to learn from one another and potentially replicate promising programs or other activities.

Introduction

The goal of Title IV, Part A (Title IV-A) is to help local education agencies (LEAs) improve school and student outcomes. LEAs often have multiple priorities in the operation of their school systems and may not have the time or resources to explore various programming options for implementation of the Title IV-A program. State coordinators (SCs) can support LEAs by collecting and sharing successful or promising programs and activities that other LEAs in the state are currently implementing.

Further, SCs can actively connect LEAs that have common needs and contexts so that they may share and learn from one another. This document provides tips to help SCs learn about LEAs and inform them about the good work that their peers are doing with Title IV-A-funded programming to address identified needs.

Statutory Support for Disseminating Information About Programming

[The Title IV-A statute](#) supports SCs' role in disseminating information about successful, promising, and evidence-based programs (EBPs). Specifically, this statute says that State education agencies (SEAs) may use funds to provide capacity building (Sec. 4104(b)(1)); help LEAs foster safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments through the use of evidence-based resources (Sec. 4104(b)(3)(B)(iii); Sec. 4104(b)(3)(C)(iii)); and disseminate promising practices and make instructional content widely available (Sec. 4104(b)(3)(B)(iv); Sec. 4104(b)(3)(C)(iv) and (vi)).



Tips for Promoting LEA Programming and Activities

1 Look for and Collect Examples of Successful LEA Programming Proactively

The following strategies can serve as a starting point for SCs to identify successful programs implemented within and across LEAs:

- Revisit SEA-published reports about LEA progress toward Title IV-A objectives. Make note of what was featured, progress made over time, or trends across LEAs.
- Review LEAs' consolidated applications actively to find information about their programming choices and successes. Keep notes about effective programs and practices within each LEA, as well as commonalities across LEAs.
- Focus on programming with evidence of success when reviewing LEAs' applications for funds (and, if provided, their needs assessments and evaluation plans).
- Convene community of practice (CoP) discussions with small groups of LEA leaders to learn about programs that have been successful in their schools.
- Request information about LEAs' success stories through emails, newsletters, and Website forms or during meetings, conferences, or other convenings.
- Talk with LEA leaders one-on-one as part of routine technical assistance interactions.
- Follow news reporting about LEAs' efforts to improve schools by using search engine alerts or proprietary news tracking services.

It is a good practice for SCs to track and compile successful Title IV-A programming options they hear or read about and then share this information with LEAs. For example, SCs could compile their findings into an online searchable repository of best

practices and success stories. SCs might also maintain a database with entries for each LEA that lists the Title IV-A priority content areas addressed in each program, the name of the innovative activity, a description of the practice, evidence of effectiveness if available, and the LEA point of contact for further information. This database could be as simple as an Excel spreadsheet that includes the relevant information.

2 Identify LEAs With Similar Programming Needs

Although some programs and activities might work across all LEAs, it is often the case that LEAs' unique situations and challenges require tailored solutions. To better understand the landscape and plan for supporting tailored solutions, SCs can connect the dots. Specifically, SCs can make a list of LEAs with common needs or interests, and then add information about the different programming options that have been identified to address those specific topics (for additional guidance on this process, see the T4PA brief [Assessing and Addressing LEA Needs](#)). It may be the case that no single LEA among a group with common needs has been able to identify or implement successful programming to meet those needs. If so, SCs can review EBP registries for ideas to share with LEAs (for more information on EBPs, see "[The Importance of Evidence-Based Programs](#)").



The Importance of Evidence-Based Programs (EBPs)

Choosing the right programs to promote is critical to LEA and student success. Title IV-A strongly encourages the use of EBPs that have already been shown to be effective for the intended purpose and in comparable contexts (i.e., the selected programs have been successfully used in similar school systems for comparable issues). Ideally, these programs also offer equitable and culturally responsive approaches to help meet the desired goals. Promising programs, with some preliminary evidence, can also be used (Sec. 8101(21)(A) (i)(III)). For a promising program that seems aligned with an LEA's identified needs but lacks sufficient evidence, consider reaching out to content experts to assess its generalizability to the specific LEA's circumstances.

After an LEA has identified an EBP, LEAs will want to take steps toward implementation. These steps may include training staff, acquiring needed resources, or establishing processes for data collection and evaluation. For more information, see [Selecting Evidence-Based Programs and Practices for Title IV, Part Activities and Assisting LEAs With the Use of Evidence-Based Practices and Programs](#).

3 Articulate how LEAs' Needs and Work Align With Each Other or With State Priorities

All programming that promotes student and school success is worth sharing, but SCs may want to begin with activities that LEAs have in common or that help address state-articulated priorities. Doing so shows other LEAs how they might address a common issue or satisfy state requirements (if applicable). For example, an SEA may have a departmental goal to improve mental health supports offered throughout the state school

system. Meanwhile, several rural school districts' needs assessments may indicate that mental health supports and community-specific strategies are also priorities for stakeholders. SEAs can note and disseminate examples of other LEAs' solutions that have been successful in meeting this need. Sharing SEA goals that are aligned with LEA needs and promoting co-learning through success stories can help LEA leaders become more aware of and use Title IV-A programs that effectively support mental health and other common, priority needs.

4 Facilitate Ways for LEAs to Connect, Share, and Support One Another

After identifying examples of successful programming for LEAs to share with or learn about from others, SCs can serve in the valuable roles of promoter and facilitator. Unidirectional communications channels (e.g., Web pages, social media, and newsletters) can help spread the word about innovative or successful activities. Such "spotlights" can do a great job featuring success stories, but typically need to be written to a more general audience and focus on sharing the broad accomplishment, with less description of implementation steps.

LEA leaders will likely want a chance to talk about the specifics of a successful activity. To assist with this conversation, SCs can facilitate opportunities for LEAs with similar needs or contexts to connect. Interactive forums (e.g., small-group meetings, and virtual CoPs) both promote relationship building and allow time for peer-to-peer discussions about the most appropriate programming options and strategies for specific circumstances, settings, or populations. Events like these also give participants a chance to engage in active learning, thinking, planning, and problem solving. Larger forums might also be useful to share details or provide training on new, promising programming (see "Reaching a Larger Audience").

Reaching a Larger Audience

If information about successful programming might benefit all LEAs, consider providing more structured learning supports, such as workshops or annual statewide conference sessions. Doing so increases the likelihood that the information will reach more LEAs and, if training is included, that a new intervention might be used and implemented to fidelity.

To make the biggest impression on listeners, facilitate firsthand retelling of program success stories. This helps LEAs identify with one another and conveys the authenticity and feasibility of the approach. Depending on the effort needed to carry out the activity, SCs may wish to ask LEAs presenting their work to invite any partners who helped make the work successful. Such joint presentations show LEA peers how agreements, activities, and services were set up. The opportunity to learn from one another about how programs and activities were planned, funded, and conducted may inspire other LEA leaders to replicate successful work. LEAs may also feel a greater sense of trust when hearing about strategies tested by peers in real-world settings, working in comparable communities and contexts.

Also consider whether it might be useful to convene LEA staff members in specific roles and with similar interests. The following are some examples:

- District superintendents may find value in discussing high-level approaches to address a common goal.
- Curriculum selection team leads may want to connect and learn about the details of a particular programmatic intervention.
- Administrative data system leads can share how they developed successful data management platforms or school dashboards.

- School-based physical and mental health planners could discuss how they have supported identification, referral, service provision, and student/family privacy practices.
- Annual assessments data managers could compare notes on activities that support school personnel with reporting grades or using the data for formative assessment.
- LEAs working to develop diverse, equitable, and inclusive programming may sometimes focus on identity-based cohorts, as appropriate. Individuals willing to share their related cultural, socioeconomic, ability-based, or other lived experiences can offer their perspectives on programs and activities that successfully supported diverse students and staff in respectful and effective ways.

SCs can also encourage LEAs to present their successes at conferences. This might begin as a conversation with SEA-level planners, persuading them to promote that type of peer-to-peer sharing at large-scale events. SCs could also leverage smaller events (e.g., office hours) to spotlight an LEA each time they meet, thereby offering a less intimidating platform for local leaders to share their efforts and accomplishments.



5 Help All LEAs Find a Success Story

To avoid feelings of competition among LEAs, SCs can focus on providing LEAs with access to a supportive learning network. That said, trust building often includes reciprocity; all LEAs would like to feel like they have something to offer. It is important for SCs to help each LEA find its strengths and ways to contribute meaningfully to the learning community. To address this, take inventory of the visibility of each LEA to its peers, and consider whether the LEA is sharing a lot (i.e., giving information to others) or consuming a lot (i.e., receiving information from others). Some LEAs may be working hard but experiencing mixed results, may have new staff or leadership, or may not be sure how to contribute as part of a joint learning community. SCs can speak with LEA representatives to explore what success looks like for them, then figure out a plan to share their efforts with their peers. Doing so will help LEAs understand and respect that each is on its own path

to success. Some are making incremental progress, while others are moving in leaps and bounds. However, all LEAs have similar goals of promoting school, staff, and student success, and all potentially have something to add to the conversation.

Conclusion

This information sheet provides SCs with methods to identify and promote successful LEA programming and activities that support the Title IV-A grant goals. Shining the light on LEAs' successes may strengthen SEA-LEA relationships as well as inter-LEA connections. Promoting "what works" may inspire LEAs to replicate promising activities and programming being implemented by peers. SCs may use the information collected and shared throughout this process to assess the merit of activities and programming proposed in LEA applications for Title IV-A funds. This information may also help LEAs shape their plans for school improvement and student and staff support. Using these tips will help SCs raise the visibility of LEAs' success stories, which may help improve outcomes for students across Title IV-A priority areas.



Contact Us

Help Desk Toll-Free Number:
(833) 404-4845

Help Desk Email:
info@t4pacenter.org

T4PA Center Website:
<https://t4pacenter.ed.gov>



Established in 2018, the T4PA Center is operated by Synergy Enterprises, Inc. under Contract #ED-ESE-15-A-0015 awarded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Supportive Schools (OSSS). All materials created or disseminated by the T4PA Center, including the contents of this publication, should not be presumed to reflect the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education or to imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education. The U.S. Department of Education and the T4PA Center do not guarantee the accuracy, timeliness, applicability, or completeness of any outside information provided in these materials. The T4PA Center does not endorse products, services, or service providers.

This publication may contain hyperlinks and URLs for information created and maintained by private organizations. This information is provided for the reader's convenience. The inclusion of information or a hyperlink or URL does not reflect the importance of the organization, nor is it intended to endorse any views expressed or services offered. All hyperlinks and URLs were accessed March 2022.