

**SPOTLIGHT ON:****ALABAMA  
TITLE IV-A IMPLEMENTATION**

## **TITLE IV, PART A STATE USE OF FUNDS: Convening a Title IV, Part A Advisory Committee**

The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) convenes a Title IV, Part A (Title IV-A) Advisory Committee (Committee) as part of the training and technical assistance (T/TA) the Title IV-A team provides to local education agencies (LEAs). ALSDE formed the Committee to increase engagement with LEAs and to support and advise ALSDE's two-person Title IV-A team, which is responsible for 142 LEAs. The Committee comprises 20 members — two representatives from each of Alabama's State Board of Education districts and four additional LEA representatives. To form the Committee, ALSDE intentionally selected members from both rural and urban districts and brought together a combination of more experienced and newer Title IV-A coordinators.

Since establishing the Committee, ALSDE has benefited from the group's collective insights. During the Committee's first meeting, ALSDE and the Committee members formed a working group to develop program monitoring materials. Using exemplars collected from other State education agency (SEA) partners as a model, ALSDE and the Committee members

reviewed existing documents in groups, discussed how each subsection could be tailored to ALSDE, and ultimately co-created a unique, Alabama risk-based monitoring assessment. Additionally, the Committee developed two forms for the ALSDE State coordinators (SCs) to use while conducting monitoring and T/TA with LEAs. ALSDE plans to continue this collaborative approach and considers it a defining characteristic of the Committee and its work. Future meetings will occur on a quarterly basis, and Committee members will continue to participate in activities such as reviewing documents, providing input on processes, and raising discussion points and strategies to enhance T/TA provided by ALSDE.

ALSDE and the Committee also hosted a virtual conference, which was open to both Committee members and more than 80 additional LEA representatives. The conference served as a peer-to-peer learning opportunity, allowing LEAs to engage with and learn from one another and, in turn, enhance their own local programs and processes. LEAs were invited to present on a range of topics at the conference, including effective use of funds



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and innovative practices, and shared their own tools and strategies used in their work. Following the event, full session recordings were disseminated to any LEAs that were unable to attend.

The Committee's work remains ongoing, and the ALSDE SCs continue to seek guidance and input from the Committee members. At subsequent meetings, the Committee recommended that ALSDE dedicate time to targeted T/TA and outreach. As a result, ALSDE now hosts regular peer-to-peer support meetings that include a mixture of open forum discussions and prepared presentations from LEAs that are piloting novel approaches to their Title IV-A programs. These events allow LEAs to ask questions and learn from their peers in a consistent, informal setting.

## **PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION TAKEAWAYS**

The Committee has helped enhance ALSDE's Title IV-A program and its relationship with LEAs. For other states that may want to implement a similar approach, ALSDE offers the following suggested practices.

### **SUGGESTED PRACTICE**

#### **Lean on established partnerships with LEAs.**

ALSDE emphasizes the importance of maintaining strong, ongoing relationships with districts, noting that these relationships can be leveraged when selecting members to serve on an advisory committee. ALSDE's Title IV-A team already knew its LEAs through application review processes and was therefore able to reach back out and identify Committee representatives through

those connections. The Committee and ALSDE work closely together, making relationships a critical component of success throughout the process.

### **SUGGESTED PRACTICE**

#### **Convene a diverse group of representatives.**

For building a successful advisory committee, ALSDE highlights the importance of including representatives who bring a variety of experiences to the collaborative. The ALSDE Title IV-A team notes that its Committee benefits from having representatives from both rural and urban districts, as well as more experienced Title IV-A coordinators who provide support for newer coordinators. When the Committee convenes, these diverse experiences can enhance collaboration and peer learning.

### **SUGGESTED PRACTICE**

#### **Involve LEAs in the state-level processes that affect their work.**

One unique element about the ALSDE Committee is how the LEA representatives' input is used to evaluate and modify state-run processes. Instead of using a top-down approach, ALSDE engages LEAs in shaping the Title IV-A processes that affect their work, allowing for practitioners at the local level to play an active role in how processes are run at the state level. For other states looking to involve LEAs as part of a similar committee, Ayanna Long, the ALSDE Title IV-A SC, underscored the importance of LEAs having a voice in the processes that impact them.

To learn more about Federal programs in Alabama, visit ALSDE's [Website](#).

## **CONTACT US**

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