RFA State Education Fellows' Progress Updates on Priority Leverage Points

October 2019

RESULTS FOR AMERICA

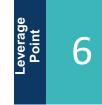# Table of Contents

Colorado

Leverage Point 4

Using Evidence to Allocate School Improvement Funds
- Implemented an internal process called the "Service Design Team" to support the development of internal supports/services to the field. CDE staff interested in providing supports (e.g. principal supervisor network) must apply to this internal team,w hich asks for information about evidence-base, design structure, and intended outcomes

Leverage Point 5

LEA Applications for School Improvement
- Continuing to refine the common application for school improvement (EASI) funds
- Additional resources allocated from the state legislature to school improvement resources.

Leverage Point 6

Monitoring and Evaluating School Improvement
- Received additional resources from state legislature to support program evaluation

Leverage Point 8

TA on Needs Assessment
- Internal initiative to align Diagnostic Review and improvement planning activities to CST Four Domains

Leverage Point 9

TA on Selecting Evidence-Based Interventions
- Internal team evaluating root causes identified in schools' improvement plans to guide the development of strategy guides
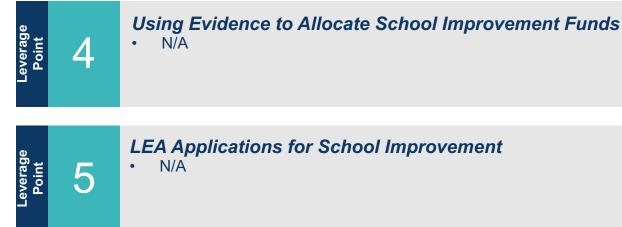
Colorado

Briefly describe one way that your agency is using evidence to advance your efforts to achieve more equitable opportunities and outcomes for students in your state.
(e.g., Have you commissioned an evaluation to specifically examine the impact of a particular program or strategy on vulnerable student populations? Have you used the results of evaluation to redirect funds towards evidence-based approaches found to be impactful for certain student groups?)

- *CO received additional funding through the state in late spring 2019*
- *We are working to create an evaluation process and are grappling with how best to maximize the evaluation resources*
  - *This includes what do we manage internally, what do we manage through a public-private partnership, what else is possible?*

- *We are keenly focused on how to bring coherence across the department to our evaluation work and leverage various evaluations*

Briefly describe one challenge your agency is facing when it comes to leveraging evidence to address equity goals.

- *Grappling with how to account for all the unique contexts and situations in order to determin effectiveness of CDE-offered supports*
- *How best to progress monitor new initiatives in some turnaround settings*

Kentucky

Leverage Point 4

Using Evidence to Allocate School Improvement Funds
- N/A

Leverage Point 5

LEA Applications for School Improvement
- N/A

Leverage Point 6

Monitoring and Evaluating School Improvement
- The Kentucky Department of Education will be implementing a new quarterly monitoring process.
  - Thirty-one (31) student level data points will be analyzed.
  - Schools will receive a written report and an in-person meeting from state education staff to provide support and leverage change points.

Leverage Point 8

TA on Needs Assessment
- Districts and schools are engaging in the newly revised Needs Assessment for their respective comprehensive improvement plans. The needs assessment is to be completed by November 1st.
- The Kentucky Department of Education hosted its annual Continuous Improvement Summit, which brought together over 800 school and district leaders. Participants engaged in several trainings related to improvement planning, which included four sessions on how to build an effective improvement plan. The session highlighted the importance of the Needs Assessment when establishing priorities.

Leverage Point 9

TA on Selecting Evidence-Based Interventions
- KDE will continue providing as-needed assistance and training to schools regarding evidence-based practices (EBPs).
- KDE is piloting a Professional Learning Community (PLC) protocol to support the work in schools and make EBPs *a natural part of what we do*.
- The Elevating Evidence roadshow in July welcomed over 480 participants, which included district and school level personnel, as well as regional cooperative representatives. Over 55% of Kentucky's school districts had at least one representative attend a training.

Kentucky

Briefly describe one way that your agency is using evidence to advance your efforts to achieve more equitable opportunities and outcomes for students in your state. (e.g., Have you commissioned an evaluation to specifically examine the impact of a particular program or strategy on vulnerable student populations? Have you used the results of evaluation to redirect funds towards evidence-based approaches found to be impactful for certain student groups?)

Continuous Improvement Coaching (CIC) – KDE conducted a data analysis to review the impact of the Continuous Improvement Coaching program on summative student achievement. We examined the impact of nine treatment conditions. This information was used internally as part of our continuous improvement process. Findings of this analysis were used to amend the theory of action for the 2019-20 school year. This program addresses inequity by providing additional targeted support for low performing schools in rural communities. We will repeat this procedure at the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

Teacher Equity – KDE conducted a data analysis that explored the relationship between teacher-centric measures of school quality and CSI/TSI/Other schools. The study found that schools identified for CSI status have a statistically different teaching population than schools in TSI or otherwise identified schools. We are continuing to explore this data to determine if there are causal predictors that can be used to create early warning/risk factors. From this study, we also observed that retention and turnover are significant issues in CSI schools. We are currently studying the impact of past retention efforts developed by LEAs with SIG funds.

Briefly describe one challenge your agency is facing when it comes to leveraging evidence to address equity goals.

The rural/urban equity issue in Kentucky is a vital concern. Rural schools have indicated that they have struggled to find relevant research to support the continued use of programs/practices in their schools. The majority of research seems to be conducted in urban settings.

Massachusetts

Leverage Point 4

Using Evidence to Allocate School Improvement Funds
- Developed and rolled out new grant program for all CSI and TSI schools (102 schools)
- Completed competitive SRG competition for 8 eligible schools – all awarded
- Reviewing all evidence submissions in summer 2019, analyzing patterns and trends and areas for enhanced supports

Leverage Point 5

LEA Applications for School Improvement
- Enhanced guidance on our website with numerous resources
- Hosting face-to-face and webinar PD for SEA staff AND districts and schools throughout the year
- Virtual office hours with SEA EBI point-person (Kendra)

Leverage Point 6

Monitoring and Evaluating School Improvement
- Expanded annual school site visits from ~50 to ~120 schools
- Using a new rubric for secondary schools
- Analyzing monitoring data in summer '19 for patterns, trends and areas for enhanced supports
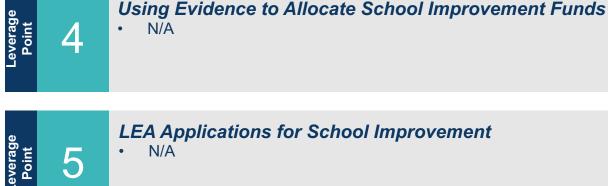
Leverage Point 8

TA on Needs Assessment
- Enhanced guidance on our website with several resources
- Providing PD to SEA staff to use guidance and resources directly with districts
- Exploring strategies to improve needs assessment relative to racial equity for SY '19-20

Leverage Point 9

TA on Selecting Evidence-Based Interventions
- How Do We Know website, enhanced turnaround plan guidance, advisory council
- Providing PD to SEA staff, districts and schools, virtual office hours with Kendra
- FAQs, case studies under development – will review all evidence submissions to determine areas of support for SY 19-20

Minnesota

Leverage Point 4

Using Evidence to Allocate School Improvement Funds
- N/A

Leverage Point 5

LEA Applications for School Improvement
- N/A

Leverage Point 6

Monitoring and Evaluating School Improvement
- The Regional Centers of Excellence, the organization that facilitates school improvement in Minnesota, has continued to evaluate their work throughout this improvement cycle. Considerable effort has been spent on evaluating the quality of practices identified by schools in their school improvement plans and strategizing on how to support schools that need to revisit their plan.

Leverage Point 8

TA on Needs Assessment
- The Minnesota Department of Education has been working on an updated needs assessment that would provide a more holistic view of factors that affect student success. Training around the needs assessment is also currently being developed.

Leverage Point 9

TA on Selecting Evidence-Based Interventions
- Minnesota is revisiting its evidence-based practice list to include practices that are not directly aligned with indicators that would get a school identified under our accountability system. A training is also being developed that will be targeted to district-level positions, such as title directors, that will explain how to use evidence and evaluations when making investments and purchases.

Minnesota

Briefly describe one way that your agency is using evidence to advance your efforts to achieve more equitable opportunities and outcomes for students in your state. (e.g., Have you commissioned an evaluation to specifically examine the impact of a particular program or strategy on vulnerable student populations? Have you used the results of evaluation to redirect funds towards evidence-based approaches found to be impactful for certain student groups?)

- *There have been numerous conversations about how to get the message out about ESSA's definition of "evidence-based" out to a broader audience. When we first approached ESSA implementation, we viewed the requirement as most important for identified schools. Now we are reconsidering this and we are considering ways to get high-leverage individuals, like federal program administrators, on board with looking at the evidence behind what they invest in. We've also started having conversations with some of our state program administrators to look at how they might also use ESSA's evidence requirement within their own programs to help steer schools and districts towards more effective practices.*

Briefly describe one challenge your agency is facing when it comes to leveraging evidence to address equity goals.

- *There has not been significant movement regarding developing an agency-wide culture of evaluation and looking at results of initiatives. There remains significant work to be done getting key staff on the same page with ESSA's evidence requirement and this is an important first step to getting the agency to rigorously reflect on its own work.*

Mississippi

Leverage Point 4

Using Evidence to Allocate School Improvement Funds
- Developing a List or Catalog of Service for resources/supports using a Request For Qualifications process that meet specified criteria for use by CSI/TSI/ATSI identified schools.

Leverage Point 5

LEA Applications for School Improvement
- Releasing Application for 2nd Cycle of Identification (2019)
- Began Application Consolidation to one Platform for Plan and Funding Components
- Goal to be fully aligned to Title I, Special Education, and other specified grant applications by the 2nd Cycle of CSI identifications

Leverage Point 6

Monitoring and Evaluating School Improvement
- Conducting research on High School Feedback Report to enrich the state's blueprint for College and Career Readiness. This research will be utilized for adding more features to Mississippi Succeeds data dashboards, to empower schools with data analytics and decision-making on preparing students ready for postsecondary.

Leverage Point 8

TA on Needs Assessment
- N/A

Leverage Point 9

TA on Selecting Evidence-Based Interventions
- Revising the preliminary draft which is developed as an Evidence-based Practice Guide, based on ESSA's four levels of evidence, to help districts and educators make informed purchasing and instructional decisions that support improved student outcomes.
- Including sessions on Evaluating Implementation of Evidence-based Interventions at Fall School Improvement Convening

Mississippi

Briefly describe one way that your agency is using evidence to advance your efforts to achieve more equitable opportunities and outcomes for students in your state. (e.g., Have you commissioned an evaluation to specifically examine the impact of a particular program or strategy on vulnerable student populations? Have you used the results of evaluation to redirect funds towards evidence-based approaches found to be impactful for certain student groups?)

- *Mississippi is committed to advance evidence-based decision-making culture in our education system. The Office of Research and Development within the Department is a pursuant to the Board of Education's strategic plan and evaluates (and reviews) the Department's programs and issues to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the programs. The Early Learning Collaborative Act of 2013, which become law on April 18, 2013, establishes Mississippi's first state-funded, voluntary Pre-K program on a phased-in basis. The office has been conducting a series of research regarding the impact of Pre-Kindergarten Programs on Student Performance in Early Schooling in the State of Mississippi. Those studies concentrate on whether attending an Early Learning Collaborative (ELC) center improve preschoolers' kindergarten readiness and what is the impact of the ELCs program on students' performance over time. By far we have found an overall positive trend of relationship between ELC participation and the likelihood that a student will achieve proficiency as well as score higher on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment from over two-year window (SY14-15 to SY16-17). The next phase of the research is to study the effectiveness of the program in improving the third-grade literacy.*

Briefly describe one challenge your agency is facing when it comes to leveraging evidence to address equity goals.

- *One challenge in leveraging evidence to address equity goals, is not having the ability to launch more broadly to have deeper impact when results show that the initiative is helping to bring students with less access to the doors of our schools with a greater level of readiness.*

Ohio

Leverage Point 4

Using Evidence to Allocate School Improvement Funds
- Ohio is working with REL Midwest to expand the resources available in Ohio's evidence-based clearinghouse. REL Midwest is reviewing additional existing clearinghouses (e.g., NTACT) for the purpose of adding to their "ESSA Evidence Crosswalk"; Ohio will use this to add to our clearinghouse, but the crosswalk will be available publicly.

Leverage Point 5

LEA Applications for School Improvement
- N/A

Leverage Point 6

Monitoring and Evaluating School Improvement
- This fall, the department's internal Improvement Council will begin meeting. This is a cross-center team of staff intended to work through how to: 1) ensure that school improvement is the primary focus of the entire agency, not just the work of the Center/Office directly connected to school improvement processes; and 2) use data to improve how we determine whether school improvement is happening.

Leverage Point 8

TA on Needs Assessment
- Ohio is beginning a study that will explore how districts develop Reading Achievement Plans (RAPs). Results from this work should inform our TA on both Needs Assessments and Selecting Evidence-Based Interventions.
- Ohio is working to expand support for its growing Regional Data Lead (RDL) network, which is designed to improve districts' capacity to use data to inform continuous improvement.

Leverage Point 9

TA on Selecting Evidence-Based Interventions
- N/A

Ohio

- *Ohio's recently passed budget updated Ohio law to allocate Student Wellness and Success Funds to every district in Ohio. Districts are mandated to spend those funds in any of 11 categories identified in legislation. There are also two data/research related elements to this legislation.*
  - *1) Legislation allocates $350,000 for the department to use for return on investment studies (ROI) associated with the use of student wellness funds. We are putting out an RFP this fall to carry out case studies focused on these four categories of allowable spending:*
    - *Mental health services;*
    - *Services for homeless youth;*
    - *PD regarding the provision of trauma informed care; and*
    - *PD regarding cultural competence.*
  - *2) Legislation requires the department to collect data from districts regarding the use of their student wellness and success funds. We are aiming to design that collection to inform our support efforts, as well as to provide information that will help us understand implementation and impact.*

- *Copying from July's update as it remains accurate:*

- *There is a great deal of support behind the idea of improving equity and using data to improve equity.*

- *What that actually means is more difficult. While Ohio's Strategic Plan for Education does define equity, helping people understand how to operationalize that so that we are actually using evidence to address equity is a little more challenging. We need:*
  1. *Shared awareness, understanding and agreement – within the state and across the state – on the definition of equity;*
  2. *Commitment to designing tools and programs where the intended outcome is to improve equity (vs. where we can tack on "this will improve equity" to programs or tools that were designed with other goals in mind.*
  3. *Ability to then help people understand how to use those tools and programs – i.e., what action do I take based on this data or evidence I'm seeing for the first time?*

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Oklahoma

Leverage Point 4

Using Evidence to Allocate School Improvement Funds
- All CSI schools receiving competitive funds are currently identifying evidence based interventions and practices. They document the evidence within our grant management system and through a more detailed Evidence Based Intervention Documentation Form if the documentation provided in the grant management system is not sufficient. Use of EBIs figures into our rubric for awarding funds.

Leverage Point 5

LEA Applications for School Improvement
- All CSI schools receiving formulaic funds are currently identifying evidence based interventions and practices. They document the evidence within our grant management system and through a more detailed Evidence Based Documentation Form if the documentation provided in the grant management system is not sufficient. This allows us to track funds used toward EBIs.

Leverage Point 6

Monitoring and Evaluating School Improvement
- LEAs using an external provider must evaluate provider proposals using a rubric which include use of Evidence Based Practices.
- Initial Continuous Improvement Plans, both formulaic and competitive, are evaluated against an implementation rubric and risk assessment.

Leverage Point 8

TA on Needs Assessment
- School Support Specialists are continuing to support CSI leadership teams as they use needs assessment data to identify root causes and create SMART goals and action plans.
- The ATSI team has provided virtual support for our 352 ATSI sites in a modified Nine Essential Element needs assessment and a Resource Allocation Review for the 6 Dimensions of Equity.

Leverage Point 9

TA on Selecting Evidence-Based Interventions
- School Support Specialists are continuing to support CSI leadership teams as they select EBIs based on the SMART goals and action plans.
- The ATSI team has provided virtual support for our 352 ATSI sites for awareness of EBIs.
- The School Support Office is partnering with the Federal Programs Office to create a comprehensive approach for EBIs across all schools receiving federal funds.

Oklahoma

Briefly describe one way that your agency is using evidence to advance your efforts to achieve more equitable opportunities and outcomes for students in your state. (e.g., Have you commissioned an evaluation to specifically examine the impact of a particular program or strategy on vulnerable student populations? Have you used the results of evaluation to redirect funds towards evidence-based approaches found to be impactful for certain student groups?)

- *The Office of School Support, in conjunction with the State Support Network, has created a Resource Allocation Review based on Six Dimensions of Equity work by Jonathan Travers.*
- *In partnership with the Office of Accreditation, we have developed a protocol for regional accreditation officers to facilitate discussion with superintendents and principals identified as ATSI concerning dimensions of equity and how resources are distributed to those dimensions.*
- *We are anticipating a continuing collaboration with REL Southwest to study the impact of resource allocation reviews based on the Six Dimensions of Equity.*

Briefly describe one challenge your agency is facing when it comes to leveraging evidence to address equity goals.

- *We are facing a capacity issue in regards to professional development for emergency certified teachers and instructional coaching for teachers implementing new practices, particularly in our rural sites.*