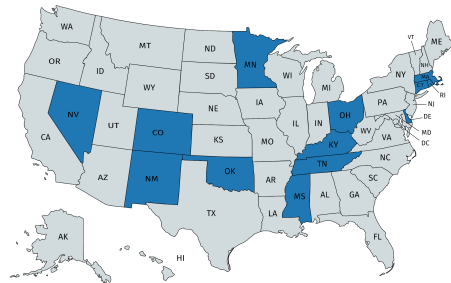


State Education Fellowship, Cohort 2

In December 2017, Results for America (RFA) launched its [State Education Fellows](#) program to help 18 state education agency (SEA) officials from nine leading states implement the ground-breaking evidence provisions in the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). In January 2019, an additional eight leaders from four additional states joined the program to help their states use evidence and data to drive faster progress for the students they serve. (Cohort 1 states appear in the map below.)

The fellowship is the first to bring together SEAs’ senior evaluation and program leaders into a single network focused on accelerating the generation and use of evidence. State Education Fellows are [champions](#) of investing in what works and are [helping](#) make evidence-based policymaking the new normal in education.



To continue this important work and to help SEAs and their school districts respond to the overlapping crises of the Covid-19 pandemic, the economic collapse, and pervasive racial inequities, RFA is launching Cohort 2 of the State Education Fellowship. States and districts will be meeting increased student needs, allocating new relief funds, and revisiting longstanding systems and structures. It is perhaps more important than ever that they use data and evidence to inform these decisions, especially regarding how they can make the most effective use of existing and new funding.

Cohort 2 will run from early 2021 through mid 2022 and include a mix of new and returning SEAs. This document provides an overview of the Fellowship and what SEAs can expect from participating.

Fellows will have access to a peer network of leading education officials, expert technical assistance to solve problems and implement evidence-based solutions, and support and resources to elevate and spotlight successes and continue to build momentum. The Fellowship will bring together leaders from the most data- and evidence-driven SEAs to collaboratively develop and implement strategies for building and using evidence, with a focus on equitably directing funding toward more evidence-based approaches. In doing so, Fellows will also continue to create national proof points that set the stage for broader adoption across the country.

Fellowship Goals

1. Help SEAs function more like **learning agencies** that regularly use data and evidence to improve
2. Expand SEAs’ willingness and capacity to **shift more funds** to evidence-based approaches
3. Advance SEAs’ willingness and capacity to use data and evidence **equitably**
4. Create more **proof points and resources** that motivate and help other SEAs make similar shifts

Who Should Participate?

SEAs will be invited to form teams of three Fellows (or four, on a case-by-case basis). At a minimum, one Fellow should be a senior leader responsible for research, data, and/or evaluation. The other two Fellows should have responsibilities aligned with the SEA Strategic Priority (see below), such as program leads and federal grants leads. (Visit the [Fellowship webpage](#) for more information about the Cohort 1 Fellows and their various SEA roles.)

What Will Fellows Do During the Fellowship?

In addition to engaging with a peer network about various topics related to evidence and equity, each SEA team will also identify a specific goal they want to work toward by shifting more funds toward evidence-based approaches. This should be something that is both important and urgent, a goal that education leaders across the state want to improve. Then, teams will identify a **Strategic Priority** representing a concrete change the SEA can make that aligns with that goal. The Fellows will work to accomplish their Strategic Priority (or make significant progress toward it) during the Fellowship with the support of RFA and peer Fellows.

For example, if a SEA team's goal is to increase early literacy proficiency, a Strategic Priority might be to revise a competitive grant program to prioritize early literacy and to award competitive preference points to proposals that incorporate evidence-based literacy strategies and interventions.

A different SEA team seeking to strengthen the effectiveness of its educators may pursue a Strategic Priority to better leverage Title II's requirement that professional development be "evidence-based," perhaps via technical assistance and increasing the rigor of the SEA's Title II local plan approval process.

All of the identified Strategic Priorities will be:

- Designed to improve student outcomes and advance equity,
- Focused on shifting funds to evidence-based approaches, and
- Aligned to one of the following three Strategic Priority buckets:
 - School Improvement: e.g., increasing the role of evidence-based approaches in Comprehensive Support & Improvement (CSI)/Targeted Support & Improvement (TSI) plans
 - Formula-Funded Programs: e.g., helping Local Education Agencies (LEA) incorporate evidence-based approaches in their plans for spending federal or state formula funds
 - Competitive Programs: e.g., designing competitive grants to prioritize evidence-based proposals

RFA will convene and connect with Fellows in three ways:

- **Fellowship Convenings**: All Fellows will come together for four (likely virtual) meetings from early Spring 2021 to Summer 2022, during which Fellows will build community, learn together, provide updates on their work, and provide feedback via peer consultancies on challenges facing their Strategic Priorities work. At times, Fellows will work in groups with others pursuing Strategic Priorities within the same bucket (e.g., teams focused on adjusting competitive grants).

- **Connection Calls:** Between each convening, Fellows will connect for shorter whole-group calls with the goal of strengthening community, sharing emerging practices and challenges, and spotlighting Fellows’ work.
- **Individual Conversations:** RFA and/or our technical assistance partners will also engage with each SEA team separately to support progress toward their SEA Strategic Priority, help solve sticky problems, and elevate common roadblocks for future meetings and connection calls.

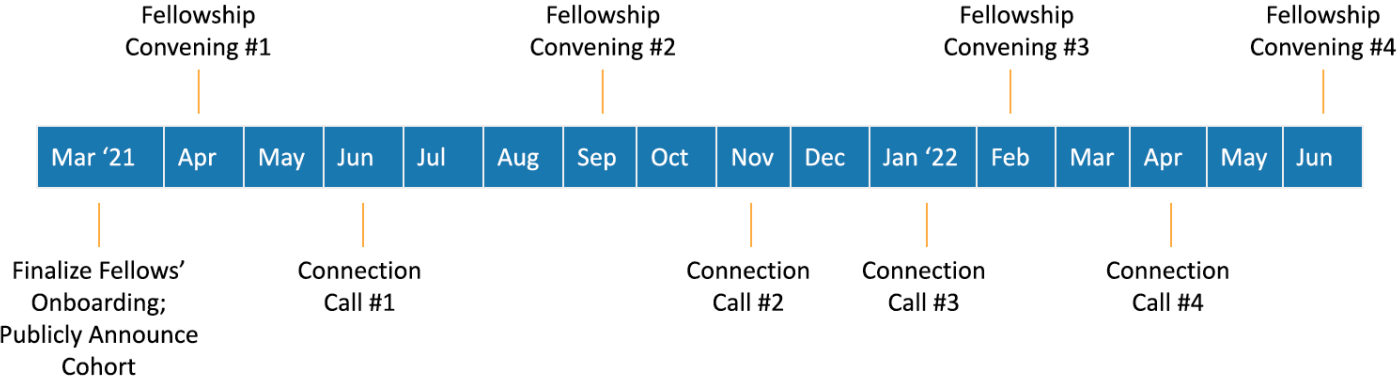
How Do We Join?

SEAs interested in participating in the Fellowship should contact Sara Kerr at sara@results4america.org to express interest and/or ask questions.

The following are **Fellowship expectations** that each participating SEA will agree to meet:

- Participate regularly in fellowship convenings, connection calls, and individual conversations
- Write at least one entry in a blog series (per SEA) about the Fellowship, progress on their Strategic Priorities, and/or lessons learned
- Cooperate with an independent evaluator that is studying the Fellowship to better understand the ways in which communities of practice like this help advance the usefulness and use of research evidence in policy making and practice
- Provide feedback and advice to inform RFA’s education policy efforts
- Secure a commitment from the state chief to become one of RFA’s [Moneyball All-Stars](#)

When Does Everything Take Place?



* Teams will also participate in monthly Individual Conversations with RFA and/or technical assistance partners.