



**Reform
Support
Network**

SUSTAINABILITY DESCRIPTION AND RUBRIC

MAY 7, 2014



AGENDA

- **Introductions & Objectives (12:00 p.m. – 12:05 p.m.)**
- Defining Sustainability (12:05 p.m. – 12:20 p.m.)
- Introduction to the Sustainability Rubric (12:20 p.m. – 12:40 p.m.)
- Discuss Applicable Uses of the Sustainability Rubric (12:40 p.m. – 12:55 p.m.)
- Wrap-up and next steps (12:55 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.)



TODAY'S OBJECTIVES

- **Participants will be able to...**
 - Understand the definition of sustainability and component categories
 - Identify what the Sustainability Rubric is, its purpose, and its uses
 - Identify opportunities to use the Sustainability Rubric in Comp Center staff's work to support States



AGENDA

- Introductions & Objectives (12:00 p.m. – 12:05 p.m.)
- **Defining Sustainability (12:05 p.m. – 12:20 p.m.)**
- Introduction to the Sustainability Rubric (12:20 p.m. – 12:40 p.m.)
- Discuss Applicable Uses of the Sustainability Rubric (12:40 p.m. – 12:55 p.m.)
- Wrap-up and next steps (12:55 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.)



DISCUSSION: THE MEANING OF SUSTAINABILITY

How do you define the word “sustainability”?

- Continue the work
- Keeping the initiative going over time in spite of changes in leadership, resources, new or competing initiatives
- Maintain, support, or endure

What are your current concerns about the sustainability of education reforms?

- Funding
- Ownership
- Continued support by state policymakers
- Change in leadership personnel
- Concern about staffing turnover due to political or economic reasons
- May not build capacity of SEAs to main progress when leadership changes
- States talk about addressing sustainability but rarely address it early, often, or strategically
- Equating funding with sustainability
- Complexity
- How to measure and document



THE RSN HAS DEVELOPED A COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY TO GUIDE SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS (1/5)

- A **priority goal** is one of a subset of student-outcome related goals that is most critical to achieve
- A **priority reform** is a body of work that an SEA is undertaking in order to achieve one or more of its priority goals (e.g. implementing college and career ready standards, ensuring quality data systems, implementing new educator evaluation systems).
- A **sustainable reform** is a priority reform that is durable, adaptive, and persistently focused on priority goals for improved student growth in the face of changing conditions.



THE RSN HAS DEVELOPED A COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY TO GUIDE SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS (2/5)

System Capacity

SEA Capacity

State Capacity

Performance Management

Clarity of Outcomes & Theory of Action

Alignment of Resources

Collection and Use of Data

Accountability for Results

Context

Alignment of the Statewide System

Public Value



THE RSN HAS DEVELOPED A COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY TO GUIDE SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS (3/5)

System Capacity

Variable

Category

SEA Capacity

- Align human capital decisions to support priority goals
- Build a culture of continuous improvement toward priority goals
- Align organizational structure to priority goals

State Capacity

- Extend capacity through partnerships
- Extend capacity in the field

Element



THE RSN HAS DEVELOPED A COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY TO GUIDE SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS (4/5)

Variable

Performance Management

Category

Clarity of Outcomes & Theory of Action

- Set student outcome targets to achieve priority goals
- Establish a theory of action and strategies for implementing priority reforms
- Develop plans that align strategies to priority goals

Alignment of Resources

- Direct resources to priority reforms
- Establish clear leadership of priority reforms

Collection and Use of Data

- Ensure quality data on performance
- Ensure quality data on implementation
- Use data to review progress and make decisions

Accountability for Results

- Link internal accountability to results
- Link external accountability to results
- Engage stakeholders about results

Element



THE RSN HAS DEVELOPED A COMPREHENSIVE DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY TO GUIDE SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS (5/5)

Variable

Category

Context for Sustaining Reform

Alignment of the Statewide System

- Align the policy agenda to support priority reforms
- Build a coalition to drive priority reforms

Public Value

- Build stakeholder support for priority reforms
- Build broad public support for priority reforms

Element



TOGETHER, THE ELEMENTS ARE OUR THEORY OF ACTION FOR WHAT MAKES A REFORM SUSTAINABLE

Elements of sustainability rubric: System Capacity		Category
SEA Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align human capital decisions to support reform goals Build a culture of continuous improvement toward reform goals Align organizational structure to reform goals 	
State Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend capacity through partnerships Extend capacity in the field 	
Elements of Sustainability: Performance Management		
Clarity of Outcomes and Theory of Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set student outcome targets to achieve priority goals Establish a theory of action and strategies for implementing priority reforms Develop plans that align strategies to priority goals 	
Alignment of Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct resources to priority reforms Establish clear leadership of priority reforms 	
Collection and Use of Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure quality data on performance Ensure quality data on implementation Use data to review progress and make decisions 	
Accountability for Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link internal accountability to results Link external accountability to results Engage stakeholders about results 	
Elements of Sustainability: Context for Sustaining Reform		
Alignment of the Statewide System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align the policy agenda to support priority reforms Build a coalition to drive priority reforms 	
Public Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build stakeholder support for priority reforms Build broad public support for priority reforms 	Element

Variable

Element



AGENDA

- Introductions & Objectives (12:00 p.m. – 12:05 p.m.)
- Defining Sustainability (12:05 p.m. – 12:20 p.m.)
- **Introduction to the Sustainability Rubric (12:20 p.m. – 12:40 p.m.)**
- Discuss Applicable Uses of the Sustainability Rubric (12:40 p.m. – 12:55 p.m.)
- Wrap-up and next steps (12:55 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.)



THE RSN SUSTAINABILITY WORKGROUP FOCUSES ON SUPPORTING STATES IN THESE AREAS

- Objectives of the workgroup:
 - Identify priority student achievement goals and the priority reforms that must be sustained in order to reach them.
 - Assess the current sustainability of the priority reforms against comprehensive criteria.
 - Take action to ensure those priority reforms can be sustained.
 - Empower staff to manage progress on sustainability strategies using performance management systems and processes.
 - Contribute learnings within the Work Group and throughout the RSN and other States.



THE WORKGROUP USED THE RUBRIC WITH STATES TO DETERMINE A SUSTAINABILITY LEVEL FOR EACH ELEMENT

ii. Build a culture of continuous improvement toward priority goals					
Questions to Consider	Inadequate	Emerging	Strong	Exemplary	Look-Fors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a culture of continuous improvement that extends to every staff member of the agency? Is that culture anchored in a regular formative assessment of each individual's skills, strengths and areas of growth with respect to supporting goals? Does that assessment drive robust professional learning throughout the agency? 	<p>Little or no formative assessment of staff skills occurs throughout the agency; where it does, it is at the initiative of individuals rather than as a result of organizational practice.</p> <p>The practice of summative assessment of staff is a formality or viewed as an unpleasant element of the agency's culture.</p> <p>The SEA offers few, if any, professional learning opportunities; those that it does offer are disconnected from any understanding of the needs or growth opportunities of staff.</p>	<p>Some formative assessment competency exists and is practiced by managers in the agency, but it is still not an organization-wide practice.</p> <p>Managers understand and take seriously their roles in summative assessment; however, quality of this practice varies considerably.</p> <p>The SEA offers professional learning opportunities that are generally good, but these opportunities are not necessarily tailored to staff needs.</p>	<p>There is a shared expectation in the agency that a primary responsibility of every manager is to provide high quality formative and summative assessments of their teams that drive professional learning and growth to help employees implement priority reforms and contribute to priority goals.</p> <p>All managers actively strive to improve their skills in providing both formative and summative feedback, and most managers are highly competent.</p> <p>The SEA offers professional learning opportunities to staff on the basis of individually assessed growth and development needs; offerings agency-wide are dynamic and responsive to these shifting needs across the organization.</p>	<p>Every individual in the organization takes responsibility for providing and seeking substantive feedback that drives their own professional growth and that of their manager(s), their team and their colleagues to develop the skills needed to implement priority reforms and contribute to priority goals; every staff member excels in feedback and coaching, and the practice is pervasive before and after every opportunity for practice in the work of the agency.</p> <p>The SEA does not distinguish between "professional learning" time and other time; every moment is considered an opportunity for improvement, punctuated by formal training that is tailored to individual needs.</p>	<p>Formative assessment (for example, feedback meetings, reflections on progress) is a common and regular practice in the agency.</p> <p>High-quality protocols and/or agency-defined practices exist for employee reviews and (if applicable) formative feedback.</p> <p>Written employee reviews and/or formative assessments are of high quality.</p> <p>There is a catalog of professional learning offerings and process for deciding what to offer, to whom and when.</p> <p>Staff members provide feedback indicating that they feel a culture of continuous improvement exists, skill and competence of managers is high and formative and summative assessment processes are strong, etcetera.</p>



RUBRIC EXERCISE

- Inadequate: The SEA is very siloed and offers little opportunity for reflection and formative assessment as they are overwhelmed with day-to-day responsibilities.
- Inadequate: The culture of continuous improvement may exist within particular divisions or units but it doesn't extend to every staff member in the agency because the organizational structure is so categorical and "siloed."
- Inadequate: The SEAs are entrenched in ongoing "implementation" issues and spend little or no time in reflective or self-assessment activities or stakeholder outreach.
- Inadequate: The State Agency has no real professional learning of any type, and feedback really is a formality.
- Inadequate: There is an interest and energy at the cabinet level in doing this work but it is not in place in any meaningful way.
- Inadequate: Professional learning opportunities are limited and treated as "compliance only" activities.
- Strong: There is a fairly good culture of feedback at the organization, but sometimes it is not always backed up by professional learning.
- Inadequate: While working in creating this culture has begun (new chief and only a handful of former staff were retained), they are not yet at the point where this culture is engrained.



WE DID A SELF-ASSESSMENT WITH THE STATES AND IT HELPED US DECIDE WHERE TO FOCUS

		State A	State B	State C	State D	State E
Variable	Element	Rubric Rating & Rationale	Rubric Rating & Rationale	Rubric Rating & Rationale	Rubric Rating & Rationale	Rubric Rating & Rationale
A. SEA Capacity	i. Align human capital decisions with priority goals and reforms.	<p>Emerging: STRENGTH: RTTT has enabled the hiring of driven, self-motivated capable staff (including Regents Research Fellows) that develop and use cross-agency relationships. Managers are strategically hiring those that can move reforms forward.</p> <p>WEAKNESS: Civil Service rules can be a roadblock. RTTT staff are likely temporary.</p>	<p>Emerging: Know goals/priorities;</p> <p>Lack of structured or strategic recruiting;</p> <p>Leadership held to account for goals/priorities.</p>	<p>Exemplary: Focus groups feedback;</p> <p>Survey results;</p> <p>Emails from district personnel.</p>	<p>Emerging: Depends on Complex Area Superintendent (CAS) leadership;</p> <p>Lack of ownership at all levels;</p> <p>Don't have a deep bench;</p> <p>Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) positions filled.</p>	
	ii. Build a culture of continuous improvement toward priority goals.	<p>Inadequate: STRENGTH: Many staff are self-motivated and look for and engage their own PD. Some managers are very good at providing informal feedback.</p> <p>WEAKNESS: Formal feedback/performance/evaluation structures are not in place. Manager's time is limited for PD; Civil Service rules can limit advancement. Strong employees become 'good' at their job and then the job becomes 'easy' for them – there is a need to challenge staff. People are promoted to 'management' because they are good at their job but are not trained to be managers.</p>	<p>Emerging: Some formative professional development is available;</p> <p>Managers perform staff evaluations but quality varies widely;</p> <p>Learning opportunities exist but vary in quality;</p> <p>Some staff have developed additional skills.</p>	<p>Strong: Vacancies at SEA have been filled from within as staff becomes more proficient.</p>	<p>Emerging: Including the ART in the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) sends a strong signal;</p> <p>Strong SEA routines;</p> <p>Complex Area Superintendent (CAS) routines are 1:1 informal meetings that do not include a "critical friend(s)" or the relevant offices.</p>	<p>Inadequate/ Emerging: A lot of work to be done at and below Director level. Change is slow.</p>

1. SYSTEM CAPACITY



THIS RESULTED IN US DOING ADDITIONAL WORK IN AREAS OF CHALLENGE

- We have developed a set of Problem Solving Teams (PST) to address specific challenges identified by the majority of states in the workgroup:
 - Building system capacity
 - Assessing progress and engaging/communicating with stakeholders about progress
 - Using policy and budgeting to sustain the reforms
- Each PST has identified common outcomes and deliverables to develop in conjunction with states



AGENDA

- Introductions & Objectives (12:00 p.m. – 12:05 p.m.)
- Defining Sustainability (12:05 p.m. – 12:20 p.m.)
- Introduction to the Sustainability Rubric (12:20 p.m. – 12:40 p.m.)
- **Discuss Applicable Uses of the Sustainability Rubric (12:40 p.m. – 12:55 p.m.)**
- Wrap-up and next steps (12:55 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.)



WHAT IS YOUR INITIAL FEEDBACK?

- How can you incorporate some of this language into your conversations with States?
- What are some potential applications of the Sustainability rubric in your work?
- In your experience working with States are there other areas of sustainability that we haven't touched upon in the description or rubric?



AGENDA

- Introductions & Objectives (12:00 p.m. – 12:05 p.m.)
- Defining Sustainability (12:05 p.m. – 12:20 p.m.)
- Introduction to the Sustainability Rubric (12:20 p.m. – 12:40 p.m.)
- Discuss Applicable Uses of the Sustainability Rubric (12:40 p.m. – 12:55 p.m.)
- **Wrap-up and next steps (12:55 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.)**



WRAP UP & NEXT STEPS

- Next steps:
 - Follow-up webinar
 - Reminder: complete survey

THANK YOU!

Key Contact Information for Sustainability:

- Jamila Smith (USED): Jamila.Smith@ed.gov
- Nick Rodriguez (EDI): nrodriguez@deliveryinstitute.org

Link to other RSN Resources and Tools:

- <https://rtt.grads360.org>