

School and District Improvement (SDI)

The School and District Improvement (SDI) State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) supports members as they work with struggling schools and districts, turn around the lowest performing schools, and close achievement gaps for all students and for specific subgroup populations. With the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), state education agencies (SEAs) have an opportunity and responsibility to rethink how they support and intervene in their lowest-performing schools, and how their SEA structures do that work. The role that SEAs play in addressing these challenges continues to increase, along with the responsibility for making and monitoring progress. For many states, this work requires new roles, skill sets, and systems, and for all states, the challenges of figuring out how to help schools and districts advance are complex and daunting. The SDI SCASS provides an opportunity for states to collaborate, share best practices, and problem solve together to address these challenges. The discussions include learning about new research-based strategies, engaging with experts in the field, and working together across states to address shared problems.

In 2016-2017, the SDI SCASS focused on supporting states' transition to ESSA as it relates to turning around low-performing schools and districts. Some of the focus areas and accomplishments follow:

- Refining implementation plans to meet ESSA requirements
- Identifying ways to provide high quality and effective supports to schools and districts under ESSA
- Coordinating and aligning services and supports within the SEA
- Developing effective and efficient statewide systems of support
- Creating plan templates for identified schools (forthcoming)
- Building knowledge in high-need areas including wraparound student supports, development of pipelines for teachers and leaders, true stakeholder engagement for parents and families, and strategic performance management
- Developing of a set of FAQ documents for SEAs around the following topics
 - [Identification](#)
 - [Differentiation of Supports](#)
 - [Funding Sources & Alignment](#)
 - [Family & Community Engagement](#)

The work of the SDI SCASS in 2017-2018 focuses on supporting states as they implement [CCSSO's Principles of Effective School Improvement Systems](#) and the concepts included in [CCSSO's School Improvement and Supports Critical Area Outline](#) including:

- Coordination and alignment of services and supports within the SEA
- Development of effective and efficient statewide systems of support
- Implementation of strategic performance management practices in the statewide system of support
- Knowledge building in high-need areas to be determined by members

The SDI SCASS has sponsored a number of publications and working documents that may be helpful to it's members as well as other stakeholders, including:

- [Utilizing Integrated Resources to Implement the School and District Improvement Cycle and Support, 2017.](#)
- [Using Needs Assessments for School and District Improvement: A Tactical Guide](#), CCSSO and CST. 2017. [Usable worksheets.](#)
- [Funding Streams to Assist Supports and Interventions](#), Working Document, updated Sept. 2015
- [State Supports to Districts and Schools: How SEAs Rate the Impact](#), Julie Corbett and Sam Redding, 2015

Advisor: Julie Corbett Julie Corbett, the President and Founder of Corbett Education Consulting LLC, serves as the advisor to the SDI SCASS. Corbett specializes in school and district education reform and turnaround strategies with clients all over the country. She works with school management organizations, districts, SEAs, and other nonprofit organizations on a variety of turnaround-related projects. She is the author of a growing list of publications, acted as a Peer Reviewer for the U.S. Department of Education's (USED's) Race to the Top District competition, was a member of USED's Race to the Top Reform Support Network, and is a Strategic Partner and on the Scientific Council for the Center on School Turnaround (USED grant awarded to WestEd). Before launching her own education consulting company, Corbett was Program Manager at Mass Insight Education & Research Institute in Boston. There, she led the outreach and dissemination of The Turnaround Challenge's framework and strategies; researched, wrote, and edited a variety of publications for the Meeting the Turnaround Initiative; and worked on a variety of state consulting projects. Before joining Mass Insight, she was a research assistant with The Rodel Foundation of Delaware and assisted with the Vision 2015 education reform. Corbett also completed a year of service with Americorps VISTA and the Delaware Mentoring Council program, where she was the lead staff in the creation of a Governor's Executive Order for state employee mentoring (signed by Gov. Minner, Sept. 2005). She resides in Connecticut and is an elected member of her local school board.