

SLDS Grantee Meeting Agenda and Summary
Tuesday, February 26, 2008
San Francisco, CA

AGENDA

- 4:00 p.m.** Arrival & Light Refreshments
- 4:30 p.m.** Welcome
Kashka Kubzdela, NCES
Mark Schneider, NCES
- SLDS Features Matrix Discussion
Sarah Ruano, Kforce
- 5:30 p.m.** Table Discussions: Sustainability
- 6:00 p.m.** Break
- 6:10 p.m.** Continued Discussion & Report Out by Table
- 7:00 p.m.** Discussion: Using LDS Data for Internal and External Research Purposes
[Omitted, due to time constraints]
- 7:30 p.m.** Adjourn

MEETING SUMMARY

Welcome and Overview

Kashka Kubzdela welcomed the grantees (see Appendix 1 for participants) and provided a brief overview of the agenda. She reminded them that NCES has begun hosting monthly topical webinars with the first one, Data Dictionaries, attended by over 40 people from 21 states. The next webinar is scheduled for March 21 but a show of hands indicated that it should be rescheduled given it would be Good Friday. Future webinars will be recorded and accessible via an internet link at the conclusion of the webinar and the link will be distributed on the grantee listserv. Kashka encouraged grantees to volunteer as facilitators of a topic or share documents/applications/websites on the webinar. She then introduced NCES, Kforce, and CCSSO staff and turned the meeting over to Mark Schneider, NCES Commissioner.

Mark Schneider welcomed the grantees and outlined the FY09 IES budget request with regard to the SLDS program. They have requested a total of \$100,000,000 for the upcoming fiscal year and they are seeking to fund states who commit to building P-16 systems. States will also be encouraged to build systems that include workplace information to better determine what K-12 courses are most effective in leading to a successful transition to employment. He emphasized the need to develop sustainability within a state. Mark also stressed the need for more research to be conducted on the data coming out of these systems and raised the question of

how we might begin to link survey data with longitudinal data to gain a more complete understanding of the school environment.

Sarah Schaller Ruano announced that the latest version of the LDS Share is available on CD with each state allowed to acquire three CDs. She asked each table of participants to discuss the value and usefulness of the Features Matrix and report back as to how it could be improved. In the interest of time, she collected hand written reports from each table rather than having a discussion.

Sustainability Discussion

Paige Kowalski directed the grantees to review the Guiding Questions (see Appendix 2) and use them for a table discussion on the topic of LDS Sustainability. At the end of the table discussions, each table reported back to the group on their key takeaways. Also, each table recorded their takeaways on an index card which was collected and summarized (see Appendix 3). Tate Gould facilitated the reporting of takeaways following the table discussions. Key points of this discussion included:

- How can states “achieve” sustainability? Sustainability is ongoing by definition.
- States may not “achieve” sustainability but they can “fail” in their efforts to secure it.
- LDS systems must be able to adapt to new situations.
- One definition of sustainability: The use of the LDS by its core stakeholders in their daily work.
- Stakeholders must contribute time and resources.
- The LDS must deliver useful data to all stakeholders.
- States must institutionalize their LDS system so that it is larger than a steering committee.
- Give stakeholders something useful to do besides just looking at it (e.g., testing).
- Pay attention to marketing to LEAs (e.g., what is in it for them?); give them a “quick win” to get their buy-in.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m. and the agenda item on research will be dealt with on a future webinar.

Appendix 1

Participants

FY06 Grantees

Sidney Fadaoff – AK
Ken Okuhara – CA
Dan Conway – CA
Randy Bonnell – CA
Jackie Nunn – MD
Challis Breithaupt – MD
Carolyn Wood – MD
Margaret Ropp – MI
Cathy Wagner – MN
Marsha Ward – OH
Tom Olson – SC
Marta Burgin – SC
Ellen Still – SC
Corey Chatis – TN
Tim Last – WI
John Calderone – WI

FY07 Grantees

Dan Domagala – CO
Jerry Taylor – CO
Ted Carter – KS
Charlotte Bogner – KS
Cathy Nicoletti – KS
Kathy Gosa – KS
Bill Hurwitch – ME
Bob Beecham – NE
Judith Fillion – NH
Irene Koffink – NH
Sudha Sharma – NH
Shawn Franklin – NV
Ken Nelmes – NV
John Brandt – UT
Susan Williams – VA
Bethann Canada – VA
John Williams – VA
Peter Coleman – VA

Appendix 2

Guiding Questions: Sustainability

Please use these questions to guide the discussion at your table and record your top three (3) discussion takeaways on the table's index card. Following the discussion, select a representative to report one of the takeaways out to the larger group. The index cards will be collected at the end of the meeting and the takeaways will be recorded and distributed via the listserv.

1. How do you define sustainability and how will you know when you have achieved it?
2. How can you involve your stakeholders in your pursuit of sustainability?
3. Beyond a line-item on a state budget, there are other critical components of sustainability; what is your plan with regard to the following categories of sustainability?
 - a. Human resources – recruiting the right talent to keep up with the demands on the system.
 - b. Policies – affecting state policies to leverage the LDS.
 - c. Standards – implementing standards to increase effectiveness.
 - d. Evolution – enhancing the LDS to meet the changing needs of stakeholders.
 - e. Impact – demonstrating to stakeholders that the LDS is worth the investment.
 - f. Marketing – communicating all of the above to the public.
4. What are other important questions to think about?

Appendix 3

Responses to Question 1:

Sustainability is the use of the system by defined stakeholders in their daily work. This will be achieved when stakeholders contribute non-fiscal resources to continue the system.

Sustainability is having the resources necessary to continue to move forward with what the grant has started—it consists of the ability to continuously adapt, expand, and be flexible. You can never achieve sustainability—it's an ongoing process.

Sustainability means having flexibility. Sustainability will be achieved when standards that maximize flexibility are developed.

Sustainability can be achieved by letting the data justify the system, developing a “proof of concept,” meeting the needs of the stakeholders, and obtaining sufficient financial support.

Sustainability is acquired when stakeholders find value in the system. This will happen when stakeholders learn how to use the system.

Sustainability differs based on the maturity of the data systems being put in place in each state, but it includes resources (money and people), policy and vision.

Sustainability is achieved when LEAs buyoff on the benefits of a LDS.

Sustainability is defined as being able to continuously grow and evolve as needed once initial implementation is complete. Sustainability is an ongoing process with no finish line, but you should set milestones to keep moving forward and meet your needs.

Responses to Question 2:

You can involve stakeholders in the pursuit of achieving sustainability by proving that it can provide value to them as a resource. You must involve local educators in training and outreach, make friends in high places that have a lot of pull, and be responsive to stakeholders' feedback.

You can get stakeholders involved by expanding the stakeholder scope to find groups who may have funding sources that can contribute to achieving sustainability. These new stakeholders can include student loan corporations or other government agencies, such as the Education Development Coordination Council.

You can get stakeholders involved by asking for feedback on a regular and systematic basis. You have to give them some responsibility and accountability for continued success to involve them in requirements, testing, etc.

Responses to Question 3:

Human resources staff needs to be flexible and have the ability to adjust based on needs of the project. They need the tools and information to provide the proper mentorship and support.

Human resources wages are typically too low to compete with the private sector. One option to remedy this problem is contracting this work out.

Policies can be affected through the Data Governance Board and Data Request Review Board by keeping these groups engaged with the LDS project.

Through governance, accountability policies need to be maintained as the situation dictates. Policies should be directed at LEAs to take responsibility and ownership by having them certify data.

Standards to increase effectiveness can be introduced by developing and implementing processes to standardize requirements, project management, data use, testing, etc. There should be a feedback mechanism.

Standards need to be normalized for them to increase effectiveness.

Evolution of the LDS to enhance its ability to meet the changing needs of stakeholders can be achieved by basing development on interactive processes that will continue to develop and enhance in response to feedback and demonstrated needs.

The LDS can be enhanced in the future by creating expandability and flexibility through the creation of web based applications and developing standards and policies that maximize these qualities.

The impact of the LDS and investments made can be demonstrated to stakeholders by prioritizing some projects based on what they can provide to stakeholders.

The impact of LDS can be demonstrated by training stakeholders to use the system. This will also increase data quality from those stakeholders that provide it.

The LDS must be marketed by presenting achievements to supervisory councils and Boards of Education, sending information out on listservs, holding conference calls, and engaging in other methods of communication.

Marketing should consist of constantly measuring progress on the ground and relaying information through press releases.

Responses to Question 4:

Other important questions to think about include how to connect the LDS to the big picture, as well as other projects.

Other responses:

Steering Committee: Not just for term of grant; ongoing beyond grant.

The Steering Committee needs to be made permanent, and they need to be made part of the system.

Institutionalize the Steering Committee; give them a role in maintaining the system.
States need to be able to give data back to LEAs.

Many states will need money to sustain some of the activities.

Have stakeholders solve the problems.

Selling the LEAs on the benefits it provides to them.

Prioritize development to those data elements most desired by the LEAs; what they need versus what we can do.

Share electronic data of records that would normally take a long time to acquire.

Need to go back to state legislature sooner rather than later (with evidence).

Scope management; you should under promise and over deliver.