

SOUTHEAST Comprehensive Center

at American Institutes for Research ■

American Institutes for Research (AIR) operates four regional comprehensive centers serving 13 states. The **Southeast Comprehensive Center** (SECC), funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, provides technical assistance (TA) to the state education agencies (SEAs) of Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina. SECC services are focused on building SEA capacity to support districts and schools to ensure that all students graduate from high school ready for college or a career. SECC provides support across several reform areas, including school improvement, educator development and effectiveness, early childhood education, and standards and assessments. SECC brings experience and expertise to engage stakeholders in policy design and implementation, providing research and content expertise to inform initiatives and plan for high-quality implementation and sustainability.

Alabama



Promoting Equitable Access

SECC provides expertise in convening stakeholders to inform content, design, and implementation of policies and initiatives that promote equity. SECC has extensive experience in facilitating groups to achieve desired outcomes and synthesizing stakeholder input into clear, actionable recommendations.



Evidence-Based Technical Assistance

SECC provides expertise in identifying and compiling relevant and reliable evidence about what works in improving education outcomes. Extensive experience in applying evidence and research to inform decision-making and deep content knowledge allow SECC staff to provide strategic guidance in the development of policies and initiatives.



Implementation and Sustainability

SECC supports policy and initiative implementation through the development of a course of action. SECC has extensive experience with leading processes to assist state education agencies, districts, and schools in achieving specific tasks and outcomes outlined in the course of action, assessing progress, and documenting lessons learned to inform sustainability. SECC also provides support in developing guidance, training, tools, and other resources that are key to successful implementation and sustainability of initiatives.



Year 7 (October 2018–September 2019) Projects

PROJECT 1 | Alabama Educator Effectiveness

Purpose | To assist the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) as it implements multiple metric educator evaluation systems that meet federal requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Technical Assistance Approach | SECC is providing content expertise and evidence-based resources for guiding the development of a statewide model for teacher and leader evaluation, including defining teacher and leader effectiveness, determining metrics of effectiveness, and aligning educator evaluation outcomes with professional learning.

PROJECT 2 | Alabama English Learners

Purpose | To collaborate with ALSDE to collect stakeholder feedback for refining the state's English learner (EL) professional development (PD) plan. SECC is supporting the Title III and EL staff with resources and tools designed to measure the effectiveness of PD it provides to local education agencies (LEAs).

Technical Assistance Approach | SECC is providing TA and resources to support the analysis of stakeholder feedback related to the state's EL system of support, the refinement of its system based on feedback, and with developing performance management tools for continuous improvement of its support processes.

PROJECT 3 | Alabama Low-Performing Schools

Purpose | To support ALSDE with implementing a strategic plan and performance management tools for its Office of Student Learning and providing related PD to state school turnaround staff. SECC is continuing to support the state with scaling up its School Improvement Grant (SIG) program using the Center on School Turnaround's Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement framework.

Technical Assistance Approach | SECC is supporting the department in developing a performance management system for monitoring the implementation of the statewide system of support (SSOS) for principals of low-performing schools. As such, SECC will facilitate cross-office collaboration in the refinement of the state's logic model and SSOS. SECC will assist in the development and use of metrics for evidence of impact related to how the state supports principals of low-performing schools. In addition, SECC will support the department by providing PD and resources related to evidence-based practices for school improvement.

PROJECT 4 | Alabama Professional Learning Commission

Purpose | To support ALSDE with the codevelopment of a strategic plan for establishing an SSOS for professional development. SECC is continuing to support the state with scaling up PD efforts.

Technical Assistance Approach | SECC is facilitating meetings with SEA staff from across the agency and members of the Alabama Professional Learning Committee (APLC) to look at professional learning (PL) being provided to districts and schools and to devise a cohesive framework for providing PL opportunities to educators in the state. SECC will share resources and expertise with the department and APLC that support the design of evidenced-based professional learning and evaluation of services.

PROJECT 5 | Support for Implementing College- and Career-Ready Standards and Assessments

Purpose | To help SEAs strengthen their plans for implementing college- and career-ready standards (CCRS) and assessments.

Technical Assistance Approach | SECC supports SEAs in strengthening their plans for implementing CCRS and assessments via professional learning, facilitation, and provision of resources and learning opportunities through an online newsletter and webinars.

PROJECT 6 | Ensuring School Readiness Community of Practice

Purpose | To support SEAs and other agencies (birth to third grade) with early childhood (EC) initiatives and improvement efforts.

Technical Assistance Approach | SECC provides opportunities for cross-state collaboration, problem-solving, and networking via an interactive online site, online newsletter to deepen awareness of EC developments, and webinars in which states can participate in professional learning with experts in the field.

PROJECT 7 | Equity Dialogues: Increasing Opportunities to Improve Outcomes for Students

Purpose | To build the knowledge and skills of agency staff to support implementation of equity strategies by LEAs as the states implement their ESSA plans.

Technical Assistance Approach | SECC will facilitate one or more convenings of state and local leaders to share challenges and concerns in providing support to LEAs, share emails on topics of relevant interest, and provide a summary report of research-based strategies to address challenges faced by LEAs in implementing equitable educational opportunities across all student groups.

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