# CoP June Meeting Summary

June 30, 2022

3:00-4:00 pm ET

**Topic:** Subgrantee Data Collection

**Facilitator:** Alex Gabriel

**Notetaker:** Obioma Okogbue

**Additional NDTAC Representative:** Claire Kelley

**ED Representative:** Jeff Buehler

**Attendees:** Connecticut, District of Columbia, Maine, Mississippi, Nebraska, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont

## Intro

The meeting began with the facilitator sharing announcements that the 2022 NDTAC conference materials and updated coordinator handbook were recently posted online. For introductions, each participant stated their names, states, and their weather report regarding how comfortable they felt with subgrantee data collection. Coordinators expressed a range of feelings about subgrantee data collection. While some coordinators expressed optimism and a feeling of preparedness, others expressed concerns and challenges about the process. As a group, attendees reestablished the norms for the CoP.

## Presentation

The facilitator began with a short presentation that provided an overview of EDFacts, including the requirements, the data collection process, file specifications business rules, and data notes. The facilitator shared that EDFacts is an ED initiative to collect, analyze, report on, and promote the use of high-quality, K-12 performance data, and much of the Title I, Part D data that appears in the CSPR is pulled directly from EDFacts data files.

The facilitator explained the EDFacts process, starting with states collecting and submitting data, the Department applying business rules, states resubmitting data and notes, and ED and NDTAC reporting and presenting data.

They explained the types of data collected from TIPD are participation (demographics such as age, race, gender, EL status, disability status) for LEAs and SAs, academic achievement (test scores in reading and math) for LEAs and SAs, and program outcomes (such as high school course credits, job training, enrolling in GED programs) while in the facility and after exiting the facility. The facilitator clarified that each of the categories is connected to a file specification which describe the file format in which the data should be submitted. The facilitator also explained that all SEAs have an EDFacts coordinator that TIPD coordinators should collaborate with to complete the EDFacts submission.

The facilitator shared how business rules are applied against the submitted data to check for any errors or data quality issues. The two types of checks are (1) Accuracy: year to year comparisons, subtotals align with totals, and (2) Completeness: Missing or incomplete data. After any data issues are identified, the state receives a notification of the data issue and state can resubmit the data with clarifying comments.

The facilitator then moved on to a data notes exercise and described the types of data notes that are useful. They shared three examples:

* Data corrected: In this example, a good comment clearly addresses if the error has been fixed. For example, “These file specs have been corrected and resubmitted.”
* Data is correct as submitted: In this example, a good comment demonstrates that the state understand the flag, clarifies that the data is correct as submitted and will not be resubmitted, and explains why in sufficient detail for a reviewer to understand what steps to take. For example, “[Redacted] LEA ([LEA number]) Did not have an At-Risk Program in 2018-19. Current data submitted in FY19 correct.”
* Data cannot be corrected: In this example, a good comment includes information about notes and acknowledges what is wrong, and if possible, why. For example, “Some students did not identify a gender. A note was provided in submitted file.”

The facilitator concluded the presentation by sharing the way that data are used such as ED reporting on programs to congress, NDTAC identifying TA needs, and SEA planning for program improvement.

## Group discussion

States discussed best practices and challenges around subgrantee data collection. One coordinator asked if there were any states that felt like they had successfully integrated their data systems across agencies to provide a “source of truth” for data comparisons to make sure that the numbers were accurate as the data provided to ED is all self-reported. While comparing ED Facts year-to-year helps with mitigating some errors, there are still margins for error because all of it is self-reported every year by the same subgrantees.

The facilitator asked SCs about the data systems that their states use. One coordinator noted that the state still uses paper because there are not many facilities. One of the ways that the state instituted checks for correctness was to build in places for autocorrect data; however, the totals still need to be computed manually. For their data checks, there are comment boxes in the data collection tool so that it coaches subgrantees to proactively put in data notes to explain changes in their data. Because there is a smaller population served, a change as small as a decrease from nine students to seven students can trigger comments from ED. The SC also stated that they provide the data back to the subgrantees in an understandable year-to-year comparison format so they can include it in their fiscal application.

One Coordinator asked if states were experiencing challenges on defining language differently and marking students differently, especially with how facilities and districts define students to make sure everyone is using the same descriptions and speaking the same language. A coordinator responded that in their state, they were also experiencing the same validity problems around language and did training from the ground up to ensure that everyone had the same understanding around language, definitions, and descriptions. Another coordinator noted that they spent a lot of time translating between the language that they used in the program office and the language that partner agencies use and they provided time and space for that to happen.

One coordinator wanted a justification for why they were told to collect information on IDEA special education services within the facilities like they are an independent program. One SC noted that this could be for program accountability from another program.

Overall, SCs at the session gave some advice for a smooth data collection and submission process. They are:

* Do not wait until the last minute to begin reaching out to facilities.
* Give the subgrantees usable data and they are more likely to use it.
* With ED giving notice about any changes to data collection years in advance, subgrantees can be informed early enough to remediate any challenges that can come with staff turnover and short timelines.

The facilitator asked SCs how they are able to engage subgrantees in using their data. One coordinator responded that visiting the facilities and kids will make the conversations around data meaningful to them and the facilities. It is absolutely essential to go into the facilities and meet with the people to build relationships as soon as possible. This eases relations and helps SCs understand the environment in the facilities and what the educators may have to deal with.

SCs came to a consensus that what works well in relationship building is establishing informal visits and meetings, even outside the facilities. Showing up as a collaborative and supportive role also works well. Approaching the relationship as an equal partnership instead of a punitive authority creates a safe and effective relationship.

## Housekeeping Items

Next Community meeting will be August 25th, 2022, at 3:00 pm-4:00 pm ET

Please reach out to Alex with any questions or requests regarding CoP 1 at the following email: agabriel@childtrends.org

Please refer to the ND Communities website for summaries and CoP member listings for future use.

## Final Thoughts

Please share any feedback you have concerning the topics, format, or facilitators so we can improve the overall experience for all SCs.