Fidelity of Implementation Toolkit

Stronger Connections Grant

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Fidelity of Implementation Rubric

The fidelity of implementation rubric provides SCG awardees with a tool that guides campus and district leadership to meaningful evaluation of grant progress and deilverables.

Performance Measures Assessed:

- Grant Management- ability to connect grant dollars to the work in a timely manner
- Training & PD- effective capacity building
- Data Collection- data informs decision making
- Student Support Framework- successful implementation of the SSF
- SMART Goal- identified needs addressed through application benchmarks
- Sustainability- stakeholders develop long term goals for scalability and sustainability of work

Evaluation Steps:

- LEA leadership (campus, district, business office) meet quarterly to discuss each of the six performance measures and complete the self-evaluation using the rubric criteria.
- Upon completion, a SmartSheets survey is submitted That documents the LEA's ratings, narratives, and other relevant information.
- Regional ESC SCG leads will schedule short, virtual check ins with an LEA SCG's project director or other representative of the work to review their FOI ratings, successes, challenges, and any supports. TEA SCG program staff will attend these virtual check ins on a rolling basis to participate in the discussion and learn from the field.
- Data collected from the FOI survey submissions will be entered into dashboard visualization that allow stake-holders to analyze trends, assess progress, and provide any necessary in-time supports.

Compliance

Application assurances state that awardees must provide timely response to requests from TEA for information and data regarding program development, implementation, and performance and evaluation measures. While awardees must submit quarterly FOI surveys to remain in compliance with grant assurances, this tool was designed for district leadership to perform honest evaluations of their grant work. Ratings lower than "meets expectation" will **not** be penalized. This FOI tool is not in any way tied to funding. Ratings of a 1 or 2 mean there is room for growth and may also indicate a gap in regional or state level supports. The information you submit via the FOI tool is valuable and essential to the efficacy of this work.

We look forward to showcasing regional and statewide trends found in FOI data and following up with additional wraparound supports as needed.

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Performance Measure #1

Performance measure one is **grant** **management**. This PM ensures that the awardee is 1) on track to spend 100% of their SCG funds in accordance with grant goals and deliverables, 2) successfully connecting the dollars to the work of the grant, and 3) complying with state and federal reporting requirements.

Guiding Questions:
- Have you created a projected quarterly budget for the upcoming SY? Note: submission of quarterly spending goals required in June 2024 and June 2025 virtual FOI check-ins. As a team, review that budget every FOI check-in.
- How are you ensuring campus-specific needs are being met by this LEA-level grant?
- To what extent is your campus leadership involved in the decision-making process on spending funds?
- How flexible is your budget to meet future needs or unforseen challenges?

Example Artifacts:

Budget workbooks

ER Reports

Agendas

Meeting notes/minutes

Vendor Partnerships

Capacity Building Programs

Rubric Critera:

1 - Needs Improvement	2 - Progressing	3 - Meets Expectation	4 - Exemplary
The LEA is off track in their quarterly budget goals. They have overspent or underspent greater than 10% -and/or- The LEA has not created an environment where campus leadership, district leadership, and the business office all participate in budget discussions. -and/or- The LEA has projected costs that do not align to the grant deliverables.	The LEA is slightly off track in their quarterly budget goals. They have overspent or underspent up to 10% -and- All other criteria met.	~~The LEA has submitted a projected quarterly budget for the 24-25 SY by the June 2024 FOI submission.~~ The LEA is on track to spend ~25% (+/-5%) of funds by December 2024. The LEA continuously creates an environment where the following local stakeholders participate in budget discussions- campus leadership, district leadership and the business office. The LEA is able to justify all their expenses against the deliverables and goals of the grant. The district maintains a quarterly, if not monthly, budget where drawdowns are tracked and entered into Expenditure Reporting.	All "meets expectation" criteria has been met + one or more of the following: - Evidence of sustainable use of grant funding. (Ex. Unique partnerships with organizations, internal capacity building) -Other funding sources identified to sustain work.

Performance Measure #2

Performance measure two is **training and professional development**. This PM ensures that the awardee is building capacity by utilizing the appropriate technical assistance providers and attending mandatory and recommended trainings to support the implementation of their SSP and other grant deliverables.

Guiding Questions:
- What TCSS trainings have you registered for and completed this quarter? Are there any staff who have not recieved these trainings? What about required ESC trainings?
- Are there any additional ESC trainings available to you that align with your identified needs or gaps in your student support program? What about trainings/PD offered by other vetted vendors?
- Have you provided timely feedback regarding the trainings and professional development you have recieved?
- Have you gathered feedback on those trainings and other PD from your staff to evaluate their understanding and willingness to implement? If not, how can you gather that data?

Example Artifacts:

Verification of training

Documented feedback

Nonapproved vendor documentation

Description of trainings that meet identified needs

Rubric Critera:

1 - Needs Improvement	2 - Progressing	3 - Meets Expectation	4 - Exemplary
Staff have failed to participate in required TCSS or regional ESC trainings or professional development activities. -and/or- The LEA has failed to submit the necessary documentation to the TCSS regarding the use of nonapproved vendors.	The LEA has not completed mandatory TCSS or regional ESC trainings, or there are some staff not up to date on trainings, but they are scheduled to be completed. -and/or- TCSS or other training/PD partners have not yet received requested feedback.	The LEA is up to date on mandatory TCSS trainings. The LEA ensures that the appropriate staff attend and complete these trainings. The LEA provides timely feedback to TCSS and their partners regarding training and professional development outcomes and experiences, as requested by the TCSS. The LEA participates in additional training and professional development according to their SCG goals with regional ESCs and/or vetted technical assistance providers. (*Should the LEA be working with a nonapproved vendor via the appeals process, the LEA submits all required documentation to the TCSS for evaluation on time and completed in full.)	All "meets expectation" criteria has been met + one or more of the following: - The LEA has demonstrated how to scale trainings to other campuses outside of the SCG.

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Performance Measure #3

Performance measure three is **data collection**. This PM ensures that the awardee is submitting critical data entries using the tools and timelines set forth by the TCSS and the TEA. This PM also measures an awardee's ability to identify in-time supports and turn data analyzation into actionable next steps.

Guiding Questions:

- How have your participating campuses integrated vendor CMS or other local tracking tools into their daily/weekly routines? Are there any push back or concerns?
- Have you met or are projected to reach upcoming deadlines for data submissions related to nonacademic needs and climate surveys?
- Do you have partnerships with any external vendors that require data submisisons? What kind of progress will that data measure? How do you integrate it into your grant goals?
- Are you up to date on FOI submissions? How have FOI submissions kept you on-track to meeting grant goals and objectives?

Example Artifacts:

Verification of training attendance

Data entries in local tracking tool or vendor CMS

Data submissions in TEA Qualtrics survey

Climate survey results

Virtual FOI check in attendance

FOI submission reports

Other data sources as applicable

Rubric Critera:

1 - Needs Improvement	2 - Progressing	3 - Meets Expectation	4 - Exemplary
Not all staff have completed necessary data collection training. -and/or- There are outstanding data submissions requested by TCSS or regional ECSs. -and/or- The LEA has not completed one or more FOI submission(s). -and/or- The LEA is trained and understands the proper integration of data collection processes, but staff are not utilizing the tools.	The LEA has not completed required data trainings, but missing trainings have been scheduled. -and/or- The LEA exhibits a pattern of late data submissions to TCSS, regional ESCs, or the TEA.	The LEA has ensured that all staff have completed necessary training regarding the data tracking and collection of nonacademic needs, including climate surveys and the TEA tracking/collection tools. The LEA has ensured all campus and district leadership understand expectations for tracking nonacademic needs, either by optional vendor CMS or TEA's local tracking tool. The LEA meets data entry timelines for the TEA Qualtrics data collection survey. The LEA attends all quarterly FOI check-ins, ensuring the appropriate personnel are present and that all agenda and FOI materials are completed prior to meeting. AND the local advisory committee reviews FOI submissions each quarter. Participating campuses have completed approved climate surveys according to TCSS timelines. The LEA submits other data, including critical feedback data, as requested.	All "meets expectation" criteria has been met + one or more of the following: - The LEA has developed unique systems to fully integrate the data tracking/collection into school culture and climate. - The LEA has evidence of evaluation of: climate data, FOI data, and nonacademic needs data that includes action plans.

Performance Measure #4

Performance measure four is the **student support framework**. This PM ensures that the awardee is on track to integrating and maintaining an effective student support framework and student support team according to the parameters set forth by the TCSS. This includes implementation of the parent and family engagement playbook as well as local advisory committees.

Example Artifacts:

Verification of training

Evaluation tools/rubrics

Satisfaction surveys

Progress monitoring tools for SSTs

Agendas/minutes/notes

Guiding Questions:

- How do you envision your student support program? How have you, up until this point, incorporated TCSS' student support framework?
- How did you set up your student support team? Who is this team made up of? Have their roles been defined?
- To what extent have you incorporated the TCSS family engagement playbook? What challenges have you been met with? What successes?
- How have you established and maintained your local advisory councils? What kinds of contributions have they made?

Rubric Critera:

1 - Needs Improvement	2 - Progressing	3 - Meets Expectation	4 - Exemplary

Not all staff have completed necessary PFE or SSF training.
     -and/or-
There are mandatory components of SSF/SST/PFE evaluation that are missing.
     -and/or-
A lack of support related to implementation of the SSF/SST frameworks has been identified.
     -and/or-
Feedback from local advisory committee members is not being considered, there are not enough opportunties to give input, or there is no transparency regarding implementation of the grant.
	The LEA has not completed required PFE or SSF trainings, but missing trainings have been scheduled.
	
	-and/or-
	
	There are minimal outstanding tasks related to the establishment or ongoing support of the local advisory committees that the LEA will address by the next FOI submission.
		District leadership understand the SSF and PFE playbook and fully support its implementation.
		
		The LEA has ensured that all staff have completed necessary training regarding the Parent and Family Engagement Handbook and Student Support Framework. Follow up support is provided as needed by staff.
		
		Any evaluation/diagnostic materials developed by the TCSS regarding the SSF/SST and PFE are completed on time and incorporated into next steps and action items.
		
		The LEA is on track to establish local advisory committees by the end of the 23/24 SY. These committees receive communication on expectations and timeline of meetings. These committees operate based on TCSS roles and responsibilities. Members are given everything they need to effectively participate.
		
		Staff at participating campuses have regular opportunities to ask questions, problem solve, and debrief regarding their experiences implementing the SSF and SST.
			All "meets expectation" criteria has been met + one or more of the following:
			
			- The LEA has been spotlighted by their regional ESC, TCSS, or TEA for their SSF implementation efforts.
			
			- The LEA has received community recognition for their SSF or PFE efforts.

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Performance Measure #5

Performance measure five is **SMART goals & benchmarks**. This PM allows the LEA to track their progress towards the smart goals they indicated on their application according to their identified needs. The benchmarks outlined in SCG applications are integrated into this performance measure.

Guiding Questions:
- Review your SMART goals and benchmarks with the team to reorient yourselves to the original why behind the work.
- What does progress look like so far? Where can you identify impact?
- What are the challenges you've encountered so far and what have you learned from them? What barriers do you anticipate may arise? Are there any supports you need from your regional ESC, the TCSS, or the TEA?
- Pinpoint areas of success. Are there any areas of this work you would like to share with other SCG awardees?

Example Artifacts:

Various data sources aligned to SMART goals

Data visualizations

FOI check-in attendance and notes

Advisory attendance/minutes/notes

Interventions plans

Evidence of additional support

Rubric Critera:

1 - Needs Improvement	2 - Progressing	3 - Meets Expectation	4 - Exemplary
The way in which goals are measured are inadequate, or the LEA has failed to produce quarterly progress measurements to share with stakeholders. -and/or- Goals are off-track and there are no documented plans that address next steps, possible interventions, or supports.	District and/or campus leadership are unfamiliar with SCG goals and benchmarks. -and/or- Any one of the LEA's internal stakeholders has not been given timely opportunities to review goal progress and related data.	District and campus leadership as well as teachers at participating campuses know and understand the goals and benchmarks set forth by the LEA regarding the Stronger Connections Grant. Goals developed by the LEA have adequate data sources and are measured accurately for student impact. The LEA utilizes school climate/culture survey data to refine goals. Goals and any corresponding data are discussed quarterly with district and campus leadership as well as teachers. Local advisory committees are given timely opportunities to review goal progress and give input where reasonable. Goals are on-track. If off-track, next steps, interventions, and in-time supports have been identified and discussed with relevant stakeholders.	All "meets expectation" criteria has been met + one or more of the following: - Goal(s) have been met ahead of schedule. - Goal(s) have been exceeded.

Performance Measure #6

Performance measure six is **sustainability**. This PM ensures the LEA is integrating sustainability measures into their programmatic decisions.

Guiding Questions:
- Reflect on the impact you'd like this work to have five years from now, ten years from now. Where are there areas to begin incorporating sustainability?
- What are your current barriers to sustainability? What future barriers do you anticipate? How do you plan to mitigate those barriers now?
- What areas of this work that could continue to function with no funding? With partial funding? With another funding source?

Example Artifacts:

Verification of training

CMS application entries

Evaluation tools/rubrics

Satisfaction surveys

Progress monitoring tools for SSTs

Agendas/minutes/notes

Rubric Critera:

1 - Needs Improvement	2 - Progressing	3 - Meets Expectation	4 - Exemplary
District is not integrating matters of sustainability into program discussions and decision-making. District did not participate in the required TASBO sustainability webinars (2).	District has identified an area of scability and/or sustainability but has not yet demonstrated implementation efforts.	District leadership, campus leadership, teachers, and members of the student support program team meet regularly to discuss SCG progress. Local Advisory committees are also given opportunities to discuss. -current challenges -recent success -areas of the budget that could be reworked to ensure longevity The LEA is utlizing the 1x1 consulting services from TASBO (if elevated as a need by SCG leadership/advisory committees). Answer these questions in your narrative: -Identify one avenue of your work that demonstrates scalability to other campuses? -Identify one avenue of your work that demonstrates sustainability beyond Sept. 30, 2026?	All "meets expectation" criteria has been met one or more of the following: - The LEA's methods of sustainability have been shared and duplicated amongst other campuses within the LEA. - The LEA's methods of sustainability have been shared and duplicated amongst other SCG awardees.

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Frequently Asked Questions (updated 3/17/2025)

1. **Purpose of FOI Tool**
   a. Is use of this tool required?
      Yes. Per the SCG program guidelines, awardees must "provide timely response to requests from TEA for information and data regarding program development, implementation, and performance and evaluation measures."

   b. Can our district create our own evaluation tool?
      Your district may choose to implement additional evaluation tools. Please be mindful of any administrative burden additional tools may place on program staff at participating campuses. Use of this tool is required even if the awardee has another evaluation system in place.

   c. Why are awardees required to participate in FOIs?
      Data collected from this tool will provide regional and statewide trends in grant implementation progress, sustainability efforts, and also give insight to any additional supports needed at the regional ESC, TCSS, and TEA levels.

   d. Will we be able to view the statewide FOI data?
      Yes! Data collected will be made available to your regional ESC SCG leads to use during your follow up FOI check-in.

2. **Logistics**
   a. Who from the district completes the FOI rubric?
      Campus leadership, district leadership, and the business office should be present during your in-person evaluation. Please prioritize everyone's attendance!

   b. How are adviosry committees involved?
      Advisory committees do not need to be involved in the FOI rubric completion, but upon submission of the FOI surveys, committees should have opportunities to review ratings and narratives and discuss.

   c. Where do we document our ratings?
      You may print a copy of this toolkit and circle ratings/take notes on the page.

You may also choose to download a copy and highlight ratings and make comments for notetaking. We recommend establishing a routine that meets your needs, allows everyone to collaborate, and can be saved and referenced in the future.

d. Where do we keep artifacts and how many do we need?
Artifacts are documentation types you would already be using as part of the grant implementation (ex. Attendance records and minutes). Maintain your artifacts locally however you normally would in a way that you may refer back to them and display them virtually during advisory meetings, leadership meetings, and FOI check-ins. There is no set number required.

e. Where do we submit our FOI survey?
Please use this link to submit your quarterly FOI survey (updated for Q3). Link will NOT be active until March 31st when the submission window opens.

f. Explanation of FOI quarters:
In order to remain as streamlined as possible, beginning June 2024 we will refer to FOI quarters and budget quarters as written below:
Quarter One- July 1 to September 30
Quarter Two- October 1 to December 31
Quarter Three- January 1 to March 31
Quarter Four- April 1 to June 30

3. **Performance Measures**
a. What if I rate in-between scores?
Above all else, the rubric exists to provide awardees with a tool to help facilitate progress monitoring and discussion of grant deliverables. Leadership should use their best professional judgement when it comes to selecting a rubric rating. Ratings should be able to be justified through local documentation of artifacts and in discussion at ESC virtual check-ins.

b. What if the criteria doesn't apply to us yet?
When rating, please be mindful of where you are in the grant cycle. Ratings during the third and fourth quarters will look very different than year two of the grant. If rubric criteria does not yet apply to all participants of the grant, omit that criteria from your evaluation. This may cause fluctuation in ratings from quarter to quarter and that's okay. Feel free to document that in your narrative responses.

c. What if we rate at a 1 or 2?
Narrative responses and check-in conversations are held in a higher regard

than just the numeric score you choose. The 1-4 scale helps the TEA quantify overall trends, but the system is rooted in support. Low scores indicate areas of growth and should be followed up with tailored supports for that awardee.

d. Why did Performace Measure #3 change?
A Case Management System (CMS) is not an integrated support through the Texas Center for Student Supports at this time. Instead, the TEA team is creating an optional local tracking tool for LEAs who need it, resources for those LEAs using an approved vendor for CMS, and a required data collection survey instrument for all SCG awardees to utlize quarterly to submit aggregate data of nonacademic needs. PM #3 reflects those updates. For more information on this update, please reach out to your ESC SCG lead.

e. Why did Perforamce Measure #1 change?
Due to reporting requirements from the United States Departnment of Education (USDE), we are shifting the way budgets/expenditures are reported within the FOI survey. More information will be given to your districts in February/March 2025. The only present change is this: while districts are still expected to calculate whether they are on track with spending (per PM #1 criteria), the FOI tool will no longer ask LEAs to enter their projected and actual expenditures per budget object code per quarter. Moving forward, you will not see those questions included at the end of the FOI survey. The agency will reach out when the new budget reporting questions are available and virtual workshops will be hosted to ensure districts are equipped to handle new budget reporting procedures taking place in Q3.

f. ==Where do we submit the nonacademic needs data collection for PM #3?==
All SCG awardees are required to submit campus-level Qualtrics surveys for their nonacademic needs tracking (student support referrals). The submissions for this report occur quarterly and are always aligned to the FOI submission windows. Your FOI survey will have you certify that you have submitted the Qualtrics surveys. Because of the nature of the data collected, we are not able to integrate the nonacademic needs data collection into the same SmartSheets FOI collection. The Qualtrics report linked below will NOT be activated until the submission window opens on March 31st, 2025.
Click here for the Qualtrics survey link

4. **Deadlines**
   a. ==When do we complete the FOI rubric?==
   ==Quarter Three 2025==: complete the first FOI rubric with your teams shortly before the FOI submission window opens. Since this submission window begins after the holiday break, the window has been extended by 3 days. We recommend meeting with your teams in March, after spring break.

b.   ==When do we submit the SmartSheets FOI survey?==
==Quarter Three 24-25 SY: submit the FOI survey between Mar 31st and April 7th.==
Quarter Two 24-25 SY: submit the FOI survey between January 6th and 15th.
Quarter One 24-25 SY: submit the FOI survey between April 1st and 12th.
Quarter Four 23-24 SY: submit the FOI survey between June 1st and 23rd.
Quarter One 24-25 SY: submit the FOI survey between September 30th and
October 7th, 2024.

c.   When do we meet with our ESC SCG Lead?
ESC FOI check-ins will be scheduled after the FOI submission window closes,
depending on when the awardee submitted their survey and the scheduling
availability of the district and the ESC lead.

d.   What if we miss a FOI check-in?
FOI check-ins are required to ensure awardees have ample opportunities to
discuss goal progress, deliverables progress, challenges/successes, and any
additional support requests. Missing FOI survey submissions and check-ins will
result in lower FOI scores and missed opportunities for in-time supports.

5.   Check-in Process

a.   When do FOI check-ins happen?
Quarterly. In 2024, check-ins will take place in April (Q3), June (Q4), October
(Q1). In 2025, check-ins will take place in Jan/Feb (Q2), April (Q3), and July (Q4).

b.   Who facilitates the FOI check-in process?
Regional ESC SCG Leads will facilitate the check-in process. In most cases, it will
be a 30 to 60-minute virtual call.

c.   Who from the district should attend?
We recommend between 1-3 representatives from the district attend. Best
practice would be one district leader with oversight of the program, one
campus leader at a participating school, and someome from the business
office. More representatives are welcome to attend, especially if there are
other leaders at participating campuses.

d.   Will the TEA participate?
Yes. The TEA program team aims to join virtual calls thorughout the grant cycle
so that all 99 awardees have at least one virtual check-in call with the TEA
present. The program team at TEA looks forward to learning from the field!