Research Agenda Progress: What's Happened Since Implementation?

The presentation will begin at approximately 3:00 p.m. ET

Information on joining the teleconference can be found on the "Info" tab in the upper left of this screen. Be sure to use the "Attendee ID" number on the Info tab when dialing in to associate your name with your phone.

In order to cut down on background noise, we have placed you on mute upon entry into the meeting.

During the question and answer portion of this presentation, type your question into the Q&A panel below the participant list and click "Send."

A copy of this presentation and a link to the recording will be shared on the SLDS GRADS360° site at https://slds.ed.gov/#program.

Research Agenda Progress: What's Happened Since Implementation?

MAY 4, 2018

- Carla Howe & Kathy Gosa – SLDS SST
- Brett Carter – Montana
- Yan Li – Mississippi

Agenda

- Welcome and introductions

- Overview and background

- States' perspectives

- Q & A

- Wrap up

Background

- FY15 SLDS Grants have a Data Use focus
  - Research & Evaluation was one priority area funded under the FY15 grants
  - SST held workshops to support the development, implementation, and use of the Research Agendas beginning in the fall of 2015 for grantees and non-grantees

State Panel

Features MT and MS. They'll share information about:

➢ Research agenda:

  ➢ Current status

  ➢ Its development

➢ The research agenda and SLDS sustainability connection

➢ Expectations for the future

➢ Lessons learned

Creating and Supporting a Research agenda

Brett Carter

Montana Office of Public Instruction

Timeline

- October, 2015 – Montana was awarded the 2015 SLDS grant in the Research and Evaluation Category

- December, 2015 – The grant team was finalized and began working on agency wide "Research Priorities"

- April, 2016 – Finalized these priorities for approval of the Montana Office of Public Instruction Data Governance Committee

Overview

Description and staffing for research themes

Theme	Description	Staffing resources
General Student Outcomes	Research on student outcomes. American Indian student achievement will have a special focus.	This research will be completed by OPI staff from the Measurement and Accountability Division. The Technology Services Division will lead development of new GEMS reports and dashboards
Special Program Effectiveness	Research on state efforts to strengthen the Montana education system to investigate the long term outcomes of these special programs on student success.	This research will be completed by OPI staff from the Measurement and Accountability Division with the guidance of each division managing each special program. The Technology Services Division will lead development of GEMS reports and dashboards
University Research Projects	These partnerships will research policy questions as they relate to the Montana education system. Research questions will be driven by external researchers and supported by OPI.	University faculty and graduate research assistants will take the lead on this research. Data requests will be approved by OPI leadership and managed by the Measurement and Accountability Division.
Teacher quality	These partnerships will foster a cooperative relationship between OPI and the teacher preparation programs in Montana	Staff from the Measurement and Accountability Division will assist faculty from the teacher prep programs in the creation of lessons on Montana data literacy.

Progress

- With Data Governance approval, there was agency-wide buy in to the these ideas
- This information has also been shared and received buy in from our external stakeholders (e.g. university faculty, other agency staff, LEAs, etc.)
- These priorities clearly outline what work needs to be done and who should be responsible for completing this work
- The priorities are aligned with our 2015 SLDS project plan and both get updated in synchronous way
- The priorities align with internal agency goals as well as shared policy goals with other agencies (sustainability)

Future Directions

- Continue to work with Data Governance to update these priorities
- There is a need to update leadership as turnover happens to make sure there is buy-in from the top
- These priorities may change over time depending on new goals and existing research outcomes

Where Are We Now?

Mississippi Research Agenda Progress

May 4, 2018

Yan Li, Ph.D.

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Mississippi Department of Education

VISION

To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens

MISSION

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community

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State Board of Education Goals FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2016-2020

1. All Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas

2. Every Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career

3. Every Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program

4. Every School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders

5. Every Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes

6. Every School and District is Rated "C" or Higher

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Timeline

Mississippi began its efforts to establish an SLDS in the late 1990's.

2008 grant – establishment of the K-12 system
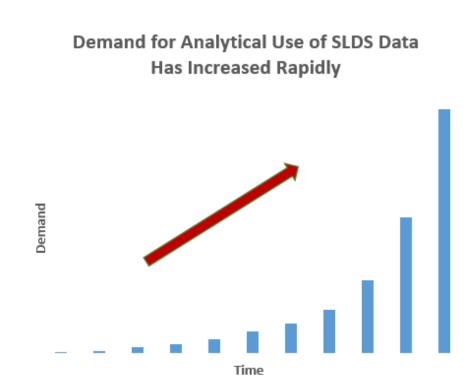
2009 grant – creation of the P-20w system

Increase in Demand

Prior to the 2015 SLDS grant, there was no research agenda.

The K-12 system was mostly used as a single location producing data reports to meet state and federal reporting requirements.

Demand grew for more analytical use of the SLDS data to inform decision-making and program implementation.

However, capacity at MDE to use data in its K-12 data warehouse or data sought from the P-20w system for research and analysis was limited.

Demand for Analytical Use of SLDS Data Has Increased Rapidly

Demand

Time

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2015 SLDS grant: October 2015 – September 2019

Priority area #1: Research and Evaluation

Projected outcome: Establishment of the Office of Research and Development

Key mission: **Development of a research agenda**

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Staffing to increase research capacity

In February 2017, only **1** researcher was in the office.

Other than developing a research agenda, graduation rate calculations, federal EdFacts student assessment statistics reporting, and other technical support to other program offices were added to the function of the office.

There was an urgent need to increase the agency's awareness of what is a research agenda needed.

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Agenda!

MDE Research Agenda Development Process

Staffing to increase research capacity

New Hires

- April 2017: lead researcher

- November 2017: research analyst

The Office of Research and Development reached the planned staffing level of 3 researchers.

Re-identified key stakeholders

Renewed Research Agenda Advisory Committee

Conducted committee meetings to discuss changes in the research agenda

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Data Elements Identification

The Research Office internally identified data elements, and conducted data availability evaluations.

The longitudinal data system is great research resource, but it may take effort to organize it in a way that allows researchers to easily use it for research. So an important step is to identify and document the available data and business rules, to save time when answering research questions.
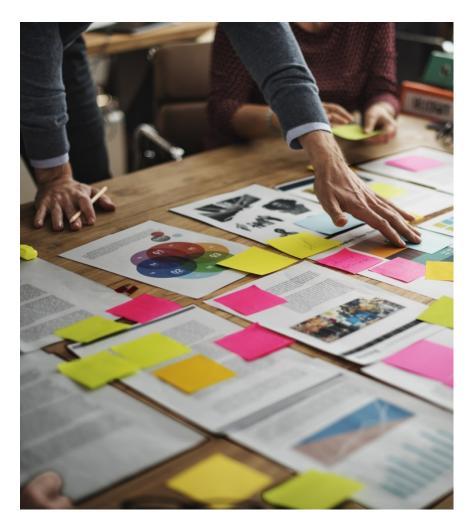
Our data elements identification effort was guided by several parameters:
What are the questions asking? What data will researchers need to provide a good answer? Where the data is sourced from? Whom may we need support from? What is the difficulty level of getting the data? If not possible, what kind of proxy variables are available?
Our research office believes that, if a question is focused, and clearly establishes what data is needed to answer the question, the research process will likely be smooth and achievable within a reasonable time frame.

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Literature Review

The Research Office conducted literature review.

- What has already been done on the topic?
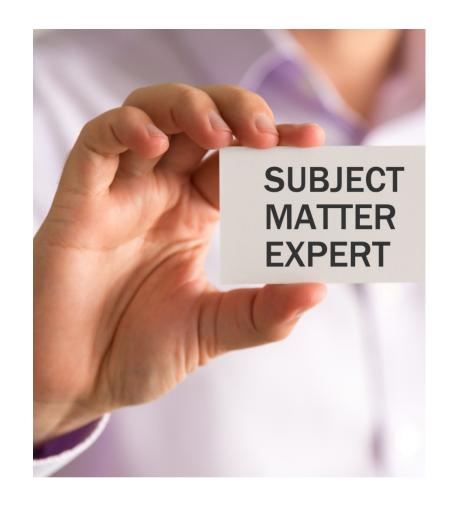
- What are the issues surrounding the topic?

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Subject Matter Expert Team

Created a Subject Matter Expert Team

The Subject Matter Expert team help us narrow down a broad topic, focusing it even more, by looking at a particular perspective, time period, place, population group, or more than one of these.

The Subject Matter Expert team also help us to avoid questions that are too focused that can lead to "tunnel vision" which can inhibit our understanding and analysis.

Communications with Other SEAs

Initiated communications with researchers at SEA level from other states, to learn and share best practices.

From communications with researchers and research offices in other states, we learn their process of handling research requests, locating the focus areas for their research agenda, and utilizing resources efficiently and effectively.

Conferences and Workshops

Attend educational data/research conferences, webinars, and workshops to get strategies and gain insights.

Goal Alignment

State Board of Education's six strategic goals

MDE's research agenda is guided and driven by our strategic plan, with each goal in our strategic plan carrying a set of research questions.

Alignment of research questions and the goals

The following questions guides the alignment of our research questions and strategic goals:
Are they relevant to the priority areas listed in our strategic plan? What did we miss, or not understand? What is going on in this focus area? What are the basic processes, and are they working? How do we convince the policymakers and practitioners, that the research questions have something new and important to say about the strategic goals?

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MDE Research Agenda Efforts Today

Research Agenda Progress

We have made exciting progress on our research agenda so far!

The current research agenda has **32** research questions, which covers areas of student growth, achievement gap, early learning, teacher effectiveness, educator preparation, educational technology, and school improvement.

The research agenda is in its **refinement process** and ready to have its **third round** of review by the Research Agenda Advisory Committee.

We plan to **publish** our research agenda when our new website goes live.

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Looking back…

After a year's effort:

- a more mature research agenda is available and is centered on the State Board of Education's strategic goals

- An increased awareness of what is a research agenda has been achieved

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Some challenges persist

- The channel of communication hasn't fully reached all the agency's levels yet.

- The need to strengthen the relationship with the agency's executive leadership and key stakeholders is becoming more apparent.

- The office is a small team.

- The need to create partnerships with external researchers is becoming more urgent.

New Leadership

Under the leadership of our new Chief:

- We are having **more thorough and in-depth discussions** with all program offices in the agency;

- The discussions go **horizontally and vertically**, with the objective of aligning the research priorities to what the agency considers important.

Current Work

We are also working on:

- Creating a Researchers' **Guide** to Mississippi State Education Data, including the research agenda

- **Strengthening** the relationship with MS's National Strategic Planning and Analysis Research Center (NSPARC) and the state data center

- Data **governance**

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Lessons learned along the way

- Communication **plan**

- **Collaboration** with other states who are conducting similar work

- Internal relationship building and priority **alignment**

- Importance of consistent **support** from the agency's leadership

- Study questions that **matter**, and answer policy questions of interest in a rigorous way

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Expectations for the Future

We genuinely expect our diligent work to yield the best outcomes through the research agenda, by:

- Maintaining a **proactive** research agenda

- Having the internal research office attain strength in descriptive and comparative, linear modeling, and **rapid turnaround**;

- Working with **external groups** to have enhanced level of sophistication and qualitative/quantitative analysis;

- Strengthening **long-term** relationships and trust;

- Turning research methods to **state-wide metrics**, to establish a more efficient and matured system.

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Questions?

Research Agenda Toolkit

Research Agenda Toolkit

Research Agenda Toolkit

Creating and Managing a Research Agenda

RESEARCH AGENDA TOOLKIT

Creating and Managing a Research Agenda

Data Use

System Design

Stakeholder Engagement

Data Governance

Project Planning and Management

Purpose / Vision

Sustainability

SLDS

Research Agendas help SLDS teams and their states align SLDS work with state strategic goals and policy priorities, review and prioritize research projects, and respond to proposals from researchers.

Research Agenda Home

Research Agenda Overview and Needs Assessment

Creating and Managing a Research Agenda

Related Resources

DEVELOP

UPDATE

IMPLEMENT

RESEARCH AGENDA LIFECYCLE

REPORT

MONITOR

The lifecycle of a Research Agenda includes

- developing the agenda;
- implementing the agenda;
- monitoring progress on research and evaluation projects connected to the agenda;
- reporting the results of research activities; and
- using research results to inform practice and establish updated Research Agenda priorities.

Research Agenda Toolkit

Additional Resources

State Resources

Other resources of interest

- NCES Forum - *Research Access to Data – SEA Perspective* https://nces.ed.gov/forum/pub_2012809.asp and One-Pager

- NCES Forum - *Researcher Access to Data – LEA Perspective* https://nces.ed.gov/forum/pub_2014801.asp and One-Pager

- SLDS – Research Toolkits https://slds.ed.gov/#program/research-toolkits

- CEDS - https://ceds.ed.gov/Researchers.aspx

Helpful links

- SLDS SST Points of Contact https://slds.ed.gov/#program

- SST general help email: support@sst-slds.org

- SLDS GRADS360° website: https://slds.ed.gov/#program

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Thank You!