Planning for Sustainability
A NCSSLE Online Learning Event
National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments
April 21, 2016
Planning for Sustainability

A Project Prevent and
Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Grantees
Online Learning Event

Please introduce yourselves by providing the following information:

- In the chat box: Your name, role, and school district
This is a “Listen-Only” online event.

Opportunities to participate include:
- Polling questions
- The chat box

Shared materials will be emailed and posted online after the event is over.

If you are having any audio or other issues, please contact ncssle@air.org and we will be happy to assist you.
Polling Question 1

- Which grant program are you representing today?
  - Elementary and Secondary School Counseling
  - Project Prevent
  - Both
Polling Question 2

- How many years of funding remain in your grant-funded work with the program(s) just identified?
  - 3
  - 2
  - 1
Learning Objectives

As a result of attending today’s OLE, participants will be able to:

- Describe the fundamental principles, visions, and processes for planning sustainability efforts.
- Discuss ways to gather and utilize data to “build the case” for sustaining program achievements.
- Explain how to communicate with organizational leaders and other stakeholders through a sustainability action plan.
Overview of Our Time Together

1. Planning for Sustainability: An Overview
2. Communicating to Key Stakeholders
3. Planning for Sustainability: The Process
4. The Sustainability Worksheet: Guiding Your Way
Polling Question 3

- What do you hope to gain from this OLE session on planning for sustainability?
Today’s Speakers

Planning for Sustainability

Sandy Williamson
Director, NCSSLE

P2 Grantee: 
*Shelley Duke*

ESSC Grantee: 
Scott Lindstrom
A Concept of Sustainability

- There is no standard approach for defining or conceptualizing sustainability.

- Sustainability can simply be a continuity of a program or services – the ability to carry on program services through funding and resource shifts or losses.

- Or sustainability is about institutionalizing services or the continuation of activities and impacts; creating a legacy, including continuing organizational ideals, principles, and beliefs; upholding existing relationships; and/or maintaining consistent outcomes.
Building Sustainable Programs: The Framework

Building Sustainable Programs: The Resource Guide
Eight Key Sustainability Factors

There are 8 key factors that influence whether a service, program or its activities and benefits will be sustained over time:

1. Create an action strategy
2. Assess the environment
3. Be adaptable
4. Secure community support
5. Integrate program services into community infrastructures
6. Build a leadership team
7. Create strategic partnerships
8. Secure diverse financial opportunities

Citation: 4
1. Create an Action Strategy

- Research suggests that including sustainability planning early in program planning stages helped programs better coordinate sustainability planning into their future efforts.

- Sustainability is often the last stage to be discussed in program planning; this can lead to the implementation of services that do not anticipate the long-term environment in which they operate.
2. Assess the Environment

- Analyzing a school-based prevention program, a 2006 study noted the program had difficulty in its first year moving from implementation to stabilization in five target schools.

- Researchers recommended that the project assess community readiness for the program by considering key stakeholder perspectives, which included parents, teachers, and principals. A comprehensive community readiness assessment would have helped lay the foundation for a viable sustainability plan.
3. Be Adaptable

- The ability to adapt and improve to ensure effectiveness was a core feature for sustainability.

- Needs within the school and community change.

- Financial and political landscapes can change.

- Balance between adaptation in light of changing needs and fidelity to a proven approach can be challenging.
4. Secure Community Support

- A well-planned communication approach is critical for leveraging community assets and partnerships that can help sustain successful implementation.

- Using multiple stakeholders and sharing stories that describe the impact of a program/effort can help garner support for the programs.

- Community collaboration can be instrumental in a programs’ success and the decision to maintain them.

Citation: 1
5. Integrate Programs and Services into Local Infrastructures

- Sustainable programs adopt efficient practices (during the grant period).

- Streamlining management systems, hiring and training additional staff, training “trainers” and developing program materials enabled programs to continue services.

- Examining the policies, practices, and structures through which programs and services are offered can help sustain and replicate efforts.

- It is important to consider how to embed the policies, practices and structures within your organization or partnering agencies.

Citations: 10, 12
6. Build a Team of Leaders

- Secure and support dedicated and competent leadership for the team.

- Sustained programs have leaders that fight to maintain the program.

- Recognize that leaders can be advocates, resources, or barriers.

- Building a leadership team, verses a single leader, can help bolster successes even during staff turnover.

- Ensure a clear vision is provided for the team.

Citation: 8
7. Create Strategic Partnerships

- Work with external agencies and advocate with strategic partners with an interest in the issues addressed by the program.

- Building effective partnerships can help programs and services achieve sustainability.

- Strategic partnerships may increase program and service capacity, help the program become more efficient in service delivery, and decrease the likelihood of duplicated efforts.

- Strategic external partnerships can also help grantees:
  - learn important lessons about implementation, community readiness, and needs.
  - gain more exposure to target audiences, and secure additional resources.

Citations: 3, 8
8. Secure Diverse Financial Opportunities

- Understand that diversity of funding is the most significant financial factor in predicting sustainability.

- Understand the local funding environment to infuse adequate sustainability planning.

- Incorporate sustainability activities and planning into their overall program and service funding plans.

- Create a budgetary line item to address sustainability planning.

Citations: 8, 11
Key Take Aways

- Be intentional about what it takes to sustain your work.
- Involve more champions/stakeholders in your efforts.
- Update your sustainability plan regularly.
- Build necessary capacities, especially during the last year.
- Strengthen those things that are working.
- Strengthen organizational structures.
- Make sure your key practices are now routine.
Questions You Should Be Asking Yourself

1. What were your original goals when you started?

2. What have your outcomes been?

3. What are the big take-aways from your work so far?

4. What’s working and going well?

5. What are the continuing big challenges?

6. As you begin to look at the upcoming year, what do you see as your major focus areas?
As You Think Ahead to Sustaining Your Work

- How will you transition your work as your grant work progresses?
- How do you continue to integrate your work?
- In the short term, what will you need to do in the next 3-4 months?
- In the long term, what will you need to do in the next 9-12 months?
- Who will own the work that needs to be sustained?
Polling Question 4

How would you describe your current sustainability planning efforts for the grant program(s) you are representing today?

- Fully developed, complete
- Further developed, not complete
- Initial phase of development
- Not yet developed
Polling Question 5

- What elements or characteristics of your program influenced your answer in Polling Question 4?
Questions?
1. Think like a (social) marketer

2. Stay strategic

3. Appeal to both hearts and minds

4. Pick the low-hanging fruit first
The CDC Clear Communication Index (Index) is a research-based tool to help you develop and assess public communication materials.

The Index has 4 introductory questions and 20 scored items drawn from scientific literature in communication and related disciplines.

The items represent the most important characteristics that enhance and aid people's understanding of information.

http://www.cdc.gov/ccindex/
Tip: Appeal to Both Hearts and Minds

Heart = Stories
Stories leave audiences moved but without a sense of direction.

Mind = Data
Data/numbers are abstractions that rarely persuade audiences to act.

Stories + data = “I get it now. How can I help?”
Our Students

Almost one-half have no vision for their future beyond high school.

Almost one in three regularly feel hopeless.

And more than one-third of our students don’t believe that any of us care.
In 2007, **5.8 percent** of students nationwide ages 12-18 reported avoiding school activities or one or more places in school because they thought someone might attack or harm them.

**Enough children to fill 450,000 school buses.**

(That’s 3,409 miles of buses.
And that more than stretches from coast to coast.)
Sustainability Planning (Months Prior to the End of the Funding Cycle)

- Teachers
- Students
- Support Staff
- Administration
- Families
Reflections on Your Work So Far

- Who has been a key champion for your work?
- What activities or key stakeholders have been important in integrating this initiative, its goals and outcomes with existing frameworks within schools?
- How have you communicated the benefits of your programs/staff to date?
- Who are the key audiences that need to understand what you are doing and its impact?
- How have you connected the work you are doing with the greater focus on connecting initiative results to student academic outcomes?
Purpose of Planning Process

- Determine what programs/activities are in place to support students, school staff and families; identify their functions and how well they are working.

- Identify any potential gaps/determine what remains to be done.

- Decide how to communicate with any agency (partners) the benefits from their involvement or partnership with initiative.

- Plan strategies to sustain successful programs and develop a sustainability action plan.
Planning for Sustainability

- **Determine:**
  - Key successful programs that already will be sustained,
  - Key successful programs that need a strategy to sustain, and
  - Programs that you do not want to sustain.

- Develop sustainability action plan.
STEP ONE: Identify Programs and Activities to Sustain.

List your evidence based programs/activities.

EXAMPLE:
- Universal bullying interventions (e.g., Olweus)
- Whole school approaches to climate or behavior (e.g., PBIS)
- After School Programs

1. List your evidence-based programs/practices.

Examples:
- Universal prevention interventions (e.g., PATHS, Second Step, TGFD)
- Universal bullying interventions (e.g. Olweus)
- Whole school approaches to climate or behavior (e.g., PBIS)
- Violence prevention for at risk students (e.g. Aggression Replacement Training) Mental health treatment models (e.g., FFT)
- After School Programs
- Individual or small group counseling
STEP TWO: Determine What You Can “Take off the Table.”

Look over your list of evidence-based programs and practices and determine:

- Were any program/activities completed during the grant-funded period that you will no longer be implementing?
- Do any already have sustainability plans (e.g., schools or other partners have agreed to continue implementation?)
- Have any been deemed ineffective or not a good fit for the community/target audience/organization’s culture?
- Do you have any efforts that are/will be institutionalized?

2. Consider what you can “take off the table.”

Consider:
- Were any program/activities completed during grant-funded period that you will no longer be implementing?
- Do any already have sustainability plans, e.g. schools or other partners have agreed to continue implementing?
- Have any been deemed ineffective or not a good fit for the community/target audience/organization’s culture?
- Do you have any efforts that are/will be institutionalized?
STEPS THREE AND FOUR: List and Prioritize the Remaining Activities.

Work with your school team and community partners to prioritize your list. Consider:

- Which programs/activities have proven to be most effective?
- Which are producing outcomes that support the mission and goals of the initiative?
- What other criteria might your partnership apply to prioritize programs for sustainability?
STEPS THREE AND FOUR: List and Prioritize the Remaining Activities. (continued)

3. List the remaining programs/practices.

4. Work with your project team and community partners to prioritize your list.

Consider:
- Which programs/activities have proven to be most effective?
- Which are producing outcomes that support the mission and goals of the initiative?
- What other criteria might your partnership apply to prioritize programs for sustainability?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
**STEP FIVE: Deconstruct your Programs and Activities into Functions.**

List the functions and activities of each program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prioritized Program/Activity</th>
<th>Functions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: Afterschool Program</td>
<td>PROMOTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>REGISTRATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SPACE/FACILITIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SUPPLIES/MATERIALS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>STAFFING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SNACK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STEP FIVE: Deconstruct your Programs and Activities into Functions. (continued)

5. Deconstruct each prioritized program and practice into functions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prioritized program/practice 1: Example: Afterschool Program</th>
<th>Functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promotion/PR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Space/Facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supplies &amp; Materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staffing: Coordination, Instructors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Snack</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prioritized program/practice 2: Example: Second Step</th>
<th>Functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training new staff/boosters for continuing staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Providing materials needed for intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collecting process data on implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coaching Teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STEP SIX: Use the List of Prioritized Programs and Practices and Their Functions to Create your Sustainability Action Plan.

Consider sustainability strategies and prospects for institutionalizing for those EBPs/activities still on the table:

- Universal bullying interventions (e.g., Olweus)
- Whole school approaches to climate or behavior (e.g., PBIS)
- Afterschool Programs
STEP SIX: Use the List of Prioritized EBPs/Activities and their Functions to Create your Sustainability Action Plan. (continued)

6. Complete the following chart for each priority program and practice to develop a sustainability action plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prioritized program/practice 1: Example: Afterschool Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion/PR</td>
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<td>Staffing: Coordination, Instructors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snack</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Grant Sustainability Tool: Sustainability Assessment and Planning Tool for District Teams

**Grant Sustainability Tool**  
Sustainability Assessment and Planning Tool for District Teams

### Goal 1: Strengthen initiative characteristics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities to consider related to this goal area:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developed overarching vision, goals, objectives, desired outcomes, action steps and guidelines for the proposed initiative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed plans to sustain the initiative beyond initial launch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed a logic model (a.k.a. theory of change) and list of indicators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed school team(s), comprised of LEA/school leadership, student support personnel, teaching staff representatives, families, and students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal 1 Action Item</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Mark of Success</th>
<th>Action Steps 3-4 Months</th>
<th>Action Steps 12-18 Months</th>
<th>Resources Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Align initiative with needs of schools. Person responsible:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>How well does the initiative meet intended recipients’ needs for service?</td>
<td>□ High □ Med □ Low Because:</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ensure compatibility of initiative with district’s strategic plan or school’s improvement plan. Person responsible:</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the school district as a whole see that the initiative benefits them?</td>
<td>□ High □ Med □ Low Because:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questions?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 22</td>
<td>P2 Art Supplement Webinar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 25</td>
<td>P2/ESSC Office Hours on Evidence Based Programs 3 &amp; 4: CBITS and Check and Connect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 10</td>
<td>P2/ESSC Office Hours on Evidence Based Programs 5 &amp; 6: Gang Resistance Education &amp; Olweus Bullying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 25</td>
<td>P2/ESSC Online Learning Event on Trauma-Informed Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 31</td>
<td>P2 Community of Practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


4. HS, Office of Adolescent Health  2014   Building Sustainable Programs: The Framework

5. Jean Synodinos, Social Marketing and Communication Consultant


