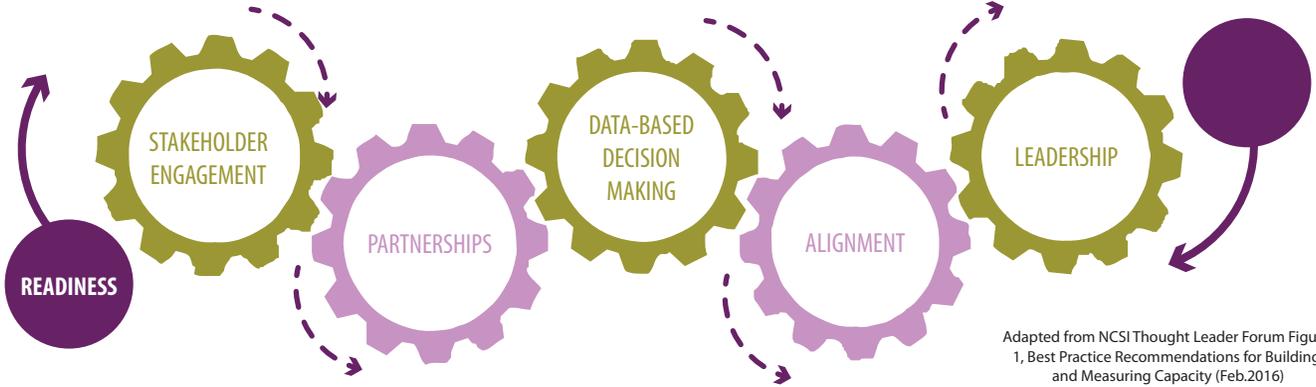


# Capturing Capacity

IDEA Part B Directors and Part C Coordinators Characterize Capacity\* and Identify Complexities and Considerations

## Capacity Components



Adapted from NCSI Thought Leader Forum Figure 1, Best Practice Recommendations for Building and Measuring Capacity (Feb.2016)

## Capacity IS...

**...complex; it is:**

- Misunderstood
- Misinterpreted
- Interpreted differently

**...ever-evolving depending on influencers:**

- State size, population, & political climate
- Limitations
- Growth
- Set-backs
- Change

**...influenced by the knowledge, skills, and experience of:**

- Teams
- Individuals
- TA Providers

“...everybody is just in such a different place with resources, collaboration with other offices, the relationships they have, the amount of staff they have that everybody defines it for themselves—there isn’t a good general definition of what it should be or what OSEP means by it...”

“...we might have great capacity to carry out one thing and then something shifts in law or we decided to align in a specific way and we need to be able to build capacity to be able to carry out that new thing now.”

“Trying to get a consistent standard for ‘are we meeting the mark or not?’ you’ll probably have differences of opinion.”

“Our State Superintendent is an elected politician. As a result, we exert leadership as allowed.”

“Capacity is a great concept but, you need to make it manageable or workable. Have some definition or measurement.”

“Our capacity will change dramatically as our seasoned staff retire or move on. When there are only ten of us, any loss of experience and expertise is magnified when it leaves.”

“We don’t have people that come with the knowledge to implement a lot of the initiatives. So, it’s a matter of scaling your knowledge up, or finding somebody to contract with to do that.”

“We need stakeholders to influence groups, not just participate.”

## Capacity Involves...

### THEME 1

#### MANAGEMENT

Management of several essential factors impacts the capacity of the state or agency to reach their goals. This includes management of:

- Human Resources
- Stakeholders
- Reform
- Behaviors
- Resources, including fiscal
- Decision-making
- Time allocation
- Input, internal and external
- Change
- Productivity
- Systems alignment
- Turnover

### THEME 2

#### NAVIGATION

Navigation of several influential contexts and variables is a driving force in the capacity of the state or agency to reach their goals. This includes the navigation of:

- Political climate, changes, & appointments
- Stakeholders, partners, & initiatives
- Priorities
- Constraints
- Participants
- Influencers, including the extent of their influence
- Relationships, internal & external
- Policies, local, state, & federal
- Procedures
- Data quality, use, & access

### THEME 3

#### COMMUNICATION & COLLABORATION

Communication and collaboration across and within systems is essential to capacity building. This includes collaboration within and communication of:

- Internal messaging & message setting
- External messaging & message setting
- Shared-decision making
- Problem-solving efforts
- Establishing & clarifying common understanding/language
- Engagement

### THEME 4

#### LEADERSHIP

Specific characteristics of leadership can influence capacity building. This includes how leaders:

- Build
- Implement
- Transform
- Facilitate
- Execute
- Align programs and supports
- Set the vision and direction
- Sustain initiatives & change
- Motivate & inspire

\*States’ Capacity to improve educational results and functional outcomes for children with disabilities

NCSI Evaluators conducted focus group interviews with a sample of Part B State Directors/Part C Coordinators to gather perspective regarding capacity between Oct–Dec. 2017. Focus groups were grounded in the NCSI Thought Leader Forum (TLF) work on Building and Measuring Capacity held Nov. 12–13, 2015. The 2015 NCSI TLF participants (researchers, practitioners, & technical providers) determined that building capacity consists of 4 key components shown in Figure 1. One other key component, “Partnerships” was identified by 2017 focus group participants (state directors and coordinators).