



Comprehensive
Literacy State
Development

National
Literacy
Center



State Literacy Plan Starter Kit Phase Four: Dissemination





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Phone: 1-833-773-CLSD (2573)

Email: literacy@seiservices.com

Website: literacycenter.ed.gov

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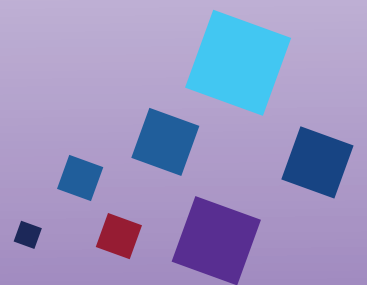


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Background

This is Phase Four of the State Literacy Plan (SLP) Starter Kit, which is a companion to the SLP Self-Assessment Tool. Phase One is called "Preparing to Develop or Revise an SLP." Phase Two is titled, "Understanding SLP Components." Phase Three is titled "Writing an SLP."

[Phase One](#) offers information about the following:

- background information on this technical assistance (TA) initiative for SLPs;
- the components of an effective SLP; and
- the steps a State educational agency (SEA) should take to develop or revise an SLP, including creating benchmarks, establishing a stakeholder group, forming a State literacy team, gathering data, and conducting a self-assessment.

[Phase Two](#) expands on the rationale and purpose of the nine components of a comprehensive SLP, with initial guidance on developing the content of each component for your SLP.

[Phase Three](#) helps SEAs with the writing process, including effective writing tips and strategies; includes sample SLP snapshots; and provides tools such as Content Planning Worksheets.

This is the fourth phase of the Starter Kit. It is for SEAs who have completed the development or revision of their SLPs and are ready to disseminate their plans to local educational agencies (LEAs) and other stakeholders.



How to Use This Document

“Dissemination” refers to the activities around informing stakeholders of a new or revised SLP. Some of these activities will continue throughout implementation, as two-way communication should be encouraged during that process. This phase guides you through developing an effective dissemination plan. When you complete this phase, you will be able to answer the following questions:

- **Why** it is beneficial to develop a coordinated dissemination plan?
- **Whom** are the professionals in your State you will connect with and educate about the SLP?
- **What** is the information you will share to convey the substance and importance of the SLP?
- **When** will you engage different groups of education professionals around the State?
- **Where** are opportunities to connect directly with audiences?
- **How** will you use multiple avenues and tailored messaging to maximize buy-in and implementation?



You can use this document to coordinate efforts as you take the following steps:

- 1) Establish the priorities of dissemination
- 2) Identify key audiences
- 3) Craft key messages
- 4) Create a strategic outreach plan
- 5) Develop materials
- 6) Structure a timeline

Tools in the appendices correspond with these steps and can help your team quickly accomplish the work of developing a dissemination plan.

Priorities of Dissemination

As you plan for communicating the SLP to the educators in your State, establishing priorities as a State literacy team can help maintain focus, streamline efforts, and foster a culture of credibility and unity through thoughtful, well-defined ideas.

The priorities for disseminating your SLP should be tailored to and based on your State's needs. Sample priorities for dissemination of your SLP might include:

- To raise awareness of the SEA's development of a new SLP.
- To explain how the SLP will improve literacy instruction and outcomes for students.
- To acquaint stakeholders with your State's literacy needs and the compelling rationale for the SLP.
- To build buy-in within LEAs for addressing those pre-K–12 literacy needs via the SLP.
- To forge and reinforce relationships between representatives of the SEA and stakeholders, especially LEA administrators and literacy leaders across the state.
- To show how SLP implementation will be tied to existing initiatives and supported by TA from the SEA.
- To inform stakeholders of the evidence-based nature of the SLP.
- To solicit and address feedback from stakeholders.
- To emphasize strategies for continuous improvement and responsiveness to stakeholder feedback.
- To develop key champions who can build support for the SLP within their circles of influence.

Local Control Considerations

Develop dissemination priorities that will help SLP implementation be effective. Focus on priorities that will help build local buy-in, such as an emphasis on students' needs and LEAs' strengths.

Once the priorities are established, the State literacy team should use them to inform the identification of key audiences, messaging, and materials as described in the next sections.

Identifying Key Audiences

While developing the SLP, you identified key audiences and whom will be impacted by it. Draw from that work to establish a list of key audiences for your dissemination efforts. Audiences might include:

- Early childhood educators and administrators;
- K–12 educators targeted by grade band or subject area;
- LEA and school administrators;
- School board members;
- Families;
- Community members;
- Partner agencies, including public-private partnerships; and
- State-level government offices pertaining to education or children.

You might want to further define certain audiences by region of the State or other factors.



Once you have identified your target audiences, identify the following considerations for each:

- **Level of understanding.** How much does the audience already know about your SEA's literacy-related efforts?
- **Interest in the project.** Why and how is this audience affected by your SLP and its implementation and outcomes?
- **Messaging.** What unique issues should be considered when messaging your SLP to particular audiences?
- **Strengths.** What strengths do particular groups bring to support your SLP rollout?

Identifying these considerations for each audience will inform the subsequent steps of your dissemination plan. Use the tool in [Appendix A](#) (Key Audiences, Qualitative Data) to work through this process.

Crafting Key Messages

Develop the messaging of the dissemination plan. To do this, consider your goals in relation to your different audiences—and what you know about them—to hone in on key messages for each. Figure 1 is a partially completed sample worksheet to help you craft key messages.

Figure 1: Sample Completed “Determining Key Messages” Worksheet

	Goal 1: Raise SLP Awareness	Goal 2: Build Buy-in	Goal 3: Acquaint Stakeholders With Literacy Needs
Audience: Families (Wide range of awareness and educational attainment)	Message: Through the SLP, the SEA will bring proven literacy improvement practices to educating every child.	Message: The SEA is dedicated to increasing literacy outcomes for all children, hand-in-hand with families.	Message: Only half of the State’s 3rd graders read at grade level. The new SLP will help educators give all children what they need to succeed.
Audience: Elementary Educators (Have varying levels of knowledge of evidence-based practices; are balancing multiple initiatives)	Message: The SLP will support educators to increase their knowledge base and deliver enhanced evidence-based instruction.	Message: The SEA is excited to partner with educators, offering opportunities through the SLP for professional development to help students achieve literacy goals.	Message: The SLP responds to goals such as increasing reading proficiency among 3rd graders; increasing literacy rates for multilingual learners and other underserved students; and closing the reading gap caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
Audience: District Literacy Leaders (Have been leading the charge on evidence-based practices)	Message: The SEA has developed an SLP that draws on existing instructional strengths and the latest evidence-based practices.	Message: The SLP was developed with a wide variety of stakeholders, including LEA literacy leaders and coaches.	Message: Literacy leaders have the most in-depth understanding of literacy needs across the State. The SLP fosters multitiered systems of support that can address known gaps that literacy leaders encounter in their work.

As demonstrated with shading in Figure 1, each audience will have specific areas of interest. Your message should be tailored to these areas. Please consider:

- **Emphasizing alignment.** Your audiences, particularly educators, need to hear and understand how the SLP aligns with existing initiatives. This requires that leadership at the SEA level is aware of local literacy initiatives to highlight alignment between the SLP and those initiatives. (See Component 3 in [Phase Two](#) of the SLP Starter Kit for more information.)
- **Conveying SLP priorities.** Reception of your messaging can hinge on the tone of your priorities. For example, you might let stakeholders know the SLP work will stress implementation and continuous improvement over evaluation and compliance.
- **Streamlining language/terminology.** Provide team members who will communicate about the SLP with guidance for consistent language—for example, using “the SLP” instead of “the plan” or using “multitiered system of supports” instead of “individualized supports.”
- **Identifying audiences that are similar enough to use identical messaging.** Do this whenever possible for simplicity and consistency.
- **Being strategic with data.** Balance the use of data so that needs are understood but audiences don’t get lost in statistics.
- **Identifying messages of highest priority.** Specify these for each audience.

Local Control Considerations

Focus clearly on alignment in messaging. This is key for all educators but can especially help build buy-in within local-control States. For example, when presenting to a specific LEA, highlight how the SLP supports existing initiatives at the local level and how the activities in the SLP can support local initiatives.





Creating a Strategic Outreach Plan

After you have set your priorities, identified your audiences, and determined what messages will resonate with each audience, developing a strategic outreach plan could be helpful. [Appendix B \(Outreach Action Plan\)](#) is a resource that can help you create a plan. Consider developing the outreach plan alongside structuring a timeline, because timing plays an important role in your strategic plan.

Some key best practices learned from States that have disseminated new or revised SLPs include:

- **Embracing repetition.** A single announcement is unlikely to sink in with any given audience. Plan for multimedia, multi-venue dissemination for every audience to ensure a successful rollout.
- **Attaching major announcements to events with built-in audiences.** Take advantage of statewide or regional gatherings that your audiences already attend.
- **Stressing alignment.** As emphasized previously, drawing connections to successful practices already in place and/or legislation could be a central tenet of your strategic outreach plan.
- **Tying dissemination (or implementation) to funding.** Not every State will have funds available for SLP implementation, but if your State does, be clear about what funds and supports exist and how LEAs can access them.
- **Identifying roles and responsibilities.** Delegate dissemination activities clearly to team members. Team member roles, locations, and availability will inform planning of dissemination events.
- **Considering your SLP implementation timeline.** Any milestones for implementation of the SLP should inform the timeline for dissemination to ensure stakeholders have the necessary information both before and during implementation.
- **Customizing dissemination activities to your audience.** Use the messaging you developed for each stakeholder group to inform the types of dissemination you use to reach its members, as well as the content of those activities.
- **Revisiting efforts.** Be prepared in case you discover gaps in your outreach activities.

Avenues for Your Dissemination Plan

Plan a variety of outreach activities tailored to the stakeholder needs you identified in the Crafting Key Messages section. You may have identified both written and presentation avenues for dissemination; be sure that each stakeholder group receives contact through both methods.

Written Campaign

Consider written communication methods such as:

- Emailed newsletters from the SEA;
- Social media posts;
- The SEA's website, including a dedicated webpage about the SLP;
- Inclusion in existing newsletters from the governor, early childhood agencies, local and regional professional educator organizations, and other relevant groups that can be key champions of the SLP; and
- Posting on other organizations' websites.

Developing Materials

Create materials for each type of dissemination activity you identified. You may create templates that can be tailored to specific events, needs, or stakeholder groups. Materials for dissemination should be concise, eye-catching, and provide an understanding of the goals, rationale, and essence of the SLP. These materials should be designed as an introduction to the SLP and direct stakeholders to resources. All materials should end with a call to action — a next step stakeholders should take, whether that is going to the website for more information, and signing up for an email list.

Newsletters

If your SEA has a newsletter and will include information about the SLP, consider the type of content that you want to feature. For example, the newsletter may highlight:

- a specific dissemination event that happened in a particular month;
- a certain section or strategy within the SLP;
- success in beginning implementation of the SLP; and
- a response to a frequent question about the SLP.

If the SEA will also send content for other organizations to consider including in their newsletters, tailor the content to those newsletters' audiences.

Website Content and Social Media

Social media posts can be made using just your SEA's accounts or can be shared with other organizations so they can also post them. Identify who within your SEA is responsible for managing updates to the website and social media accounts and provide the staff member(s) with a calendar of postings. Keep the posts brief with links to find more information. If applicable, reach out to other organizations to find out their processes for submitting content for consideration.

Handouts

Handouts can offer a snapshot of the SLP or can provide key points tailored to a specific presentation. Use colorful infographics to call out the needs that inform the SLP, give a quick overview of the plan, and provide contact information for a place where messages are consistently monitored. Also include the full plan's URL.

Handouts can include information that is tailored to the presentation's specific audience. For example, if your SLP includes a section on family engagement, a tip sheet for principals could include suggestions on how to connect with parents on what they can do to support literacy skills within their homes. Local literacy plan developers might be offered a detailed tip sheet.

Abridged SLP

If your final SLP is longer than 20 pages, consider preparing an abridged version of the document to share during the dissemination stage. This version would give stakeholders a more in-depth overview than handout materials without overwhelming them. Be sure to include where to find the full SLP.



In-Person Campaign

Connecting the SLP dissemination with other scheduled events in your State allows you to leverage built-in stakeholder audiences that may have significant investment in the work. Consider virtual and in-person presentations at events such as:

- Regional or State conferences, including those that are:
 - Broadly educational
 - Literacy-specific
- Meetings of professional education organizations
 - Teacher unions
 - The State superintendents consortium
 - Multilingual advocacy groups
 - Disability advocacy groups
- Meetings of local or regional parent groups
- Meetings of LEA leadership, schools, or departments
- Webinars led by the SEA or co-facilitated with another organization
- Existing LEA or regional professional development events

Presentations

As a first step for webinar or conference presentations, prepare outlines so the presenters know what information they are expected to cover. Then work with the presenters to develop engaging PowerPoint presentations. Invitations sent to targeted email lists can disseminate material specific to each audience. Provide links to handouts during webinars and hard copies at in-person events. Consider how presentations can provide continuity by serving as a starting point for future presentations on implementation.

Word-of-Mouth

Connect personally with the key champions you have identified across the State. Share materials about the SLP and ask for their help in getting the positive word out to colleagues and other stakeholders on the need for and benefits of the SLP.

Structuring a Timeline

Following a few simple steps — and using [Appendix C \(Structuring a Timeline\)](#) — you can draft a dissemination calendar that is effective and achievable for your team.

Follow these steps to structure the timeline:

- 1) **Identify key events.** Look at the dissemination avenues you identified to coordinate with the strategic outreach plan, and now pencil in dates for the major events. This may include conference presentations, professional development sessions, or other events.
- 2) **Work backwards.** Work backwards from your key event dates to identify other communication modes that could support the events and reinforce messaging. For example, in anticipation of an upcoming statewide education conference, your team might include notice of your participation—and the topic you will be speaking about—in your agency’s newsletter the month before the event. Social media posts about participation might begin a week before the event and be posted daily on multiple platforms to “build the buzz.” Posting could continue through the conference and then be followed up with emails to various lists with a synopsis of information that was shared.
- 3) **Fill the gaps.** After charting your key events and support activities, consider smaller events, as time allows, that would reach different stakeholders as well as other communication that is not tied to a specific event.



Conclusion

A well-developed dissemination plan is important for educating the stakeholders in your State on why the SLP is important, what it involves, and what it will achieve. For additional resources including an e-learning course on SLP dissemination, please visit the [CLSD National Literacy Center](#).

Resources

- Agency for Healthcare and Research Quality. (2014). *Quick-Start Guide to Dissemination for Practice-Based Research Networks*. <https://www.ahrq.gov/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/ncepctr/resources/dissemination-quick-start-guide.pdf>
- Institute of Education Sciences. (n.d.). *Dissemination Approaches: Pros and Cons*. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/regions/central/pdf/CE5.3.2-Dissemination-Approaches-Pros-and-Cons.pdf>
- State Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices (SISEP) Center. (2018). *Dissemination Plan Template*. <https://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/resource/dissemination-plan-template/>

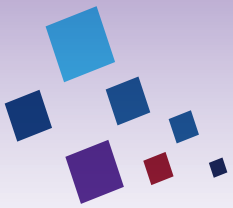




Appendix A: Key Audiences, Qualitative Data

For each key audience, summarize the group’s general level of understanding about the SLP, strengths that can support implementation of the SLP, and any other factors that may influence how you disseminate the SLP to that audience.

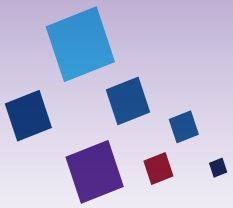
Key Audience	Level of Understanding	Strengths	Other Factors



Appendix B: Outreach Action Plan

Once you have identified your outreach activities (e.g., conference presentation, emailed newsletter), lay them out in an action plan to identify what is needed for each activity, who is responsible for preparing for each activity, and any internal due dates.

Activity	Date	Audience	Materials Needed	Team Leader	Internal Due Dates



Appendix C: Structuring a Timeline

Fill in each month of initial dissemination. Then identify key events, supporting events, and other events to see all dissemination activities together in one calendar. Consider using different colors or fonts to easily distinguish between event types at a glance. The first month has been completed as an example.

<p>Month: July</p> <p>In-person presentations: regional elementary principal conference July 31</p> <p>Virtual presentations: webinar July 13</p> <p>Email and web: newsletter July 1; social media July 10, 14, and 30</p>	<p>Month:</p> <p>In-person presentations:</p> <p>Virtual presentations:</p> <p>Email and web:</p>	<p>Month:</p> <p>In-person presentations:</p> <p>Virtual presentations:</p> <p>Email and web:</p>	<p>Month:</p> <p>In-person presentations:</p> <p>Virtual presentations:</p> <p>Email and web:</p>
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