Comprehensive Literacy State Development | National Literacy Center

State Literacy Plan Starter Kit Phase 1: Preparing to Develop or Revise an SLP

Comprehensive Literacy State Development | National Literacy Center

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Introduction

Purpose and Intended Audience of SLP Starter Kit

A State literacy plan (SLP) is the cornerstone of literacy, defining a State's approach to comprehensive literacy instruction. An SLP provides a framework for implementing evidence-based instructional practices related to literacy, guides the State's efforts to improve literacy skills, fosters a culture of lifelong learning, and addresses the diverse needs of the State's populace. State educational agencies (SEAs) without an existing SLP or unfamiliar with the SLP writing process will benefit from using this SLP Starter Kit.

SEAs with an existing SLP may also find this kit useful because it provides background knowledge about SLP development, a readiness checklist, and information about creating a stakeholder group and SLP writing team.

Background

The U.S. Department of Education currently funds discretionary grant awards to 29 SEAs to enhance literacy skills through the Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) program. The SEAs use the grants to conduct subgrant competitions that fund literacy development programs in local educational agencies (LEAs) and early childhood organizations; support pre-literacy, reading, and writing instruction using evidence-based practices and interventions; and serve children from birth through grade 12, prioritizing disadvantaged children, including children living in poverty, English language learners, and children with disabilities.

In 2023, the CLSD National Literacy Center reviewed the publicly available SLPs of the CLSD grantees in the 2019 and 2020 cohorts to identify common elements and components of SLPs. The Center also conducted a focus group of current grantees to establish trends in how SEAs approach the SLP development process. That information was used to develop the SLP Starter Kit, which serves as a resource to assist SEAs, including SEAs that do not receive CLSD funds, in developing or revising their SLPs.

Technical Assistance

Free technical assistance (TA) is available to help SEAs develop or revise their SLPs. This TA complements the SLP Starter Kit, Self-Assessment Tool, and User Guide, offering personalized support to SEAs engaged in SLP development or revision. If you need assistance, please contact the CLSD National Literacy Center at 1-833-773-CLSD (2573) or literacy@seiservices.com.

Feedback From State Educational Agencies

SEAs with SLPs from across the country provided valuable feedback about the rationale behind creating an SLP. Their insights centered on the SLP development process, offering their perspectives for further SLP refinement and improvement. Based on their feedback, the center determined that an SLP does the following:

- Serves as a living document that guides literacy-related activities, professional development, and student learning.
- Establishes partnerships and relationships through engagement.
- Breaks down silos and facilitates collaboration.
- Addresses the needs of the community and all student populations by looking through the lens of multiple stakeholders.

In addition, the focus group identified that SEAs should:

- Employ literacy experts in the SLP building and revision process.
- Establish development processes that draw on the necessary capacity to complete the process efficiently.

Purpose of an SLP

The purpose of an SLP is to align State literacy initiatives, content standards, evidence-based practices, and State guidance to support teachers and student learning. An SLP provides a framework for literacy instruction, intervention, and assessment. An SLP offers practical guidance for (1) elevating literacy instruction and professional practice and (2) describing how data can help drive implementation and continuous improvement.

The review of SLPs identified the most common components of an SLP:

- A cover page and introduction.
- Policies and legislation related to literacy.
- Needs of the target population.
- How the SLP aligns with other State literacy initiatives.
- Goals and activities.
- An instructional framework related to literacy.
- How the SLP will be implemented at the local level.
- How continuous improvement will be achieved at the State level.
- Resources and tools.

Each component typically includes several subtopics (called elements), and each element includes a content-based explanation.

Using This SLP Starter Kit

This SLP Starter Kit is a companion to the TA that SEAs may receive through the CLSD National Literacy Center, and it will help SEAs create or revise their SLPs. In this kit, SEAs will find guidance, tools, and resources that correspond with the SLP development process, including:

- Assessing readiness for SLP development or revision.
- Identifying and analyzing State literacy infrastructure, legislation, and policies.
- Composing or recomposing an effective State literacy team (SLT).
- Identifying and using SLP development resources.
- Understanding the SLP development timeline.
- Using data and a self-assessment to shape SLP content.

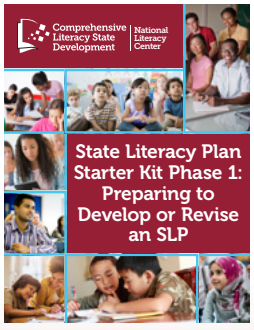
This kit provides the information and resources SEAs need to begin developing or revising an SLP.

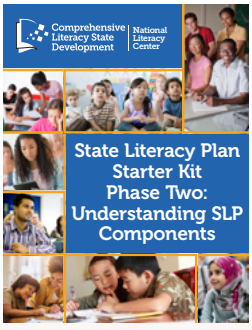
Starter Kit Phases

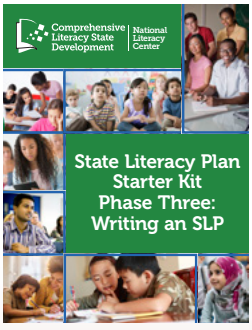
This SLP Starter Kit is organized into five phases:

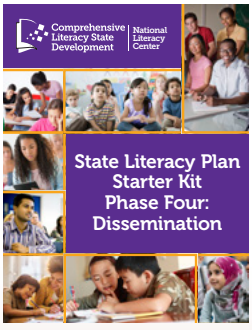
- Phase One: Preparing to Develop or Revise an SLP. Phase One discusses the work that needs to be completed before writing an SLP.
- Phase Two: Understanding SLP Components. Phase Two includes information about the components and elements that can be included in an SLP.
- Phase Three: Writing an SLP. Phase Three discusses how to select and organize the components and elements of an SLP.
- Phase Four: Dissemination. Phase Four includes information on disseminating an SLP.
- Phase Five: Implementing an SLP. Phase Five covers how to implement an SLP at the local level.

This document is Phase One: Preparing to Develop or Revise an SLP.









Phase One: Preparing to Develop or Revise an SLP

When preparing to develop or revise an SLP, first consider the literacy team's readiness. Conducting some or all of the following steps before drafting the SLP can help ensure the SEA is prepared to begin writing the SLP.

- Understanding the administrative processes.
- Understanding existing State literacy infrastructure.
- Assembling or reassembling an SLT.
- Understanding current and upcoming legislation and its impact on literacy.
- Conducting the data gathering process to analyze State literacy achievement trends.
- Completing a self-assessment of a current SLP if there is one.
- Creating a stakeholder group and understanding how and when stakeholders will be involved.
- Planning an outline of components, elements, and content.
- Understanding the process for obtaining public feedback and dissemination.

Each step is further explained within this SLP Starter Kit with resources and tools.

SLP Documents List: Before beginning to develop or revise an SLP, it is important to gather all essential documents and information that could inform the SLP content. (See Appendix A)

Use the SLP Readiness Checklist below to help assess your readiness to develop or revise an SLP. Once the SLP Readiness Checklist is completed, note areas that need to be addressed and use this kit and the TA available to begin work. (See Appendix B)

SLP Readiness Checklist: This checklist assists SEAs with assessing their level of readiness to develop or revise an SLP by addressing a series of yes-or-no questions.

Administrative Approval Processes

Prior to commencing work on an SLP, proper authorizations must be obtained from senior administrators. Approval processes vary across SEAs. To obtain authorizations, you should create a plan explaining the importance, benefits, and expected outcomes of the SLP. This plan could be a written proposal, a logic model, or a presentation. Once authorizations are received, establish a budget and timeline. Be mindful of the impact that approval processes can have on associated timelines.

SLP Development Benchmarks

When developing or revising an SLP, the establishment of a timeline with benchmarks is helpful to monitor progress, make necessary adjustments, and ensure accountability. Feedback from SEAs indicates that the entire development or revision process can take anywhere from six months to two years, depending on the results of the data gathering and self-assessment. Here are common benchmarks on an SLP development timeline:

Benchmarks for SEAs Developing an SLP	
Benchmark	**Benchmark Description**
Establish a budget	The budget is developed.
Form an SLT	The team responsible for developing the SLP is established.
Review current standards or curriculum framework	Current standards or curriculum framework has been reviewed.
Review existing State legislation (reading, literacy, dyslexia, etc.)	Existing State legislation related to literacy has been reviewed.
Create a timeline	A timeline for the SLP is developed.
Develop a data-gathering plan and data collection protocols	Guiding questions about State literacy are developed, and data sources are identified and obtained.
Gather, analyze, and interpret data	Literacy-related data are analyzed and interpreted to guide the development of the SLP.
Engage stakeholders	The stakeholders are identified, and a communication plan is developed and implemented.
Create a logic model	The theoretical framework, such as a logic model that outlines the goals and expected outcomes, is created.
Create an SLP outline	An outline of SLP components is established.
Draft sections of the SLP	Benchmarks for drafting different components of the SLP are met.
Edit the first draft	The first draft goes through the review process.
Get stakeholder and public feedback	The revised draft is ready for stakeholder and public review.
Incorporate stakeholder and public feedback	Stakeholder and public feedback are analyzed, reviewed, and incorporated into the SLP.
Finalize the SLP	The SLP is completed and approved.
Disseminate the SLP	The SLP is disseminated to stakeholders.

Benchmarks for SEAs Revising an SLP	
Benchmark	**Benchmark Description**
Establish a budget	The budget is developed.
Form an SLT	The team responsible for developing the SLP is established or reconvened.
Review current standards or curriculum framework	Current standards or curriculum framework has been reviewed.
Review existing State legislation (reading, literacy, dyslexia, etc.)	Existing State legislation related to literacy has been reviewed.
Create a timeline	A timeline for revising the SLP is developed.
Develop a data gathering plan and data collection protocols	Guiding questions about State literacy are developed, and data sources are identified and obtained.
Gather, analyze, and interpret the data	The most up-to-date literacy data are gathered, analyzed, and interpreted to guide the revision of the SLP.
Perform the self-assessment	The team completes the SLP self-assessment and analyzes the results.
Reflect on data gathered and self-assessment results	Data from the data gathering process and the self-assessment are compiled and analyzed to identify trends, needs, and service gaps.
Engage stakeholders	The stakeholders are identified, and a communication plan is developed and implemented.
Revise a logic model	The theoretical framework, such as a logic model outlining the SLP's objectives and expected outcomes, is revised.
Revise the SLP	Revisions are made based on the data gathered and self-assessment.
Edit the first draft	The first draft goes through the review process.
Get stakeholder and public feedback	The first draft is ready for stakeholder and public review.
Incorporate stakeholder and public feedback	Stakeholder and public feedback are reviewed and incorporated into the SLP.
Finalize the SLP	The SLP is completed and approved.
Disseminate the SLP	The SLP is disseminated to stakeholders.

The Benchmark Tool for Developing an SLP and the Benchmark Tool for Revising and SLP: These tools will guide you through the SLP development or revision process. Fill in the "Timeline" column with an estimate of how long each benchmark will take based on the processes within your SEA to gain an understanding of how long the overall process will most likely take. The "Person" column designates the person responsible for ensuring the team reaches the benchmark.

Guiding Questions for SLP Development Benchmarks

Use the guiding questions below to reflect and discuss with the SLT:

- What considerations or actions are necessary to reach each benchmark?
- What steps and preparations are needed to ensure that the SLT is ready to work and meet each development benchmark?
- Who needs to be involved in each stage of development?
- What are the steps needed for the writing, editing, and review process?
- How will legislation impact the SLP timeline?
- When incorporating feedback from stakeholders and the public, what strategies will be effective to ensure that the input is fully integrated into the SLP in a timely manner?
- What criteria will be used to determine whether each benchmark is achieved?

Establishing a Stakeholder Group

The purpose of an SLP stakeholder group is to give feedback to the SLT. This collaborative effort enhances the plan's responsiveness and effectiveness within the community. Stakeholder groups assess whether the content aligns with the populations it is intended for and whether it is easy to understand. It is important to create a dynamic, balanced team with equal participation. Stakeholder groups should represent all populations described in the data gathering section located further along in this kit. Populations to consider include the following:

- Families, staff members, and community members of various racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.
- English language learner representatives and advocacy organizations.
- Policy and advocacy organizations for students with disabilities, students in Title I schools, and other underserved students.

Your State may require the active engagement of stakeholder groups and the public in the development or revision of an SLP. It is important to remain cognizant of these regulatory prerequisites and timelines.

When to Engage Stakeholders

Stakeholders should be engaged throughout the SLP development process. Below are phases detailing when and how stakeholders can be engaged.

Phase	Purpose
Data Gathering Phase	Before initiating the data gathering process, gather stakeholder insights on literacy-related challenges, priorities, and opportunities to inform the process.
Goal and Objective Setting	Involve stakeholders while setting goals and objectives to ensure alignment with the stakeholders' expectations and vision.
Draft Review	Seeking stakeholder feedback on the SLP's content during the drafting process can help refine the SLP and ensure it reflects the diverse perspectives of those it will affect.
Implementation Phase	Encourage stakeholders to share the SLP with the populations they work with and represent.
Continuous Improvement	Convene with stakeholders periodically to assess the SLP's effectiveness, relevance, and responsiveness to evolving needs.

Use the Stakeholder Engagement Tool below to assist with creating a stakeholder group. The tool asks the user to think about populations within the State, literacy achievement rates, current contacts, and literacy-related priorities.

Stakeholder Engagement Tool: This tool is designed to guide SEAs through the stakeholder engagement process, starting with identifying populations throughout the State and creating a list of contacts.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion for Establishing a Stakeholder Group

Use the guiding questions below to reflect and discuss with the SLT:

- Are all populations represented in the stakeholder group?
- What should initial outreach to stakeholders look like?
- What engagement modalities would be most effective for stakeholders?
- What is the purpose of stakeholder feedback? How will it inform work?
- How often will stakeholders be engaged?
- How will their feedback be integrated into the SLP?
- How will stakeholders be recognized for their contributions to the SLP?
- What State requirements exist for convening a stakeholder group?

Resources for Establishing a Stakeholder Group

Developing Stakeholder Relationships to Support School Programming
Title IV, Part A Technical Assistance Center

This guide discusses the process for engaging stakeholders, provides examples of methods of engagement, and discusses the benefits of engaging stakeholders.

Moving Toward Equity Stakeholder Engagement Guide
American Institutes for Research, December 2014

This guide helps SEAs plan for effective engagement with stakeholder groups to ensure plans are designed and implemented meaningfully.

Office of English Language Acquisition
U.S. Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition

This webpage offers information and tools regarding programs, initiatives, laws, and regulations for language instruction for students with limited English proficiency.

Resources for Developing a Logic Model

Building a Theory of Action to Inform School Improvement in Nebraska
REL Central, 2018

This resource walks through the steps the Nebraska Department of Education took to create a theory of action.

Logic Model Workbook
Innovation Network

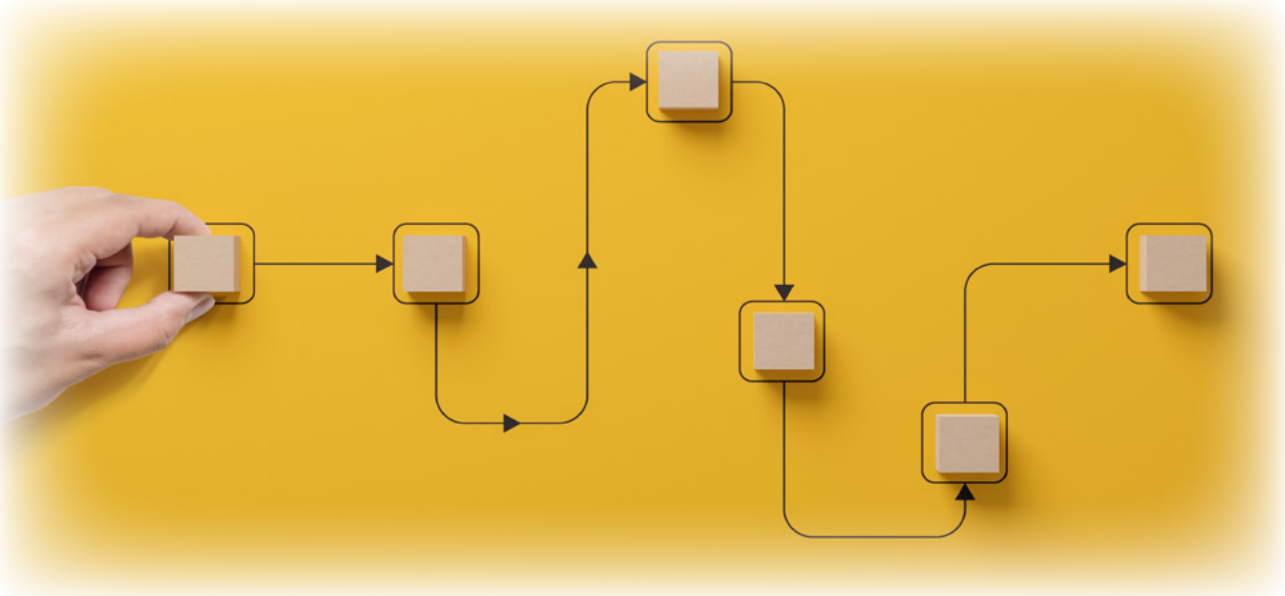
This workbook walks users through the steps of creating a logic model.

Aligning Data and Measures to Outputs and Outcomes of the Logic Model
Institute of Education Sciences, 2023

This resource explains how to plan for data collection based on logic model outputs and outcomes.

Logic Models for Program Design, Implementation, and Evaluation: Workshop Toolkit
Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, 2015

This Logic Model Workshop Toolkit is designed to help practitioners learn the overall purpose of a logic model, the different elements of a logic model, and the appropriate steps for developing and using a logic model for program evaluation. The toolkit includes a facilitator workbook, a participant workbook, and a slide deck.



Establishing or Reassembling an SLT

Prior to selecting team members, assess the budget and time commitments, and consider collaborating with both existing SEA staff members and external subject matter experts. Consider establishing roles and responsibilities as shown in the chart below.

Examples of SLT Member Roles and Responsibilities	
Role	**Responsibilities**
State Literacy Director	Is responsible for overall leadership, strategy development, and implementation of the State's literacy initiatives. Leads the team and provides overall strategic direction for the SLP development process.
Curriculum Specialist	Focuses on developing and aligning literacy curriculum materials with State standards and best practices.
Assessment Coordinator	Manages literacy assessments, data collection, and analysis to measure progress and inform decision-making.
Research Analyst	Conducts research to identify evidence-based literacy strategies.
Early Childhood Literacy Expert	Focuses on literacy development in early childhood education.
Secondary Literacy Expert	Focuses on literacy development in secondary education.
Special Education Expert	Focuses on literacy development for students with disabilities.
English Language Learner (ELL) Specialist	Addresses the literacy needs of students learning English as a second language.
Policy Adviser	Understands literacy policy and legislative changes.
Office of the General Counsel	Verifies that the SLP aligns with current legislation.
Writer	Is responsible for establishing one voice throughout the SLP and organizing thoughts and information.
Editor	Edits and formats the SLP content.

If people from outside the SEA are being considered, using an application process can help form a well-rounded team. The SLT can consider partnering with subject matter experts to review or inform the SLP content.

After identifying the individuals to include on the team, consider using the RACI model[1] to define each individual's level of involvement. This will clarify the responsibilities for each role and how team members will collaborate with others on the team. See the chart below to better understand the RACI model.

RACI Model	
R = Responsible	The person or people who perform the work.
A = Accountable	The person or people accountable for the work and the decisions being made.
C = Consulted	Anyone who should be consulted prior to a decision's being made or a task's being completed.
I = Informed	Anyone who needs to be informed when a decision is made or work is completed.

Establishing or Reassembling an SLP Team Tool: This tool supports building or reassembling an SLT and assigning SLT roles and applying the RACI model.

Guiding Questions for Establishing or Reassembling an SLT

Use the guiding questions below to reflect and discuss with the SLT:

- What activities can be supported by the current budget?
- What existing resources are available within the SEA?
- Who could serve in multiple roles?
- What is the best method to engage people from the SEA??
- Is there an approved writer on staff to engage?
- Is there a list of approved vendors, contractors, and subject matter experts?
- Are there funds to contract a writer and/or an editor?

[1] https://racichart.org/the-raci-model

Resources for Building an SLT

North Dakota SLP Application:
This is the application North Dakota used to identify members while building its SLT.

California's CLSD SLP Application Questions:
This is the application California used to identify members of its SLT.

Understanding Infrastructure

Many States are enacting literacy-related laws that strongly influence literacy instruction and SLP development. Understanding the current literacy-related legislation and policies is key when developing or revising an SLP. This background knowledge will help both the SEA and LEAs align the plan with legislation and policies.

Many States' literacy-related legislation focuses on the selection of programs, materials, and teacher training grounded in evidence and scientific research.[2] Other literacy-related legislation focuses on family and community engagement, preservice teacher training, students with dyslexia, assessments, and after-school and tutoring services. The resources below assist in developing an understanding of how literacy-related legislation in your State will affect the SLP process.

Guiding Questions for Understanding Infrastructure

Use the guiding questions below to reflect and discuss with the SLT:

- How will literacy-related legislation affect the SLP?
- Does the governor have priorities related to literacy education? How could those be incorporated into the SLP?
- What local control or guidance impacts literacy instruction?
- What collaborative efforts could be made with LEAs, communities, and State officials to ensure that the SLP is well integrated and aligns with State literacy-related legislation?

There are some other infrastructural considerations to take into account while writing an SLP. For example, the governor's literacy priorities, statutorily mandated reading councils, and local control policies. Aligning the SLP with these other literacy initiatives fosters shared objectives and secures support for the plan.

[2] https://learning.ccsso.org/science-of-reading-legislation-and-implementation-state-scan

Resources for Infrastructure

A Nation of Readers
Council of Chief State School Officers, 2021

This resource delves into four concrete actions State leaders can take to align literacy curricula and instruction to evidence-based practices.

State of Dyslexia
National Center on Improving Literacy

This webpage provides an interactive map with information about States' dyslexia-related legislation.

Education Governance Dashboard
Education Commission of the States

This source delves into State education governance and examines the roles, responsibilities, and relationships of entities tasked with policy and program development. It emphasizes the uniqueness of each State's system, as each is shaped by individual goals, cultural nuances, and historical contexts.

Data Gathering

Collecting and analyzing data helps identify literacy-related priorities within a State. A systematic approach to gathering and analyzing data should be used to determine the gap between current literacy rates and the literacy achievement goals.[3] Comparing current literacy rates with the literacy achievement goals will help determine the priorities for the SLP, identify student groups to focus on, and highlight what literacy-related strengths and weaknesses exist within the State.

[3] https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/account/compneedsassessment.pdf

Data gathering can be conducted in collaboration with community members, school staff members, and other stakeholders. Engaging with various stakeholders during each phase of the data gathering process ensures that the planning, data collection, and analysis are comprehensive and incorporate the input of people with a range of expertise and perspectives.

Start With Existing Data

When considering what data to collect, think about the existing data. Using existing data expedites the process and may lead to further queries during the interpretation stage. The following are examples of existing data:

- Census data
- Legislation and policies
- Student enrollment data
  - Student subgroup populations
  - Attendance rates
  - Dropout rates
- State literacy achievement data
  - Standardized test scores
    - State assessments
    - Districtwide assessments
    - National assessments (e.g., the SAT and ACT)
- District report cards
- Current curricula and instructional practices
- Teacher evaluation data
- Teacher professional learning data
- School district policies and plans

Planning for Data Gathering

The data gathering process includes five phases: (1) plan, (2) incorporate data findings into the SLP, (3) determine priorities, (4) incorporate data findings into the SLP, and (5) plan for continuous improvement.[4]

[4] https://region7comprehensivecenter.org/resources/needs-assessment-guidebook-supporting-the-development-of-district-and-school-needs-assessments

The chart below goes into greater detail about the data gathering and analysis steps.

Step	Description	Guiding Questions
Step 1: Plan		
Understand the Scope and Purpose of Data Gathering	• Determine the goals, objectives, and audience for the data gathering process.	• What are the objectives of the data gathering process? • What geographical areas will be included? • What educational institutions will be included? • How will underrepresented communities be included?
Identify Stakeholders	• Invite relevant stakeholders to engage in the process, and plan for their involvement.	• What stakeholders should be involved? • How and when will stakeholders be engaged?
Review Literacy-Related Legislation and Policies	• Identify legislation that affects literacy. • Understand the governor's literacy-related priorities and policies.	• What legislation affects the SLP? • Does the governor's office have any literacy-related priorities? If so, how will they affect the SLP? • What policies exist that may affect the SLP?
Develop Data Gathering Questions	• These questions should be aligned with literacy challenges and goals. • Questions should reflect the populations and goals of the State.	• What are the current literacy rates among all demographic subgroups across grade bands? • What are the barriers to literacy achievement? • What resources and programs are currently available to support literacy?
Identify Existing Data Sources	• Consider existing data, such as reports, State literacy achievement data, and data from surveys, assessments, focus groups, interviews, and observations. • Determine what information is still needed to develop the SLP.	• What existing data are available? • What population(s) do the available data represent? • How recent are the data? • What can be gleaned from the available data? • What information is still needed to develop the SLP?

Step	Description	Guiding Questions
Determine Data Collection Methodologies	• Using the data gathering questions, determine what data will be collected. • Based on the gap between the existing data and the data that are still needed, decide the appropriate data collection method (e.g., surveys, focus groups, or interviews).	• What data will be collected? • How will data be collected? • Will an existing data collection instrument be used, or must one be created? • Will quantitative and qualitative data be collected? • Will data collection need to go through a review process (e.g., an institutional review board)?
Step 2: Collect, Organize, and Interpret Data		
Collect and Analyze the Data	• Determine which data collection methods will be implemented. • Compile the data and create a report summarizing the findings. • Identify the root causes for literacy rates.	• How will data collection methods be implemented to enable accurate and consistent data collection? • What patterns and trends have been discovered? • What underlying causes can be identified as contributing to current literacy rates? • How will the data be compiled into a comprehensive report?
Step 3: Determine Priorities		
Identify Themes	• Examine the data and determine emerging themes.	• What overall themes have emerged? • What themes have emerged across grade levels, underserved groups, or other categories of students?

Step	Description	Guiding Questions
Step 4: Incorporate Data Findings Into the SLP		
Incorporate Data Findings	• Incorporate the results of the data gathering with the goals and priorities of the SLP. • Choose evidence-based strategies and/or interventions that align with the identified themes and underlying reasons for literacy rates.	• What strategies, goals, and action steps can be identified based on the emerging themes? • How will the data gathering results be used to create sustainable change? • How could root causes be prioritized? • How will evidence-based activities support implementation?[5]
Step 5: Plan for Continuous Improvement		
Plan for Ongoing Assessments	• Decide what continuous improvement strategies to establish.	• What continuous improvement processes should be established to address evolving literacy needs or legislation?

Data Gathering Tool: This tool provides guidance for the data gathering process by offering steps and guiding questions.

Guiding Questions for Data Gathering

Use the guiding questions below to reflect and discuss with the SLT:

- How well do the data gathering questions align with the goals and objectives of the data gathering process?
- How could community members, stakeholders, and experts be involved to provide input and feedback?
- What legislation and policies will affect the SLP?
- How will the insights gathered from the data be used to inform the development of the SLP?
- What challenges or obstacles are anticipated, and how could they be proactively addressed to ensure the appropriate data are collected?

[5] The What Works Clearinghouse is a central and trusted source of scientific evidence on education programs, products, practices, and policies. They review the research, determine which studies meet rigorous standards, and summarize the findings. They focus on high-quality research to answer the question "what works in education?"

Resources for Data Gathering

The following needs assessment resources can help with the data gathering process.

Needs Assessment Guidebook: Supporting the Development of District and School Needs Assessments
Comprehensive Center Network Region 7: Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi, May 2018

This guidebook offers a comprehensive look at the needs assessment planning process, including how to engage stakeholders and how to collect and organize data and information about continuous improvement.

Conducting a Self-Assessment

The SLP Self-Assessment Tool assesses the quality of an SLP. The tool is structured so that it can be used to identify components for which depth could be enhanced or used as a template for creating an SLP. To help define each component, multiple elements are listed with a scale for rating their developmental levels. Discuss the guiding questions for each element with your team or note your individual responses. Based on your responses to the guiding questions, use the "Levels of Development" key on the tool to select the level (0–4) for the element. Some elements include separate ratings for the categories "Birth–Pre-K," "Grades K–5," and "Grades 6–12."

As you are working through the tool, TA can be provided if you find yourself not understanding the component, the element, or how to evaluate the SLP.

Self-Assessment Participants

Consider engaging a range of participants—such as SEA staff members, stakeholders, district administrators, and teachers and other educators—to get feedback on the SLP using the SLP Self-Assessment Tool. This inclusive approach accommodates different perspectives and viewpoints, promoting an extensive understanding of the SLP's strengths and weaknesses.

The SLP Self-Assessment Tool can be found here.

Next Steps

After completing the self-assessment, analyze the results to identify grade band trends, strengths, weaknesses, and areas requiring additional information. Review the self-assessment results with a TA liaison from the CLSD National Literacy Center, who can assist you in developing a plan for robust SLP content.

Reflecting on the Data Gathered and Self-Assessment

After completing the data gathering process and the self-assessment, compile, analyze, and interpret the data. The data will explain the current state of literacy and the impact of an existing SLP (if applicable), while the self-assessment results will reflect the quality of an existing SLP. Use the data and the self-assessment to guide content development for the SLP. These two data sources will provide a wealth of information and will support the development of a well-rounded SLP.

Conclusion

If you have completed the steps outlined in this kit, you are ready to move onto Phase 2, which includes information about the components and elements that can be included in an SLP. For free additional TA you can contact the CLSD National Literacy Center at 1-833-773-CLSD (2573) or literacy@seiservices.com.

Appendix A: SLP Documents

The documents below could be beneficial to obtain prior to developing or revising an SLP.

- Data on literacy of target populations
  - Race/ethnicity
  - Socioeconomic status
  - Urbanicity
  - English language learner status
  - Disability status
  - Census tract
  - Other relevant populations
- Information on current and upcoming literacy-related legislation
- The governor's priorities on literacy in the State
- A list of other State literacy-related initiatives and outcome data from initiatives
- Information on teacher requirements, licensure, evaluation requirements, etc.
- Information on preservice teachers (enrollment data and degree requirements in the State, projections of future teachers needed by grade and discipline)
- Information on partnerships and agreements with institutions of higher education
- SEA policy documents
- A list of State literacy standards
- Subject matter experts or stakeholders
- Information on multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) or other intervention processes used in the State
- Information on assessment tools used with students to analyze literacy comprehension
- Information on professional learning opportunities for teachers

Appendix B: SLP Readiness Checklist

Read each statement and check yes or no depending on whether it is true in your SEA. If a task has not been completed yet, fill out resources needed and next steps to move forward.

Administrative Processes	
1. We have knowledge of the budget for the SLP development or revising process.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Resources needed:	
Next steps:	
2. We have a projected or established due date for publishing the SLP.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Resources needed:	
Next steps:	
3. We understand the SEA approval processes for developing an SLP.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Resources needed:	
Next steps:	

SLT	
4. We have an SLT assembled.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Resources needed:	
Next steps:	
5. We know who will lead the SLT.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Resources needed:	
Next steps:	
6. We have details about what roles are needed for the SLT.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Resources needed:	
Next steps:	

State Legislation	
7. We are aware of current and upcoming literacy-related legislation and policies for the next 12–24 months.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Resources needed:	
Next steps:	
8. We understand how the legislation will affect the SLP.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Resources needed:	
Next steps:	

Data Gathering	
9. We have a plan for completing the data gathering process.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Resources needed:	
Next steps:	

10. We have a plan for using the gathered data to inform the SLP.	☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**
Resources needed:	
Next steps:	

SLP Self-Assessment Tool	
11. We anticipate completing the SLP Self-Assessment Tool.	☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**
Resources needed:	
Next steps:	
12. We plan to seek TA for identified areas (components/elements) of the SLP to develop and revise them.	☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**
Resources needed:	
Next steps:	

Stakeholder Engagement	
13. We have identified key stakeholder groups and understand how they will be engaged in the SLP development process.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Resources needed:	
Next steps:	
14. We have developed a communication plan explaining how and when stakeholders will be engaged and informed.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Resources needed:	
Next steps:	

Appendix C: Benchmark Tool for Developing an SLP

Determine whether the benchmark applies to the SLP development process in your SEA and fill in the boxes with the corresponding information.

Benchmark	How long will it take to complete the benchmark?	Who is responsible for this benchmark within the SEA?
Establish a budget		
Form an SLT		
Review current standards or curriculum framework		
Review existing State legislation such as reading, literacy, dyslexia, etc.		
Create a timeline		
Develop a data gathering plan and data collection protocols		
Gather, analyze, and interpret gathered data		
Reflect on the data gathered		
Engage stakeholders		
Create a logic model		
Create an SLP outline		
Draft sections of the SLP		
Edit the first draft		

Benchmark	How long will it take to complete the benchmark?	Who is responsible for this benchmark within the SEA?
Get stakeholder and public feedback		
Incorporate stakeholder and public feedback		
Finalize the SLP		
Disseminate the SLP		

Guiding Questions for SLP Development Benchmarks

Use the guiding questions below to reflect and discuss with the SLT:

- What considerations or actions are necessary to reach each benchmark?
- What steps and preparations are needed to ensure that the SLT is ready to work and meet each development benchmark?
- Who needs to be involved in each stage of development?
- What are the steps needed for the writing, editing, and review process?
- How will legislation impact the SLP timeline?
- When incorporating feedback from stakeholders and the public, what strategies will effectively integrate the feedback into the SLP in a timely manner?
- What criteria will be used to determine whether each benchmark is achieved?

Appendix D: Benchmark Tool for Revising an SLP

Determine whether the benchmark applies to the SLP development process in your SEA and fill in the boxes with the corresponding information.

Benchmark	How long will it take to complete the benchmark?	Who is responsible for this benchmark within the SEA?
Establish a budget		
Form an SLT		
Review current standards or curriculum framework		
Review existing State legislation (reading, literacy, dyslexia, etc.)		
Create a timeline		
Develop a data gathering plan and data collection protocols		
Gather, analyze, and interpret gathered data		
Perform the self-assessment		
Reflect on the data gathered and self-assessment results		
Engage stakeholders		
Create or revise a logic model		
Revise the SLP		
Edit the first draft		

Benchmark	How long will it take to complete the benchmark?	Who is responsible for this benchmark within the SEA?
Get stakeholder and public feedback		
Incorporate stakeholder and public feedback		
Finalize the SLP		
Disseminate the SLP		

Guiding Questions for SLP Development Benchmarks

Use the guiding questions below to reflect and discuss with the SLT:

- What considerations or actions are necessary to reach each benchmark?
- What steps and preparations are needed to ensure that the SLT is ready to work and meet each development benchmark?
- Who needs to be involved in each stage of development?
- What are the steps needed for the writing, editing, and review process?
- How will legislation impact the SLP timeline?
- When incorporating feedback from stakeholders and the public, what strategies will effectively integrate the feedback into the SLP in a timely manner?
- What criteria will be used to determine whether each benchmark is achieved?

Appendix E: Stakeholder Engagement Tool

Use this template to generate ideas about who can be included in the stakeholder group, to make notes, and to create a stakeholder group.

What populations exist in the State?
What students do not perform well on the statewide assessments (e.g., specific grades or grade bands, students with disabilities, etc.)?
Which entities (e.g., LEAs, regional service centers, non-profit organizations) represent sub-groups of students that data show to be underperforming??

Are there representatives from all geographic regions of the State? If no, who else could be included?	☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**
Have efforts been taken to involve stakeholders not traditionally included?	☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Who is the contact person at each organization?		
Organization	Contact Person	Contact Information

How will initial contact be made with stakeholders?		
☐ Meeting agendas	☐ Networking	☐ Phone calls
☐ Emails	☐ Other: _____	☐ Other: _____

What will ongoing communication with stakeholders entail?		
☐ Focus groups	☐ Newsletters	☐ Listening sessions
☐ Emails	☐ Presentations	☐ Webinars

Final SLP Stakeholder Group

Questions for Reflection and Discussion for Establishing a Stakeholder Group

Use the guiding questions below to reflect and discuss with the SLT:

- Are all populations represented in the stakeholder group?
- What should initial outreach to stakeholders look like?
- What engagement modalities would be most effective for stakeholders?
- What is the purpose of stakeholder feedback? How will it inform work?
- How often will stakeholders be engaged?
- How will their feedback be integrated into the SLP?
- How will stakeholders be recognized for their contributions to the SLP?
- What State requirements exist for convening a stakeholder group?

Appendix F: Establishing or Reassembling an SLT Tool

Determine which person will fill each position on the SLT. Then use the RACI model to determine each person's level of involvement in developing the SLP. Possible examples include State Literacy Director, Curriculum Specialist, Assessment Coordinator, Research Analyst, Early Childhood Literacy Expert, Secondary Literacy Expert, Special Education Expert, English Language Learner (ELL) Specialist, Policy Advisor, Office of General Counsel, Writer, and Editor.

Person	Position	Level of Involvement
		☐ Responsible ☐ Consulted ☐ Accountable ☐ Informed
		☐ Responsible ☐ Consulted ☐ Accountable ☐ Informed
		☐ Responsible ☐ Consulted ☐ Accountable ☐ Informed
		☐ Responsible ☐ Consulted ☐ Accountable ☐ Informed
		☐ Responsible ☐ Consulted ☐ Accountable ☐ Informed
		☐ Responsible ☐ Consulted ☐ Accountable ☐ Informed
		☐ Responsible ☐ Consulted ☐ Accountable ☐ Informed
		☐ Responsible ☐ Consulted ☐ Accountable ☐ Informed
		☐ Responsible ☐ Consulted ☐ Accountable ☐ Informed
		☐ Responsible ☐ Consulted ☐ Accountable ☐ Informed

Guiding Questions for Establishing or Reassembling an SLT

Use the guiding questions below to reflect and discuss with the SLT:

- What activities can be supported by the current budget?
- What existing resources are available within the SEA?
- Who could serve in multiple roles?
- What is the best method to engage people from the SEA??
- Is there an approved writer on staff to engage?
- Is there a list of approved vendors, contractors, and subject matter experts?
- Are there funds to contract a writer and/or an editor?

Appendix G: Data Gathering Tool

Data gathering should be a purposeful, goal-oriented process. Collect usable data to guide the development of the SLP.

Step 1: Plan
What are the goals of the SLP?
What are the goals of the data gathering?
What are the objectives of the data gathering?
Who is the audience for the data gathering?

Which individuals, groups, or stakeholders will participate in planning and conducting the data gathering?
What impact do legislation and policies have on literacy?
What questions can be asked on the Data Gathering Tool that reflect the literacy challenges and goals within the State?
What existing data sources are available to support the goals of the data gathering?
What data collection methods could be used?

Step 2: Collect, Organize, and Interpret Data
What style of report will be used (e.g., presentation, summary report)?
Who is the intended audience for the report?
What are the current literacy rates for:
Students with disabilities: Students in Title I schools: English language learners: Other subcategories (including racial and ethnic groups):
What patterns or trends have been discovered?

Which root causes for literacy rates have been identified?

Step 3: Determine Priorities

What themes have emerged across grade levels and subcategories of students (e.g., English language learners and students with disabilities)?

Step 4: Incorporate Data Findings Into the SLP

How do the data gathering results align with the goals and priorities?
How will evidence-based activities support implementation?

Step 5: Continuous Improvement

What continuous improvement strategies can be established?

Guiding Questions for Data Gathering

Use the guiding questions below to reflect and discuss with the SLT:

- How well do the data gathering questions align with the goals and objectives of the data gathering process?
- How could community members, stakeholders, and experts be involved to provide input and feedback?
- What legislation and policies will affect the SLP?
- How will the insights gathered from the data be used to inform the development of the SLP?
- What challenges or obstacles are anticipated, and how could they be proactively addressed to ensure the appropriate data are collected?

https://literacycenter.ed.gov/