**February TETN Q&A**

**General Communication:**

**Q: Request to make it standard that DCSI correspondence is always shared with SI Leads./Are you going to send a draft email for communicating to our TAP districts?**

**A:** This is great feedback. In the future we will be sure to include SI Leads on emails we send to DCSIs. I will write a draft email for communicating to TAP campuses and will include it in the SI newsletter this week.

**Q: Can you clarify any communication you have sent to the DCSIs? What are the key pieces of information that have been shared?**

A: Below is the email that was sent to DCSIs on January 10th. The sample email for you to send at this time can be found in the School Improvement Facilitation Support Section of this FAQ document.

*Dear DCSIs,*

*Happy New Year! We hope your first week back to campus has been a great one, and you all enjoyed a restful and rejuvenating break. We wanted to send some reminders regarding next steps for your Campus Turnaround Plans. At this point, you should have received feedback from a member of School Improvement (this feedback was also uploaded into ISAM for you to review) regarding the draft plans that were submitted in December. The next steps for Turnaround Plan development and submission are:*

1. *Using the feedback provided by TEA, continue to develop your Turnaround Plan*
2. *Post your Turnaround Plan to the District website for stakeholder comment 30 days prior to Board Approval*
3. *Incorporate stakeholder feedback as appropriate*
4. *Have your Turnaround Plan approved by the Board before the March 2nd submission to TEA*
5. *Submit your fully developed campus Turnaround Plan, Board Resolution, and stakeholder comments to TEA via ISAM by March 2nd.*

*We are also attaching the Turnaround Plan Guidance document that is posted on the TEA School Improvement webpage for you to access.*

*Thank you, and please reach out to nicole.seltman@tea.texas.gov if you have any questions.*

*Best,*

Division of School Improvement

**ESF Diagnostic and Facilitator Support:**

**Q: I had a district ask about sending district staff to become ESF Facilitator trained - is that something they can do?**

A: For this year’s ESFF Diagnostic Windows, there was a formal process for internal ESC staff and external staff. We will be communicating to ESCs about internal processes for the 2021 diagnostic window and will also be tailoring our external facilitator recruitment processes to our state-wide needs. We will be posting updates for external facilitators on the ESF webpage. <https://texasesf.org/esf-facilitators/>

**Q: Are we now saying that we have two weeks from the visit to the post conference?**

A: The two-week window still exists between the campus visit and the ISAM upload. The area where we are focusing to clarify is the specificity of that two-week window. We want to communicate clear expectations going forward regarding ESFF roles for communication with leads, etc. We hope this clarity supports leads to review reports and support the fidelity to the diagnostic process.

**Q: In regard to FOI metrics, how will externals be held accountable?**

A: External ESFFs will not be included in your regional report, but they will be held accountable for their fidelity of implementation. Our CES team, Keith Thompson and Krista Peake, are actively reviewing all of their submitted reports and providing feedback for those facilitators. They are the SI leads for the entire external network and will be holding them accountable for their fidelity of implementation.

**Q: Just for clarification, SI Leads must review reports before submission in ISAM not before the Post-Visit Debrief with the campus. (edited)**

A: This is an area that we do not think we were clear on previously, so we are clarifying that two-week window. In terms of best practice, when we think about impact, if the lead reviews the final report prior to the post-visit conversation, the ESFF will walk in with a stronger report. If the lead then goes to do a fast review to ensure report completion before the upload to ISAM, they can ensure that a complete report is going to the district.

**Q: Can we have some exemplars from actual diagnostics?**

A: This is an excellent question. We know that there is an exemplar final report on the ESF website for your use. However, in an effort to provide other exemplars, CES will be working to identify some exemplar reports and will also take care to remove all personal identifiers so that it is anonymous. If the report is coming from your region, they will certainly let you know that they are pulling it as a sample report.

**Q: If we only have a few ESFDs in our region to be reviewed, how are we to make course corrections before the FOI Final Report?**

A: Yes, in a few regions, especially those with very few diagnostics scheduled, you will likely get lagging data to inform future practice just due to the nature of the timeline. However, that will provide you with adequate time to plan for future structures for calibration and coaching within the region.

**Q: Thanks for the overview of the FOI process. Can you apply your description to show what reports will be audited and when feedback will be received by SI leads?**

A: Yes. Leads will still receive Final Report Only FOI data on 2-3 cycles (so long as there are enough diagnostics executed) throughout the diagnostic window. In the newsletter, we will send more information about the number of cycles you will receive. CES is still firming up exact dates for cycles for each region based on the diagnostic campus visit dates finalized in ISAM on 1/31/20.

During the quick audit cycles of the 3-5 reports, we will pull a sample from your region. We will communicate which final reports we used to check for FOI when we submit the FOI report to you. We will also communicate which diagnostic final reports we viewed when we share your final formative FOI at the end of the diagnostic window.

**Q: How will external ESF diagnostics impact metrics of the ESCs that were shared during the SI lead meeting?**

A: External ESF diagnostics will **not** contribute to the formative FOI metric. They will still be held to a high bar for their FOI to the diagnostic process through CES.

**Q: When will we hear about approved Vetted Improvement Programs? I believe the application said we would be notified by Jan. 31st. We have heard nothing.**

A: We will be providing information about timelines for communication to all vendors who applied next week.

**Q: When will the next vetted application process be opening?**

We will provide information about plans for future application cycles next week as well.

**School Improvement Facilitation Support**

**Q: For some, the DCSI role is not proving to be what might have hoped in the SI process. When will a decision be made to contact Superintendent with such concerns? /Agree with the comment about superintendents...we have districts that desperately need to have the superintendent engaged because there is no real movement**

A:This is very important information for us to know, and we definitely acknowledge this concern and are actively problem-solving this to inform our processes for next year. If you have specific districts you are concerned about, please reach out to Nicole Seltman so we can work together to determine how to ensure our districts are taking ownership for and supporting campuses in the school improvement process this year.

**Q: What happens if a campus chooses not to heed recommendations and chooses all internal. Are we going to be evaluated regarding this being included?**

A: The overall score of a campus’ Turnaround plan will be VERY MINIMALLY impacted by their decision to choose all internal capacity builders. We know that you cannot force campuses to follow your recommendations, and simply encourage you to continue to recommend external capacity builders when appropriate. Should a campus choose to not follow your recommendations, we do not believe this will impact your overall evaluation. The evaluations should not be seen as punitive but as a way to share and discuss data that fosters continuous improvement.

**Q: When do we get final decisions about 2 Year D campuses resulting in an F intervention or not?**

A: The proposed Commissioner rule clarifying Texas Education Code 39A.0545 expired prior to adoption and will not take effect. However, districts and campuses should prepare to implement TEC 39A.0545 as written and identify any campus that has either a Domain D or Overall D in the 2019 ratings. If these campuses receive an Overall D or an Overall F or Domain F in the 2020 ratings, then they would be required to engage in interventions with the Agency. The agency is currently working with Legislative Members to see what the next steps are. We will let you know once we have additional clarification or information.

**Q: What is the expectation of ESCs to communicate with district DCSIs regarding TAP review process, particularly the information including on the slides in this presentation?**

A: ESCs **are not** expected to share information regarding the rubric with campuses, as the rubric is very similar to what was used for the draft plans, and we have been advised by our legal team not to share this document. This information was shared with you to build your understanding of the process and for us to share how we have incorporated feedback around calibration into the approval process.

Below is a sample email you can use to communicate to your campuses regarding expectations around the TAP submission. Feel free to modify the email to fit the needs of your campuses.

*Dear <DCSI name>*

*We hope your February is off to a strong start and the second semester is going well. We wanted to send along an email to remind you of the important pending deadlines and next steps regarding the Turnaround Plan you have been developing for <campus name>. At this point, you should have integrated the feedback you received regarding the draft plans that were submitted in December and finished developing your Turnaround Plan. As a reminder, the next steps necessary in the process are outlined below:*

1. *Post your Turnaround Plan to the District website for stakeholder comment 30 days prior to Board Approval*
2. *Incorporate stakeholder feedback as appropriate*
3. *Have your Turnaround Plan approved by the Board before the March 2nd submission to TEA*
4. *Submit your fully developed campus Turnaround Plan, Board Resolution, and stakeholder comments to TEA via ISAM by March 2nd.*
5. *There will be three separate portals in ISAM for submission: TAP Plan, Board Resolution and Stakeholder comments. Please be sure to upload to each of these three portals. Please ensure the Board Resolution is signed by the Board President and Superintendent at a minimum; signatures of all Board members are encouraged.*

*Please feel free to reach out to <insert SI contact here> if you have any questions regarding the development and submission of your Turnaround Plan.*

*Thank you, and please reach out to <insert SI contact here> if you have any questions regarding the development and submission of your Turnaround Plan.*

*Best,*

*<Signature>*

**Q: I have a campus that did not post for public comments for 30 days. How to document that in submission?**

A: Texas Education Code 39A.104(a) states “…the campus intervention team, shall prepare the campus turnaround plan and allow parents, the community, and stakeholders an opportunity to review the plan before it is submitted for approval to the board of trustees of the district.” Texas Administrative Code 97.1064(d)(1) further clarifies that “the district shall notify stakeholders of their ability to review the completed plan on the district website at least 30 days before the final plan is submitted to the board of trustees…” For the ESC that submitted this comment, please reach out to Nicole Seltman, nicole.seltman@tea.texas.gov, so that the Agency can reach out to the DCSI and decide the appropriate next steps.

**Q: How will schools who have had an ESF this year be held accountable on their plans next year as there won't be the ESF process next year for them?**

A: For campuses who have engaged in an ESF Diagnostic this year, we believe that the diagnostic process would have provided them with valuable insight regarding the current level of implementation on their campus for the Foundational Essential Actions. This information will support them as they continue to think about their school improvement focus next year and beyond. Even without a diagnostic, our campuses will still be engaged in the school improvement process, submitting their TIP, and participating in feedback calls with their assigned specialists. If there are additional concerns or need for clarification, please reach out to Nicole Seltman.

**Q: How will campuses that did not receive an ESF Diagnostic and were not required to submit a plan (D overall or D in a Domain) complete the Cycle 4 tab?**

A: We envision the Cycle 4 tab to be used as a proactive planning tool to support campuses in their intentional planning for the next year’s school improvement process. Campuses who did not receive an ESF Diagnostic, would complete the Cycle 4 tab using the results from their self-assessment (located on the Foundations Tab).

**Q: Are ESCs collecting data around the quality of the TIPs? What metrics should we use to evaluate this?**

A: SI Specialists are using an internal rubric to collect data around the quality of TIPs. This rubric will be refined for next year and incorporated into our review process further. It will be shared with SI Leads at Statewide Partners Institute in preparation for next year.

**Q: Why are ESF Diagnostic upload boxes not available in ISAM for spring ESF campuses? Dates needed can be accessed from spreadsheet we completed for the metric.**

A: The Google sheet has been completely updated (thank you!!) and will be working over the next two weeks to create updated portals in ISAM with all the new dates. If you need a portal to be updated before then, please contact Nicole Seltman or your regional manager.

**Feedback:**

**SI not meeting the deadlines dates they have provided to ESCs creates a barrier for ESCs to effectively get our responsibilities complete.**

We recognize there have been missed deadlines in our work and know this creates a barrier for you all to do your work. We are working hard to prevent that in the future. If there is specific feedback regarding late deadlines, please feel free to share it with us directly so we can problem solve and ensure it doesn't continue to occur.

**Diagnostics on 3 campuses revealed that it's district systems/lack of causing the issues, this needs to be handled at Supt level.**

This is a very valid point and aligns with our belief that change needs to come from the district level. We believe our work with the Effective District Framework (EDF) will help many campuses and districts where the change really needs to be happening at the district level. Please feel free to reach out to Lizette or Nicole directly if you would like to share more context, so that we can see how to best support the campuses you are referencing.

**Would appreciate it if Nicole checked slido more often before moving on.**

I apologize for this! I will make sure to check slido more often moving forward. Thank you for the feedback.

**Definitely agree that TEA acting as a heavy hand is helpful. Creates a sense of urgency. Thank-you**

We appreciate your feedback and will work hard to find the right balance of support and urgency with our campuses.

**Grants Updates**

**Q: Having a district submit the same report for every campus is redundant and time consuming for larger ISDs that have several Comprehensive campuses.**

A: Agreed, however we feel that this is the best solution for this school year. We are working on creating a district review in ISAM for next year (2020-2021), which would allow for one submission for the district.

**Q: Rows 37-46 only provide room for 10 campuses. Some districts have more than 10 campuses receiving funds. How should the districts proceed with adding rows?**

A: In the training, it guides the DCSI that if they have more than 10 campuses, they can add rows by right clicking on Row 47 and then click Insert.

**Q: We have multiple DCSIs in several of our districts. How would you like that populated?**

A: The district will need to coordinate this process so that only one workbook is submitted to the Agency. Possible solutions would be to put the file on a shared drive where multiple people could work on the file at the same time or assign one DCSI to complete a master copy and each DCSI complete the report for their campuses and submit to the assigned DCSI.

**Q: Can you copy ESC leads on info sent to DCSIs? We are not clear on what is being shared and what we need to follow up with and/or emphasize./Will SI Leads be copied on the DCSI email with the mid-year funding report and training information? Thanks!**

A: We will send a copy of the Comprehensive Mid-Year funding report, Mid-year funding report example and training to both DCSIs and ESC SI leads.

**Q: Will the funding report exemplar be a separate download on the training page and not just noted in the webinar? That would be helpful. Thanks!**

A: See the answer directly above and thank you for the suggestion.

**Q: Garrett, on the "expended" space will the districts include actual expenditures for reports or drawdowns? Also, will they include encumbrances?**

A: Districts should use actual expenditures as of March 13, 2020. School Improvement specialists will cross-reference the expenditures with our Grants Administration division grant expenditure report and provide feedback to districts to make sure it draws down funds if there are discrepancies. Districts do not need to include encumbrances. If the campus has more than 50% remaining in a budget code or total budget, then the campus must provide a narrative of how it will leverage the remaining funds starting in Row 48. The campus would be able to include the encumbered costs in this narrative.

**Q: When is the Grant department reviewing draw downs? What we have drawn down is not accurately showing on the Feb. 3rd spreadsheet.**

A: The grants administration division typically collects the data as of the last day of the previous month and then compiles the data for all grants so that the expenditure report can be published by the 3rd to 5th day of the next month. If a LEA or ESC has drawn down grant funds between those times, the report might not reflect the balance accurately. If the ESC believes that this is not the case, then it is encouraged to contact the Cash management unit at 512-463-8525.

**Q: What is the anticipated timeline for an ESC Grant report template?**

A: Currently, no timeline has been established to develop a resource for ESCs to track performance measures for each LEA School Improvement Grant. Per program guidelines, it is the responsibility of the grantee to track each performance measure for each grant.

**Q: For the 3 ESC grants, will base amounts be similar for each for the coming year? Can we expect campus allocations to the ESC to continue another year?**

A: For the 2020-2021 school year, ESCs should expect only two major School Improvement grants, ESC Comprehensive School Support, Cycle 3 and School Improvement Facilitation. Currently, we are planning to keep the base amounts similar to past years but will need to wait to finalize until final funding amounts are given to the agency from USDE. The total number of comprehensive campuses will always influence funding amounts and have an impact of the campus allocation amounts.