Supplemental Educational Services

Improving SES Quality

State Approval, Monitoring, and Evaluation of SES Providers

Steven Ross, Jennifer Harmon, and Kenneth Wong

Center on Innovation & Improvement

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About the Center on Innovation & Improvement

This practice guide was researched and produced by the Center on Innovation & Improvement (CII), which helps regional comprehensive centers in their work with states to provide districts, schools, and families with the opportunity, information, and skills to make wise decisions on behalf of students. CII can provide technical assistance to regional centers and states on the issues covered in this practice guide. To request technical assistance, download this guide, and find additional resources on SES, please visit CII's website: www.centerii.org or contact us at 217-732-6462.

Information   Tools   Training

Positive results for students will come from changes in the knowledge, skill, and behavior of their teachers and parents. State policies and programs must provide the opportunity, support, incentive, and expectation for adults close to the lives of children to make wise decisions.

The Center on Innovation & Improvement helps regional comprehensive centers in their work with states to provide districts, schools, and families with the opportunity, information, and skills to make wise decisions on behalf of students.

The Center on Innovation & Improvement is administered by the Academic Development Institute in partnership with Temple University Institute for Schools and Society and Little Planet.

Table of Contents

Part I: Approval Process

Part II: Monitoring Process

Part III: Evaluation Process

Part I
Approval Process

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Introduction

The purpose of this practice guide is to provide state SES directors and other stakeholders with useful information to help improve their practices in the areas of approving, monitoring, and evaluating providers. At the same time, the guide documents the collective accomplishments, successes, and challenges of states in these three areas.

Part I: Approval Process is organized into two sections that examine the state's process for approving SES providers: (a) a description of federal requirements for approving providers under the law and regulations, and (b) a status report of states' activities, accomplishments, and recommendations based on a recent national survey of state SES directors. Included in the status report is an examination of Promising Practices based on the results of a survey of state SES directors, a follow-up (cross-validation) survey, site-visits, telephone interviews with state directors, and the authors' experiences as SES evaluators and consultants over the past several years. An Appendix is included to provide samples of state documents cited in the status report.

Approving providers is the first major step for states to complete in implementing SES, and selecting effective providers at the front end is one of the best ways to ensure high quality services for students who enroll in SES programs. The promising practices discussed in Part I are intended to improve states' approval processes by:

1. Ensuring that provider applications include comprehensive and relevant information needed to support accurate judgments by state review teams. For example, supplementary information such as lesson plans and specification of minimal and typical tutor qualifications can be helpful to states in evaluating potential providers' readiness to deliver effective services.

2. Helping states to organize and systematize application reviews to maximize fairness, objectivity, and efficiency. States' usage of carefully developed and clear rubrics and rating forms is especially important for such purposes.

3. Increasing communications between SES approval stakeholders (particularly the state, districts, and potential providers) to improve the quality of applications, the effectiveness of the review process, and the feedback and guidance states give to providers for improving their applications and services.

4. Facilitating networking between states to share information, tools, and strategies for approving providers and other SES requirements.

The Center on Innovation & Improvement (CII) maintains a periodically updated database of information about each state's SES practices, including links to key documents, at www.centerii.org. Also included at this site is a separate database of research, reports, and tools on topics including SES. The CII website also includes a directory of the 16 regional comprehensive centers and five national content centers funded through the U.S. Department of Education's Comprehensive Centers program. The regional comprehensive centers provide technical assistance on SES and other topics to state educational agencies (states), and CII and other national content centers assist the regional centers in their work with states.

Section A: Federal Requirements and Expectations

Supplemental educational services (SES) are a key provision under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). To establish a framework for states' activities in approving providers, a brief summary of the guidelines and requirements established by the statute and the U.S. Department of Education (Department) is presented here. For more detailed information and guidance on SES, please visit the Department's website (see Websites Cited).[1]

The statute requires states to take on several key responsibilities related to approving SES providers, including providing annual notice to potential SES providers of the opportunity to provide services, developing and applying objective criteria to potential providers, and maintaining an updated list of approved providers across the state from which parents may select. To meet these requirements, each state creates its own application, consistent with the statutory and regulatory requirements for approving providers. In approving a provider, a state must consider, at a minimum, if the provider:

- Has a demonstrated record of effectiveness in increasing student academic achievement;

- Offers high-quality, research-based instruction that is focused on improving student academic achievement;

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[1] The U.S. Department of Education released new regulations regarding SES in October 2008, after the present national survey had been completed. While the survey results do not contradict new regulations, the survey also did not include questions that might probe practices relative to the new regulations.

- ✍ Offers services that are aligned with state academic content standards and student academic achievement standards, and consistent with the instruction provided and content used by the school district;
- ✍ Is financially sound;
- ✍ Complies with federal, state, and local health, safety, and civil rights laws; and
- ✍ Ensures that all instruction and content are secular, neutral, and nonideological.

Additionally, a state must consider whether a provider has been removed from any other state's approved provider list, and must take into account parent feedback and evaluation results, if any exist, regarding the success of the provider's program at increasing student achievement.

States set their own application timelines but must give prospective providers an opportunity to apply for state approval at least once a year. States must publish a list of approved providers, indicating which district(s) they can serve, and must indicate which providers are able to serve students with disabilities or limited English proficient (LEP) students.

A variety of entities may apply for state approval as SES providers, including nonprofit groups, for-profit companies, local community programs, colleges and universities, national organizations, faith-based groups, private and charter schools, and public schools and districts that have not been identified as in need of improvement. Providers may offer a range of services, such as one-on-one, small group, or web-based instruction, and in a variety of settings, including at a school, community center, or at home.

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Section B: State Activities, Accomplishments, and Suggestions

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Survey Methodology

In 2008, the Center on Innovation & Improvement conducted a survey (Harmon, Ross, Redding, & Wong) of the SES directors in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The survey results included descriptions from each state of its methods for approving providers and its experiences with the process. Promising Practices related to the state approval process were identified based on the survey responses, site-visit interviews with states, forums, meetings, and prior research.

To attain field validation of the Promising Practices selected by the authors of this brief, we administered a cross-validation survey to the state SES directors, asking them to indicate their level of agreement (on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) with each of 20 potential Promising Practices that were listed. In reporting directors' rating of Promising Practices on the cross-validation survey, the authors combined the percentages of those responding "agree" and "strongly agree" to derive an overall agreement rate.

Respondents to the cross-validation survey were also asked to describe the positive aspects of the approval process in their states and to describe strategies employed to recruit providers for difficult-to-serve students and communities. Three-fourths (75%) of the 52 directors contacted (39 respondents) completed the cross-validation survey. To seek greater clarification and a deeper understanding of Promising Practices that yielded high affirmation from the respondents, the authors conducted four phone interviews with state SES directors in October and November of 2008. Accordingly,

the Promising Practices highlighted in boxes and described below received sufficient validation to be suggested for consideration by states.

Survey Results and Promising Practices

The results from the study of provider approval practices are organized by a state's responsibilities for approving providers. For each responsibility, we summarize the survey responses from the state SES directors and present Promising Practices suggestions supported by the two surveys (original and cross-validation), follow-up interviews, and site-visits.

State Responsibility 1: Recruiting Potential Providers

When asked how they recruit potential SES providers to offer services in their states, the state SES directors described a variety of strategies, including the following:

- ✍ Sending invitations to a variety of potential applicants;
- ✍ Publishing a notice inviting application in a state newsletter;
- ✍ Posting information on a website;
- ✍ Involving districts in disseminating announcements;
- ✍ Engaging a local advocacy organization in recruitment;
- ✍ Holding a statewide meeting for potential applicants;
- ✍ Making presentations to recruit faith-based and community-based organizations;
- ✍ Mailing proposal announcements to all colleges and universities, all known providers, and all school districts;
- ✍ Posting announcements on various state and national listservs; and
- ✍ Encouraging regional educational agencies (or similar eligible entities) to apply.

In addition to these strategies, three strategies were endorsed in the cross-validation survey as Promising Practices for recruiting potential SES providers: direct outreach from the state director, recruitment of providers indigenous to remote areas, and cross-state collaboration in remote districts. Despite this, when specifically asked to identify practices for reaching under-served communities, the SES directors, overall, conveyed frustration with their lack of success in this area. Suggestions viewed as potentially promising (but as yet unproven in terms of showing consistent results) included involving local districts in recruitment, obtaining waivers for districts to serve as providers in their own communities, networking with faith-based organizations, and using on-line tutoring companies.

Outreach from and Accessibility to the State SES Director

The state SES directors' accessibility to potential providers appears to be a fruitful recruiting tool: the more accessible the SES director is to potential providers throughout the state, the more opportunities there are for networking with diverse organizations,

especially those with experience in rural areas. For example, the state director in Kentucky spends much of the pre-application period travelling throughout the state, holding informational meetings with districts and faith-based and community-based organizations, thus increasing awareness of SES among groups that already provide tutoring in small communities. Accessibility and an "open-door" policy were also emphasized through phone interviews with other states.

Recruiting Providers Indigenous to Remote Areas

The Kentucky director indicated that the greatest success with providing services in rural areas involves reaching out to potential providers that are already present in that area. In many rural and remote areas, community-based and faith-based organizations are already providing tutoring and after-school programs. These same organizations may be well-positioned to provide SES, and the state can give them guidance to qualify as providers.

Cross-State Collaboration on Reaching Remote Districts

States that face unique challenges regarding remote or difficult-to-serve populations may want to consider pooling resources with other states, sharing information, and establishing interstate services. Conversations with SES directors in New Mexico and Utah, for example, illuminated the struggle that many states face with recruiting and retaining providers to assist in remote areas where students may live hours from school sites, and cell phones and Internet connections do not function. Encouraging school districts, or even states, to work together in identifying providers for these areas were possible strategies mentioned.

Promising Practices: Identifying and Recruiting Providers

States can identify and recruit providers for hard to serve students and communities by:

- **Increasing the accessibility and outreach of the SES director and staff, especially in remote or rural areas, to provide information and application feedback to potential providers;**
- **Encouraging tutoring organizations that are present and active in remote or rural areas to consider operating as SES providers, and**
- **Collaborating with other state directors and school districts to create innovative recruitment strategies for difficult-to-serve areas.**

State Responsibility 2: Including Approval Criteria in Application

When SES directors were asked what criteria they use for approving providers, their responses indicated that nearly all states follow federal guidance in developing their provider applications to ensure that the application covers the required topics. Table 1a lists application criteria according to frequency of adoption by states:

Table 1a: Frequency and Percentage of States Including Federally Required Criteria for Approving Providers

Criteria	f	%
Documented research-based instruction model	52	100%
Evidence of financial responsibility	51	98%
Evidence of consistency with state standards	51	98%
Assurance of compliance with federal, state, and local health, safety, and civil rights laws	51	98%
Documented evidence of success in raising achievement	48	92%

Note: Total *n* = 52

Some states have also gone beyond federal requirements to add additional components to the provider application, as shown in Table 1b.

Table 1b: Frequency and Percentage of States' Use of Optional Application Components

Optional Application Components	f	%
Recommendations from former clients	20	38%
Attendance at informational meetings	15	29%
Demonstration or description of tutoring session	6	12%
In-person interview	1	2%
Evidence that the provider has contacted each district it is proposing to serve	1	2%
Evidence that the provider understands the unique conditions/policies of the state and the students to be served	1	2%
Descriptions (or actual copies) of the pre-tests and post-tests to be used	1	2%
Descriptions of a clear process to communicate to schools and parents regarding student progress toward goals	1	2%
Descriptions of tutor qualifications	1	2%
Descriptions or samples of recruitment and incentive materials	1	2%
Sample progress reports	1	2%
Explanations of how the provider individualizes tutoring	1	2%
Certification of liability insurance	1	2%
Signed agreements of professional conduct	1	2%
Evidence of capacity to assist English language learners and special education students	1	2%
Evidence of a student attendance policy	1	2%

Note: Total *n* = 52

Although many state SES directors expressed a desire to include in-person provider interviews as a required part of the approval process, only one state reported using interviews in a formal way. Several SES directors cited budget or staffing limitations as an obstacle to implementing provider interviews. The discussion on the use of interviews as a required or supplementary part of a state's approval process is presented in more detail in a later section on "application reviews."

Concrete Information and Samples of Provider Lessons

The SES directors' responses suggested several promising practices for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the application process. These practices are presented following a review of the survey and interview results in this area.

When asked to identify effective practices for approving providers, several state directors reported designing their application to obtain concrete and in-depth information about providers. A number of examples are listed in Table 1b, including specific evidence of contacts with districts, copies of pre-tests and post-tests, and descriptions of tutor qualifications. Two states explicitly request that potential providers submit an in-depth description of a program lesson that is aligned with state standards. According to one of these states:

> Asking applicants to provide specific information about curriculum, instructional methods, and an overview of a typical tutoring session…allows us and our reviewers to get an idea of exactly what the tutoring looks like, as well as requiring applicants to have clear pictures in their minds of exactly what tutoring sessions look like.

Recognizing the value of having firsthand impressions of the instructional approaches used, four additional state directors are considering requiring providers to submit sample lesson plans. One state director was even considering asking providers to submit a videotape of a program session.

By reviewing lesson plans, the state approval committees can obtain firsthand impressions (whether or not applicable to all lessons) of the applicants' preferred pedagogical approach and the alignment of content to district and state curricula. Obviously, submission of a low-quality plan (or none at all) would provide strong evidence for disapproval. The most straightforward approach for obtaining such information is to require it as part of the application to the state. For example, Indiana asks each applicant to provide a detailed description of a "one-hour module of tutoring," accompanied by a lesson plan, materials, and an explanation of the curriculum components addressed and instructional strategies used. Indiana awards the highest rubric rating for this category when the applicant's "lesson plan is strong and high quality; clear and extensive references are made to curriculum and instructional strategies; lesson plan is highly appropriate" (Indiana Department of Education, Evaluation Rubric for Supplemental Service Provider Applications, 2008-2009).

Tutor Qualifications and Description of Groups and Locations

States can effectively supplement application requirements by requiring additional information. For example, Maryland's SES application requires applicants to "describe qualifications of instructors providing supplemental educational services including any highly qualified staff." (See Maryland Public Schools in Websites Cited.)

Screening for tutor qualifications is important because service effectiveness is likely to depend largely on tutor ability (e.g., expertise, experience, maturity) as well as an ability to adapt strategies to meet an individual student's (as opposed to group) needs. On the cross-validation survey, 100% of the 39 respondents concurred that requesting documentation on tutor qualifications is a Promising Practice for the approval process. In a similar vein, 100% also agreed that supplementary information on tutoring group size and location would also be helpful in evaluating applications. Although the determination of appropriate group size would depend on numerous factors (age group, heterogeneity of student abilities, reading ability, tutor experience, etc.), the smaller the group size (ideally, one-to-one), the better the potential for addressing individual student needs.

Connection to Classroom Learning and Communication with Schools and Parents

Research shows the importance of school interventions having direct connection to regular classroom learning (Slavin & Fashola, 1998). In the case of SES, frequent communications with teachers and school leaders should increase the continuity, consistency, and relevance of the instructional program. Requiring a provider to submit strategies for communicating with teachers, parents, and district coordinators in its application to the state is a Promising Practice (corroborated by 100% of the directors responding to the cross-validation survey) and a way to show how a provider's instruction and content will be consistent with those offered by a district. For example, Indiana's application asks prospective providers to:

> Describe how you have established or plan to establish connections with the academic programming of the district(s) in which you intend to operate: (A) Cite the specific district curriculum or instructional methods to which your program connects, and (B) Describe how you intend to build relationships with district staff, including central office, principals, and teachers.

Maryland includes in its rubric for evaluating applications two communication categories for providers to respond to—one related to how a provider will communicate with school staff and districts, and the other related to how a provider will communicate with parents and families. Separate categories for communication methods encourage providers to establish strong connections with both the classroom and the home. Maryland assigns the highest rubric rating (4 points) for applications that describe:

✍ An on-going process to communicate with teachers, schools, and districts; various modes of frequent and two-way communication between the SES program and the school.

✍ Specific information about various modes of communication to engage parents in goal setting, decision-making, or enhancement of services; and clear discussion of plan to communicate with families who speak other languages (Maryland Department of Education, Technical Review Rubric, 2007-2008).

Phone interviews with selected SES directors confirmed the need for collaboration and communication between providers, parents, district personnel, and teachers. SES directors indicated that an emphasis on the quality and timeliness of such communication was incorporated throughout their application and scoring processes and was directly linked to an applicant's acceptance. During the application process, potential providers are instructed to be as specific as possible concerning the structure of communication—in Kentucky, for example, providers are asked to provide a sample progress reporting tool that would be used during the school year.

Promising Practices: Application Requirements

States can supplement required application data with requests for information about:

- **Sample lesson plans and their alignment with state standards;**
- **Minimal and typical tutor qualifications;**
- **Tutoring group size and locations; and**
- **Plans for communicating with teachers, parents, and district coordinators.**

State Responsibility 3: Administering a Provider Application Submission Process

The Promising Practices suggested at the conclusion of this section relate to various types of technical assistance that states can provide to improve communications with potential providers and help them complete their applications. That is, the efficiency and effectiveness of the provider approval process largely depends on applicants' ability to submit applications that address the approval criteria. Not surprisingly, when asked to identify the most successful component of their approval process, five state directors referred to one or more types of technical assistance offered to potential providers. Such assistance is typically provided prior to or during the application phase and is delivered through email and telephone communication with potential providers as well as in-person meetings or trainings.

Effective and timely technical assistance can increase the quality of application responses and eliminate weaknesses that might result in immediate disapproval or

significant point deductions. Strong agreement for these practices was voiced by the SES directors on the cross-validation survey. Specifically, 85% (33 out of 39 respondents) agreed that offering "relevant and timely assistance via email or phone hotline" and "holding technical assistance sessions with newly approved providers" should be included as Promising Practices.

Pre-Proposal Meetings, Trainings, and Application Support

Maryland conducts a six-hour, pre-proposal meeting in which potential providers can ask questions about the application process and obtain more detailed information about the state's curricula. These questions and answers are then mailed and e-mailed to all potential applicants and posted on the state's SES web page. Maryland also adds any interested provider to a mailing list to receive information about provider applications and deadlines. Some states have made attending these meetings a mandatory part of the application process (i.e., a provider that fails to attend cannot apply for state approval).

These orientation meetings often include direct training on the application process (e.g., what information the state expects in each section). States could also videotape technical assistance workshops to provide a resource for potential providers that are unable to attend the session in person. Additionally, written information and call-in support provided by the state can provide timely assistance to potential providers as they prepare their applications.

Provider Self-Assessment Tool

Georgia has developed a unique pre-proposal tool—a provider self-assessment—that "assists applicants in identifying potential weaknesses in their application, business model, or general SES compatibility." The self-assessment helps applicants make informed decisions about their current preparedness and eligibility as an SES provider. (See Georgia Department of Education in Websites Cited.)

Online Applications and Guidance

As an additional means of assisting providers in completing applications, Florida's online application provides detailed guidance and sample responses for completing each section of the application form. For example, in the section on presenting evidence of raising student achievement (see Appendix, Table 2), the applicant is encouraged to be specific about success with low-achieving students and with serving specific grade levels, special populations, and subjects. Examples report fictitious results from a "University" study and provider assessments to illustrate how relevant evidence might be communicated.

The advantages offered by online applications were corroborated by directors' responses on the cross-validation survey. Nearly 80% (31 states) of directors agreed that developing and implementing such a system should be suggested as a Promising Practice.

Further, 95% of the directors concurred that another Promising Practice is creating a state website, devoted specifically to SES, that is easy to navigate and contains information concerning the approval process. Nearly all states have created a section of the state website dedicated solely to SES in order to supply timely, consistent, and easily accessible information to providers, parents, districts, and others interested in SES. These websites should include overall state application and approval requirements as well as information specific to particular districts, especially those with unique needs. Providers with particular interests, skills, or strategies for serving special needs populations—such as students in rural areas, LEP students, or students with disabilities—would be alerted about these priorities as they identify districts to serve. These websites should also include:

- Technical assistance information and available support;
- Key events and deadlines for approval;
- Timelines for providing services if approved; and
- Links to supportive websites, including U. S. Department of Education websites, and websites which address frequently asked questions.

In addition to the above mentioned items, a state's scoring rubric can also be a useful document to include online. Rubrics that explain not only how points are weighted, but also descriptions for scoring, can be beneficial for providers in understanding what constitutes a quality application. Providing a checklist for applicants, as mentioned by the SES director in Tennessee, is another useful tool to include on the SES website.

In visiting states' SES websites, we found many that were highly informative, comprehensive, and user-friendly. An example is the Texas website that is designed for use by providers, school district staff, and parents. (See Texas Education Agency— Region VIII in Websites Cited.) A particularly helpful feature is a glossary of SES terms. Aside from being easy to navigate, the site contains highly useful information on a variety of topics, such as a refresher on SES, parent letters, the provider application, a description of the entire provider application process, a sample of the form used to evaluate applications for approval, and answers to frequently asked questions. It also provides the federal, local, and state standards for providers to follow. During phone interviews, SES directors stressed the need for a current, well-maintained, and informative SES website as vital to all aspects of the application process.

Promising Practices: Preparing Providers to Submit Applications

To improve communication with and provide assistance to potential and current providers, states can:

- **Hold technical assistance sessions with potential and newly approved providers;**
- **Offer relevant and timely technical assistance via email or phone "hotline."**

To assist providers in completing applications, states can develop a website devoted specifically to SES that is easy to locate and navigate, regularly updated, and informative with regard to all aspects of the approval process. The website should include:

- **Requests for proposal or applications for SES approval;**
- **Rubrics used for scoring with point allotments and descriptions of scoring categories;**
- **Checklists of information to include in the application; and**
- **Links to websites including:**
  - **District websites, especially high need areas;**
  - **U.S. Department of Education websites;**
  - **Frequently asked questions; and**
  - **Evaluation studies that have been completed on provider effectiveness.**

See Appendix for Table 2: Example of application questions for raising student achievement from the Florida Department of Education's "Guidance for Completing the Application to Become a SES Provider (2008-2009)."

State Responsibility 4: Administering the Provider Application Review Process

Almost all states review and make decisions about providers' applications by assembling a committee or panel. However, the survey responses reflected much diversity across states in the composition of these committees. Most commonly, one or more state employees join additional committee members, such as retired educators, school support team members, NCLB experts, parents, finance specialists, teachers, district administrators, or community members.

Nationally, one-third of states approve providers for 2-3 years, and another one-third either approve them indefinitely (no set period) or do not have an explicit policy in place. Almost one-fourth (22%) require providers to reapply for state approval each year. (The remaining states did not describe their approval period.) When asked how the approval process could be improved, three states volunteered that they were planning or would like to change their "re-approval" system so that providers are required to re-apply, and thus demonstrate that they are continuing to conform to policies and standards of quality every few years.

The state directors tended to view their approval processes quite favorably. In fact, when asked on the survey which provider approval practices have been most beneficial, the directors' most frequent response (19 states) was the provider application review. Many respondents praised the quality of their reviewers and felt positive about their use of independent teams to review each application. In some states, the team of reviewers includes representatives of key stakeholders involved in the SES process, such as content area experts, educators, district administrators, and parents. For example, one state director wrote, "[We involve] our two major school districts in the approval process. By having them on the team that reviews the applications, they have a much better understanding of some of the challenges [in approving qualified providers]."

Review Committees

States that have used review committees to screen and approve provider applications indicated in open-ended comments and interviews that this practice has been successful. Current practice suggests that one or more review committees should be formed in a state, representing diverse backgrounds and roles, such as:

- State staff (those with expertise in Title I and SES, in particular);
- School district administrators (SES in particular);
- Teachers;
- Principals (or school SES liaisons);
- Parents and community members;
- Educational researchers and evaluators;
- Curriculum and tutoring experts;
- Financial and business experts; and
- Lawyers.

A diverse approval committee can offer varied perspectives and types of expertise. Consequently, the approval process becomes more credible and objective to stakeholders (including providers) and, most critically, yields more valid approval decisions.

To help ensure a smooth, highly functioning committee, the state directors interviewed suggested that all review committee members should receive formal training. Indiana, in addition to providing live training, videotapes their training so that reviewers who are unable to attend the live session can receive the training required. The approval pro-

cess necessarily involves evaluating multiple categories of evidence, some fairly complex, technical, or subjective in nature. Training is a way to improve reviewer preparedness and reliability.

As part of both training and approval activities, states can encourage committee members to share ratings, discuss any areas of disagreement, and revise responses based on the discussions. According to several SES directors, the process used in their states requires each proposal to be read a minimum of 3 times by the committee before a decision is made. Maryland believes that the committee discussion, which usually yields consensus, increases the expertise of reviewers in reviewing applications and the validity of the evaluation of applicants. However, for states that must review a large number of provider applicants, the sheer volume of application reviews may preclude an extended review process. To maximize efficiency, Florida composes "virtual" review committees of five members who never actually meet, but submit their ratings online. The highest and lowest ratings are dropped to remove possible extreme outlier scores, and the three middle ratings are averaged to yield the final score for each applicant.

Review committees may well find certain sections of providers' applications more difficult to evaluate than others. In fact, when asked which SES provider approval practices have been most challenging, the largest number of directors (14 states) identified the evaluation of a provider's evidence of effectiveness and alignment of the tutoring with state standards. Respondents stated that most providers are unable to submit independent research demonstrating their program's impact. One director reported that the documentation submitted by providers varies widely in quality and is difficult to verify. Another indicated that some providers report results from internally-developed pre-tests and post-tests, others from state assessments, and others merely anecdotal data and quotes from former clients as "evidence" of success. Another challenging area (noted by four states), is assessing providers' financial viability as required to meet federal guidelines for the approval process. Given these considerations, one of the suggested Promising Practices is to engage experienced staff or consultants as application reviewers, where appropriate, to increase accuracy and consistency in reviewing more technical or specialized application content such as research evidence, curricula alignments, and financial soundness.

Scoring Rubrics

The component of the approval process that was identified the second most frequently by directors as beneficial (9 states) was the scoring rubrics used to rate application responses according to a consistent set of criteria. Some states make these rubrics publicly available before the application process begins so that potential providers clearly understand the state's expectations and decision-making criteria. For example, one state SES director stated that their scoring rubric "provides a roadmap for applicants to answer the indicators of quality criterion. Once again, this increases the quality of responses received in the narrative portion of the application."

Developing effective scoring rubrics requires careful consideration of both federal requirements and state needs. When asked to identify weaknesses in their approval

process, four state directors specifically noted the necessity of developing or improving such review tools. As described in the following section on Promising Practices, the most successful rubrics appear to be ones that award points in different categories based on the quality of evidence provided. Approval is then determined objectively on the basis of whether a provider's total score meets a pre-established criterion.

Rubrics or formal rating systems help to: (1) define criteria for provider approval and varied levels of provider effectiveness on each (e.g., "Sufficient," "Above Standards," etc.), (2) provide a systematic and documented framework for achieving reliable and valid evaluations of applicants, (3) communicate clear expectations to providers regarding the types and quality of services and organization components the state desires, and (4) establish a basis for communicating clear feedback to providers about the strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement in their application.

Some components of the application are likely to be more meaningful than others in judging provider effectiveness. In assigning points, Virginia, for example, differentially weights different domains based on judged importance (e.g., student achievement is highest). To be approved, providers must earn a total of 80 out of 105 possible points (including bonuses). Separate point totals and evaluations are made for three grade-level categories (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12) in two subjects (mathematics and reading). Thus, 6 evaluations are made in total.

Approval Status

Although the majority of states grant one approval status to providers, a small percentage (14%) assign providers to varied levels of approval status, such as:

- ✍ "New and Emerging" vs. "Fully Approved";
- ✍ "Conditional" vs. "Full";
- ✍ "1 Year Probation" vs. "Approved";
- ✍ "Approved" vs. "Conditional Approval" vs. "Non-Approved"; and
- ✍ "Returning" vs. "New/Emerging."

There appear to be several rationales for establishing multiple approval levels. One is that a provider that shows good potential to be effective may just miss the approval cut-off score by a few points. Awarding a conditional or probationary status allows that provider an opportunity to demonstrate success (perhaps in a more restricted or carefully monitored context) and then apply for full status the following year. States have also awarded "New and Emerging" status to less-established providers who have strong applications in all areas except evidence of effectiveness. It is assumed that such evidence will be produced based on the services provided during the trial period.

As part of probationary status, states may require providers to develop an "improvement plan" that addresses all evaluation categories falling below standards. States with students with disabilities, LEP students, or students living in remote areas who are eligible for SES may find it beneficial to give probationary approval to providers that can serve these students if the providers fall just below the approval cut-off due to minor

weaknesses in their application. New providers also may demonstrate strong organizational qualities and instructional programs, but still lack the evidence of effectiveness needed for full approval. On the cross-validation survey, the majority of directors were positive about recommending use of probationary status in these instances (56% agree), although a smaller number (21%) disagreed or were undecided (21%).

Kentucky's rubric intentionally differentiates between established and new providers in the category of "Evidence of Effectiveness, Improving Achievement." Established providers must give empirical or statistical evidence of improving student achievement. However, new providers are permitted to describe their methodology and research base as well as anticipated levels of achievement.

States generally design rubric or rating systems to yield a total score, so that final judgments can be made according to objective criteria. Based on the above considerations, these judgments can be either "pass/fail" or multi-level in nature (e.g., 81-100 points = Full Approval; 70-80 = Probationary). Criteria for different status levels can be derived initially (or revised over time) by examining the score distributions and the success of providers that were rated above and below different cutoff points.

Provider Interviews

Given the large number of providers that applied for SES approval in earlier years, conducting individual interviews with each might have created unreasonable time and staffing demands for many states. However, it should now be feasible for many states to conduct interviews of new applicants each year.

According to the state directors and SES staff interviewed, potential advantages of provider interviews are:

- Obtaining firsthand impressions of the professionalism and capacity of the organization;
- Being able to follow-up on application responses by asking open-ended questions about curriculum, pedagogy, selection of tutors, prior success, etc.;
- Establishing personal acquaintance with organization leaders to facilitate future communications;
- Having the opportunity to clarify state and district expectations regarding policies, communications, financial matters, and quality of service; and
- Obtaining additional data to increase the validity of the approval process;

In view of these potential advantages, characteristics of a practical and informative interview process might be:

- Participation by full committees where the applicant pool is small; or by rotating smaller interview teams for larger numbers of applicants;
- Conducting interviews by phone or teleconferencing to save time and travel expense for providers (although meeting a provider in person would normally be preferable); and

✍ Restriction of interviewing to only providers with complete applications (i.e., that pass initial screening).

Appeal Process

When a state does not approve a provider's application, almost one-third (31%) of the survey respondents reported some type of allowance for that provider to "appeal" the state's decision. These processes range from permitting a provider to insert missing information in the application form to the approval committee formally reconsidering their original decision.

Reapplication and Annual Review

The final two Promising Practices for approval decisions offer benefits for improving provider services over time. The first of these is for providers to reapply for approval every few years. A reapplication requirement should motivate providers to keep up with new district and state policies for implementing SES, and through the process of preparing updated applications, to re-examine their operations and procedures. Notably, on the cross-validation survey, 92% of the respondents concurred that requiring providers to reapply for approval every few years was a necessary component of quality control.

The final suggested Promising Practice was to coordinate and align the approval of providers with their monitoring and evaluation. By coordinating these processes, states further reinforce their usage of a transparent, aligned, and integrated system rather than imposing what might appear as isolated, disconnected requirements. For example, all three processes are directly concerned with satisfying customers (parents, students, teachers) through the delivery of quality instruction. However, the state directors also recognize that each process—approval, monitoring, and evaluation—assesses a provider's activity at a different phase and for somewhat different purposes. While the approval process examines a provider's past accomplishments in raising achievement, the monitoring process examines how the instruction appears in practice, and the evaluation process examines actual success in improving test scores.

At the same time, it is important for the approval process to be adaptive to changes in policy or practices over time. Not surprisingly, SES directors voiced strong support on the cross-validation survey (85% agreement) for annually reviewing their states' requests for applications and associated approval requirements to ensure currency and accuracy. Discussions with selected SES directors provide further insight in this aspect of the approval process. In New Mexico for example, the application and subsequent scoring rubric are revised each year, based on feedback from evaluators. Therefore, each potential provider, whether new or recurring, is required to submit a new application based on the revised criteria.

Based on the findings, the following Promising Practices are suggested for states to consider for improving their reviews of provider applications. In the cross-validation study,

five of the six practices listed received strong support from the respondents, ranging from 74% agreement (for "convening a mandatory meeting") to 98% agreement (for "providing formal training to all review committee members" and for "utilizing a formal rubric or rating system"). Somewhat weaker but still mostly positive reactions were expressed for "conducting provider interviews in-person or by phone" (46% agreed).

Promising Practices: Reviewing Applications and Making Approval Decisions

To improve their application review process, states can:

- Form application review committees representing diverse backgrounds and roles (e.g. community members, teachers, principals, and district staff);
- Provide formal training to all review committee members prior to their reading applications;
- Use experienced staff or consultants to increase accuracy and consistency in reviewing more technical or specialized evidence such as evidence of effectiveness or financial soundness;
- Utilize a formal rubric or rating system to score applications;
- Base approval or non-approval on a defined cut-off score to increase objectivity; and
- Conduct provider interviews in person or by phone, either as part of the initial review process or for applications approved by the review committee(s).

To improve the interpretation of application results and the approval decision process, states can:

- Establish a probationary status for providers that demonstrate potential to serve high-need districts or schools, but lack sufficient evidence of effectiveness;
- Require providers to reapply for approval every few years; and
- Coordinate the approval process with monitoring and evaluation, so that the three processes support one another and are aligned.

See Appendix for Tables 3-5 which present excerpts from rubrics from the states of Kentucky, New Mexico, and Utah. Note that each awards variable points in selected domains based on the performance level identified by reviewers. The points are added across rubrics to yield a total score.

Conclusions

The states have a strong interest in bringing the highest quality SES to students. A state's process for approving SES providers, therefore, is not a passive one. Approving high-quality providers begins with recruiting entities into the approval process that have the capacity to provide students with academic services designed to improve their achievement on state assessments. The rigor of the approval criteria further contributes to the quality of the successful pool of providers. As states discover ever more efficacious strategies for recruiting and approving SES providers, and as they share these strategies with each other, the quality of services will grow. As organizations charged with bringing successful practices to the attention of state SES directors learn more from their studies of the field, the rate of improvement will be enhanced.

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www.centerii.org

Georgia Department of Education
http://www.doe.k12.ga.us/
See document: Supplemental Educational Services: Request for Applications

Kentucky Department of Education
http://www.kde.state.ky.us/KDE/

Maryland Public Schools
http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE
See section on Supplemental Educational Services
http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/esea/Supplemental+Educational+Services

New Mexico Department of Education
See SES application scoring rubric
http://www.ped.state.nm.us/TitleI/supplementalEducationServices.html

Texas Education Agency – Region XIII
http://www5.esc13.net/
See section on Supplemental Educational Services
http://www5.esc13.net/ses/index.html

United States Department of Education
www.ed.gov
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www.ed.gov/nclb/choice/help/ses/index.html
Quality of Evidence
http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/rigorousevid/guide_pg10.
html#appendix%20b

Utah Department of Education
http://www.usoe.k12.ut.us/

Appendix

Table 2: Example of application question for raising student achievement from the Florida Department of Education's "Guidance for Completing the Application to Become a SES Provider (2008-2009)"

5.1.1 (0-5 possible points) Describe specific student achievement data to document evidence that the applicant's company or organization had a positive impact on increasing student achievement toward meeting state achievement standards. Include quantitative data that documents student learning gains.

Guidance:

- Response should be specific to the applicant's company or organization

- Current approved providers should describe success with students including student performance data. New applicants may include information on success of program in other states, in the classroom, or other forum

- Provide data to support organization's success in increasing student achievement (Including data with success for low-achieving students and students from low-income families would enhance this response)

- Include evidence to address subject areas in program (reading/language arts, mathematics, or both); grade levels and special populations

Examples:

- In a study conducted by the University of ABC in 2004, students participating in the XYZ Tutoring Program showed an average gain of 70% in reading and a 65% gain in mathematics as compared on a pre- and post-test.

- In the six school districts in Florida in which we provide services, 90% of the 500 students participating in the XYZ Tutoring Program showed an average learning gain of 25% on the SAT 10 in reading and an average learning gain of 32% in mathematics in 2006.

Resources:

- USDE: Quality of Evidence http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/rigorousevid/guide_pg10.html#appendix%20b

Table 3: Excerpt from Kentucky's Supplemental Educational Services Scoring Rubric for School Year 2008-2009.

III. Connection to Kentucky State Academic Standards and Local District Instructional Programs (25 POINTS)			
1. Describe your program's connection to reading/language arts and mathematics standards as outlined in the Kentucky Core Content 4.1. Provide examples of specific standards your program addresses. (15 points)			
STRONG (11-15 pts.)	**MODERATE (6-10 pts.)**	**LIMITED (1-5 pts.)**	**NOT PROVIDED (0 pts.)**
Connection to standards is strong, extremely clear, and extensively described; numerous standards are cited	Connection to standards is somewhat clear but description is not extensive; some specific standards are cited.	Connection to standards is partial or vague; description is limited; no specific standards are cited.	No connection to standards is provided.
2. Describe your program's connection with the instructional program(s) of the district(s) in which you intend to operate. a) cite the specific district program(s) to which your program connects, and b) describe how your organization plans to build relationships with district staff including central office staff, principals, and teachers (10 points)			
STRONG (11-15 pts.)	**MODERATE (6-10 pts.)**	**LIMITED (1-5 pts.)**	**NOT PROVIDED (0 pts.)**
Connection to district program(s) is strong, extremely clear; specific programs are cited and clear connections are established; plans to build relationships are extensive and seem likely to succeed.	Connection to district program(s) is somewhat clear; some specific programs are cited and moderate connections are established; plans to build relationships are generally clear and seem probable to succeed.	Connection to district program(s) is somewhat clear; some specific programs are cited and moderate connections are established; plans to build relationships are generally clear and seem probable to succeed.	No explanation is provided.

Note: For complete rubric see http://www.kde.state.ky.us/KDE/Administrative+Resources/Federal+Programs+and+Instructional+Equity/Title+Programs/SES+Downloads+Page.htm

Table 4: Excerpt from New Mexico's Supplemental Educational Services Application Evaluation Process and Scoring Rubric

Section III-Service Summary				
ITEM	MISSING OR POOR 0-29 POINTS	FAIR TO GOOD 30-39 POINTS	EXCELLENT 40-50 POINTS	COMMENTS
Section III **Brief Description of Program** Provide a brief description of your program that families may use in their initial search for providers.	All required information is not included or is partially included; and/ or information is too unspecific or irrelevant.	All required information is included but lacks some specificity or relevance.	All required information is included, accurate, and pertinent.	
50 points				
ITEM	MISSING OR POOR 0-29 POINTS	FAIR TO GOOD 30-39 POINTS	EXCELLENT 40-50 POINTS	COMMENTS
Section III **Narrative Description of Program** Provide a complete and detailed narrative description of your program that can be used to inform and provide information to districts and schools about your services.	All required information is not included or is partially included; and/ or information is too unspecific or irrelevant.	All required information is included but lacks some specificity or relevance.	All required information is included, accurate, and pertinent.	
50 points				

Note: For complete rubric see http://www.ped.state.nm.us/Title1/supplementalEducationServices.htm

Table 5: Excerpt from Utah's Supplemental Educational Services Rubric

Element IV. Evaluation/Monitoring		20 points
• Describe how the program will be monitored for effectiveness. • Describe the plan for designing Individual Student Plans and which sources of data will be used as to set baselines • Delineate how the progress of students receiving supplemental educational services will be measured, which assessments will be used, and how the assessment will be linked to instructional practices. • Describe how and when the school and parents will be notified of the student's progress, in their native language if necessary.		
Level I **0-6 points**	**Level II** **7-13 points**	**Level III** **14-20 points**
• Does not have an adequate plan for evaluating the success of the program. • Does not have a plan for design of Individual Student Plans • Method for measuring progress of each student receiving assistance is unclear or inadequate, and there is no mention of the link to instructional goals. • Does not adequately explain how parents and schools will be informed of a student's progress.	• Program evaluation is explained, but it occurs only at end of services. • Design for Individual Student Plans only uses provider measurement instrument as baseline. • Explains how student progress will be measured using a clearly described assessment instrument, and there is a general statement of the link to instructional goals. • Explains how parents and schools will be informed of a student's progress, but it is not on a regularly scheduled or frequent basis.	• There is a detailed plan for continuous monitoring of the program's effectiveness. • The design for Individual Student Plans uses multiple sources for baseline, including Utah CRT scores and provider measurement instrument. • Explains how student progress will be measured using a variety of clearly described assessment tools, and the link to instructional goals is outlined clearly. • Describes plan to thoroughly inform parents and schools of the student's progress on a frequent, regularly scheduled basis. • There is a plan for informing those parents who do not have convenient access to a computer of their student's progress.
Total points for element_____/20		
Comments:		

Note: For complete rubric see http://www.schools.utah.gov/Title1/supplemntal.htm

Part II
Monitoring Process

Introduction

Part II: Monitoring Process is organized into two sections that examine the states' processes for monitoring SES providers: (a) a description of federal requirements and expectations for monitoring providers under the law and regulations, and (b) a status report of states' activities, accomplishments, and suggestions based on a recent national survey conducted by the authors. An appendix is included to provide samples of state documents cited in the status report.

Included in the status report is an examination of Promising Practices based on the results of a survey of state SES directors, a follow-up (cross validation) survey, site-visit and telephone interviews with state directors, and the authors' experiences as SES evaluators and consultants over the past several years.

Monitoring providers is critical for increasing accountability and quality control of SES. Providers are *approved* on the basis of a demonstrated record of effectiveness (see Part I in this series). Monitoring by the state determines the degree to which indicators of effective implementation are exhibited in practice. As a result, it supports the dual purposes of giving the state measures of the provider's implementation quality and offering feedback to the provider to guide improvement efforts.

The Promising Practices reviewed in this practice guide are intended to work collectively in increasing the validity and efficiency of states' monitoring process by encouraging states to:

1. Develop and implement a systematic monitoring process.
2. Design rubrics, checklists, and/or rating forms to increase the consistency of accuracy of monitoring.

3. Combine on-site visits with desk monitoring so that firsthand impressions of providers and their instructional methods and staff can be obtained.

4. Involve districts in monitoring and integrating their methods and findings with state efforts.

5. Provide feedback to providers to guide the improvement of their operations and services.

6. Facilitate networking between states to share information, tools, and strategies for monitoring providers and other SES requirements.

The Center on Innovation & Improvement (CII) maintains a periodically updated database of information about each state's SES practices, including links to key documents, at www.centerii.org. Also included at this site is a separate database of research, reports, and tools on topics including SES. The CII website also includes a directory of the 16 regional comprehensive centers and five national content centers funded through the U.S. Department of Education's Comprehensive Centers program. The regional comprehensive centers provide technical assistance on SES and other topics to state educational agencies (states), and CII and other national content centers assist the regional centers in their work with states.

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Section A: Federal Requirements and Expectations

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The monitoring of providers naturally begins with the requirements established by Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), and related regulations and guidance. To establish a framework for states' activities, we offer a brief summary of the guidelines and requirements established by NCLB and the U.S. Department of Education (Department). For more detailed information and guidance on SES, please visit the Department's website (see Websites Cited).[1]

Under NCLB, responsibility for monitoring SES providers is assigned to the state and should be an extension of the initial criteria the state establishes during the provider approval process. Monitoring requirements are addressed in NCLB (Title I, Section 1116(e)(4)(D)), which requires states to develop, implement, and publicly report on standards and techniques for monitoring the quality of services offered by approved providers.

Further elaboration on the role of the state in monitoring providers has been provided through the U.S. Department of Education's NCLB Supplemental Educational Services Non-Regulatory Guidance (see section D). The complete document is available at the U.S. Department of Education's website (see Websites Cited).

States have a responsibility to ensure that providers are delivering services that are of high quality and improve academic achievement. States are required to monitor

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[1] The U.S. Department of Education released new regulations regarding SES in October 2008, after the present national survey had been completed. While the survey results do not contradict new regulations, the survey also did not include questions that might probe practices relative to the new regulations.

providers with regard to the *quality, performance, and effectiveness of the services*. In considering these responsibilities, it is important to distinguish between *monitoring* and *evaluation* (the focus of Part III: Evaluation Process). A state *monitors* a provider to assess how effectively the provider is *implementing* its program. In monitoring, a state should consider a provider's level of compliance with state and NCLB requirements, the fidelity between actual and promised program attributes (e.g., with regard to group size, tutor qualifications, and tutoring methods), and the perceived quality of the instruction provided. In this manner, a state uses the monitoring process to judge whether a provider is delivering what was promised and, if not, what refinements are needed to bring performance to an acceptable level. The SES *evaluation* process, in contrast, requires a state to focus on *provider effectiveness* by examining outcomes that occur as a result of (rather than during) program implementation. The most critical outcome for a state to consider is student achievement, but also relevant is assessing the degree of customer satisfaction with program quality by parents, teachers, and principals. Monitoring providers therefore serves a *formative* function (i.e., how well is the provider doing and what weaknesses need to be corrected?), whereas evaluating providers serves a *summative* function (i.e., how well did the provider perform?).

The monitoring and evaluation processes, though distinct in their purposes and procedures, are also complementary. Both provide information and data for judging and improving program quality. As described in Part III on evaluating providers, several states incorporate monitoring data into their rubrics for rating overall provider effectiveness.

It is recommended that monitoring occur regularly and reflect the ultimate goal of understanding the contribution of each provider to raising student achievement. The monitoring process may require the state to collect data on an annual or periodic basis. Federal law and regulations require that states' monitoring include, at a minimum, examination of evidence that a provider's instructional program:

- ✍ Is consistent with the instruction provided and the content used by the district and state;
- ✍ Addresses students' individual needs as described in students' SES plans;
- ✍ Has contributed to increasing students' academic proficiency[2]; and
- ✍ Is aligned with the state's academic content and student academic achievement standards.

Additionally, the state must consider, if available, parent feedback and evaluation results demonstrating that the provider's instructional program has improved student achievement.

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[2] Information on how states can determine whether a provider has contributed to increasing students' academic proficiency is discussed in Part III on evaluation.

States may also find it useful to collect the following information during the monitoring process:

- ✐   Academic records;
- ✐   Fidelity of provider's program with the approved program design;
- ✐   Student enrollment and daily attendance in a provider's program; and
- ✐   Regularity of submissions of students' progress reports to teachers and parents.

Although a state may request assistance from school districts in gathering information for monitoring quality, it is ultimately the responsibility of the state to function as the monitor of SES providers.

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Section B: State Activities, Accomplishments, and Suggestions

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Survey Methodology

In 2008, the Center on Innovation & Improvement conducted a survey (Harmon, Ross, Redding, & Wong) of the SES directors in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The survey results included descriptions from each state of its methods for monitoring providers and its experiences with the process. Promising Practices were identified based on the survey responses, site visit interviews with states, forums, meetings, and prior research.

To obtain field validation of the Promising Practices selected by the authors of this guide, a "cross validation" survey was administered to the state SES directors, asking them to indicate their level of agreement (on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) with each of 20 potential Promising Practices that were listed. In reporting directors' rating of Promising Practices on the cross-validation survey, the authors combined the percentages of those responding "agree" and "strongly agree" to derive an overall agreement rate. Also, two open-ended questions were included on which respondents were asked to (a) describe successful aspects of their monitoring process and (b) technical assistance measures in place to help providers prepare for monitoring. Half (50%) of the 52 directors contacted (26 respondents) completed the online cross-validation survey. Phone interviews with selected SES directors were conducted in November 2008. Overall, the respondents strongly corroborated the suggested practices presented on the survey. Accordingly, the Promising Practices highlighted in boxes and described below received sufficient validation to be suggested for consideration by states.

Survey Results and Promising Practices

The results from the study of state monitoring practices are organized by categories of recommended state activity for monitoring SES providers. For each category of activity, we summarize the survey responses from the state SES directors and present Promising Practice suggestions supported by the two surveys (original and cross-validation), follow-up interviews, and site visits.

State Activity 1: Administering a Systematic Monitoring Process

The monitoring processes described by state directors differ widely in scope, formality, and intensity. A simple classification scheme includes three generic modes of monitoring: (a) On-Site Visitation, (b) Desk Monitoring, and (c) Supplementary (district or provider) Self-Monitoring. All states use some form of desk monitoring, while a smaller number combine it with on-site visitations, supplementary (usually district) monitoring, or both. These three modes of monitoring are described in detail below, but a separate consideration for a high-quality monitoring process is whether the modes employed and the procedures utilized are coherently integrated into a systematic process.

Nearly all of the state SES directors indicated that they have a monitoring system that they use either regularly (60%), or intermittently or informally (25%). Still, according to the survey responses, 15% of the states have no type of monitoring system in place other than limited desk reviews. In fact, when asked on the survey to recommend ways that SES monitoring could be improved, the most frequent response (made by 13 states) called for adding more staff, time, and funding to support their monitoring activities. Encouragingly, the survey results suggest that the directors recognize the importance of monitoring as a component of their SES program. When asked which monitoring practices have been most beneficial, 11 states noted the importance of having *clear and consistent monitoring processes and criteria*. As a consequence, providers know what to expect and can work toward achieving higher standards. The majority of states use tools such as standard forms, clear and publicly available criteria, and informative reporting to allow providers to prepare for monitoring and make the results of monitoring transparent and meaningful. For example, one state director indicated that the SES staff has developed a numeric scoring system (which assigns points according to the quality of service or compliance demonstrated in different categories). The director added that the point system "has been successful at helping providers understand why they have been given the ratings they are given." Another said, "The rubric, which provides all components that will be monitored/reviewed, allows providers to prepare for the visit and make the best use of time." In subsequent sections of this report, we will present examples of monitoring tools found to be successful by different states.

Improving SES Quality

Survey Results and Promising Practices

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Characteristics of State Monitoring Processes

The characteristics of state monitoring systems have commonalities and differences across states, but survey respondents confirmed the following four aspects of SES monitoring as essential:

1. **Focus of the Monitoring**

   - *Provider compliance.* 91% of state directors agree that the main focus of nearly all monitoring processes is provider compliance with SES rules and regulations.

   - *Quality of services.* 68% of state directors report that their state monitoring activities also examine by desk review and/or on-site observations the quality of the instruction by individual providers.

   - *District implementation.* 84% of state directors reported that their states frequently monitor district implementation of SES, as well as providers' implementation.

2. **Structure of the Monitoring Process**

   - *Formal procedures.* 74% of state directors report using "formal" monitoring procedures that include set objectives, trained observers, and a rubric or rating system.

   - *Monitoring results included in evaluation.* 38% of state directors report that their states formally include monitoring results in their evaluation of SES providers, while another (40%) report that they do so informally.[3]

3. **Feedback to Providers**

   - *Formal written reports.* 55% of state directors report that they issue a formal written report (often with clear directives for improvements) to providers following monitoring.

4. **Frequency of Monitoring**

   - *Each provider, each year.* 45% of state directors report that their state monitors all providers in a given year, whereas 75% monitor at least half of their providers yearly.

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[3] Part III provides a sample rubric and description of how Maryland formally uses monitoring results in evaluating providers. Specifically, the ratings assigned to providers on the basis of monitoring reviews count toward their total evaluation score.

State Description of its Monitoring Process for Public Viewing

Based on the authors' interviews with state SES directors and review of monitoring plans from multiple states, the following components are recommended for inclusion in states' descriptions of monitoring processes that are publicly available (posted on a website, for example):

✍ **Objectives of the monitoring**. What are the desired outcomes? Who are the intended audiences for results? How does monitoring address the requirements and goals of NCLB in general and SES in particular?

✍ **Focus of the monitoring**. Does the focus include compliance with rules and regulations, an assessment of the quality of tutoring services, and student or parent reactions?

✍ **Scope of monitoring**. Does the monitoring include "desk review" of documents and data only? Are site visits involved? If so, how many and how extensive? Are districts assisting states with monitoring, and, if so, is it in addition to or formal part of the state's process?

✍ **Personnel/staffing**. Who conducts the monitoring? Is the amount of staff adequate to support monitoring needs? What type of training or preparation is required?

✍ **Provider selection**. Are all or some providers to be monitored in a given year? If only some, how are they selected? Are providers monitored in all the locations they serve in the state or only a portion?

✍ **Provider communications**. What is communicated to providers about expectations and participation? If site visits are planned, are they unannounced or prearranged?

✍ **Instrumentation and data collection**. What instruments are used to collect data? How are data recorded and maintained?

✍ **Representation/Communication of outcomes**. How are the monitoring outcomes analyzed and represented? Is a quantitative score produced using a rubric, checklist, or rating system? Or, is an overall (holistic) qualitative judgment made based on subjective synthesis of impressions (e.g., "Below Standards," "Satisfactory," or "Above Standards")?

✍ **Treatment of results**. Are the monitoring results used for formative evaluation only (to help providers improve)? Are they also used for summative evaluation in judging provider effectiveness and continuing approval status? What feedback is given to providers following the visit?

The survey results confirm that, all states engage in some type of monitoring, less than two-thirds conduct monitoring regularly using a systematic process. By using a formal process that includes the features listed below (endorsed by 100% of respondents in cross-validation survey), the reliability and quality of the findings will be improved.

> ### Promising Practices: Administering a Systematic Monitoring Process
>
> The consistency, reliability, and utility of monitoring can be enhanced by states' design of a systematic and formal process that:
>
> - **Is clearly articulated and documented for public viewing;**
> - **Is comprehensive by addressing all major SES compliance and service components (e.g., is aligned with provider approval and evaluation criteria);**
> - **Includes clear specification of objectives, procedures, tools (e.g., rubrics or checklists), outcomes, and feedback modes;**
> - **Is supported by adequate resources and staff; and**
> - **Includes a formal training regimen for on-site monitors.**

State Activity 2: Visiting Sites to Monitor SES Providers

On-site monitoring is viewed quite favorably by the states. When asked to recommend improvements to their monitoring processes, four directors explicitly expressed a desire to implement on-site visits or increase their frequency. On another open-ended question, seven directors identified on-site visits as the *most successful* component of their monitoring system. On this theme, one director wrote, "Going on site for EACH provider EVERY year is extremely successful at allowing us to see what the tutoring really looks like in practice." The general view of most states is that the visits provide both highly valuable feedback to both the state and the provider. As we will discuss in later sections, states use the data collected on-site to give feedback to providers, assess whether a provider's implementation of its program is satisfactory, and, where a state identifies deficiencies, suggest or require improvements. Maryland, as noted, directly incorporates monitoring results, along with student achievement and customer satisfaction outcomes, in evaluating the overall effectiveness of each provider.

Despite the appeal of such visits, only about one-third (33%) of the states reported that they conduct them routinely. The primary reason relates to resources. Not surprisingly, when asked to identify barriers to effective monitoring, the state directors most frequently (15 states) noted limited time, resources, or staff. Reinforcing this concern, one director wrote that "it is difficult and time consuming to coordinate and administer the monitoring, especially site visits." A second director lamented that they don't have "enough staff to monitor each provider in the state on an annual basis." Another added that limited resources precluded observing the same provider in multiple districts, even though the quality of services in each context was anticipated to vary.

Interviews with state personnel and directors who have conducted on-site monitoring reflect several important benefits:

- ✍ Services can be observed in action as they typically occur;

- ✍ Interviews of key participants (tutors, students, parents) can be conducted to determine experiences and impressions;

- ✍ Accountability for providers is increased;

- ✍ Useful formative (improvement) feedback for providers can be obtained and communicated in a timely manner (at or shortly after the visit); and

- ✍ A more valid, comprehensive examination of program quality will typically result.

One important goal of onsite monitoring is obtaining firsthand impressions of the instructional strategies and curriculum. As part of the visits, the monitors may also have the opportunity to (a) review documents and other evidence relevant to the implementation of services (see description below) and (b) interview students and tutors. Obstacles to onsite monitoring include the logistical demands and costs associated with planning, staff time, and travel from the state office to the provider sites. Depending on available personnel and resources, some states are much better able to implement onsite monitoring than are others.

A summary of practices used across states conducting on-site visits follows in the next section.

Summary of State On-Site Visit Practices

Scheduling the Visit

1. Most states pre-plan their monitoring visits, but a few also make at least some visits completely unannounced or random within a set time window (noting, e.g., "You will be visited at some time within the next two weeks."). Pre-planning visits helps a state to ensure that the tutoring sessions will actually take place at a designated time and location, but has the disadvantage of giving providers the opportunity to showcase their most effective tutors and lessons.

2. Some states share written criteria (ratings, rubrics, checklists) with providers prior to the visit.

3. Some states require that providers make certain documentation or evidence available during the visit. Such documents may include sample tutoring plans, assessment data, participation and attendance records, employee names and qualifications, etc.

4. Depending on state capacity and preferred strategy, yearly monitoring may include all providers in the state, a random subgroup, or a subgroup targeted on the basis of compliance problems, low performance, or other issues.

5. States reported that they spend 30 minutes to 4 hours per visit.

Location of the Visit

1. Most often, monitoring visits take place at school or community sites (and, on occasion, at the providers' own facilities).

2. Meetings with in-home and online providers may be arranged at mutually agreeable neighborhood sites to review curricula and lesson plans, and interview tutors.

3. With parent permission, homes may be visited to observe online or in-home sessions.

4. Online tutorials also may be accessed and reviewed off-site. Specifically, the monitor accesses the program and participates as a passive viewer of the instructional activity.

Observers

1. Visitation teams are most likely to consist of one or two state employees, often including the state SES coordinator. District SES coordinators or staff sometimes join the team, although most commonly, district monitoring takes place independently of state visits (see "Supplementary Monitoring" below). As one state director reported, an especially valuable element of the team approach is comparing notes to verify what is observed. The result is greater accuracy and depth for providing feedback and defending judgments in the event that a provider contests the monitoring report.

2. In states where staffing is limited or providers fairly abundant, one individual (e.g., a program consultant, SES coordinator, or state department staff member) is likely to conduct the on-site visit. But where visits take place in the home, several state directors strongly recommended sending two monitors for safety reasons.

Onsite Monitoring Activities

1. All or part of a session is observed. During interviews or meetings, state directors and SES personnel described examining such qualities as clarity of instruction, time on task, tutor skills and expertise, fidelity of lessons to their descriptions and/or state standards, age appropriateness of the lesson for the student, and consistency of the student-to-instructor ratio to that described in the application.

2. Tutors and students may be interviewed to obtain their perspectives on the instructional process and outcomes.

3. Depending on context (e.g., school or home visit), the visitation may include interviews with available parents, teachers, site coordinators, or school district coordinators, and a review of documents related to service implementation and compliance with state and NCLB requirements.

Announced and Unannounced Visits

In arranging monitoring visits, states need to decide whether to make them pre-scheduled or unannounced. Unannounced visits were viewed as a Promising Practice by an overwhelming majority (89%) of the respondents on the cross-validation survey. By showing up at a random time, the monitors gain the advantage of observing representative, rather than showcased, tutoring services. On the other hand, they simultaneously run the risk of traveling to a site only to find that the session was cancelled. A compromise approach used by one state is to notify the provider that a visit will be conducted within a prescribed time interval (e.g., 3 weeks or 1 month), and to request: (a) a listing of all tutoring sessions and their locations within that period, and (b) immediate notification of any changes that occur in the schedule. Providers that fail to comply with either requirement are penalized in their monitoring report.

Rubrics, Checklists, and Rating Forms

To increase the potential for visits to be more focused, reliable, and informative, a clear Promising Practice is for monitors to use a well-designed rubric, checklist, or rating form to record and evaluate their findings. Eighty-nine percent of the respondents to the cross-validation survey concurred. Not only do such structured monitoring tools increase the reliability of assessments, they also save time by defining specifically what states should examine. Clearly, greater efficiency and time savings are of particularly important value when state resources for implementing SES are limited. Examples from different states are highlighted below.[4]

Indiana. In addition to reviewing documentation describing the instructional program and compliance with NCLB policies for SES, Indiana uses a rubric consisting of the following *observation* components (see Websites Cited for link):

  ✍ Lesson matches description in provider application;

  ✍ Instruction is clear;

  ✍ Time on task is appropriate;

  ✍ Instructor is appropriately knowledgeable; and

  ✍ Student-to-instructor ratio matches that reported in application.

The monitors then rate the above components on a 4-point performance scale: *Below Standard, Approaching Standard, Meeting Standard*, or *Exceeding Standard*.

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[4] Note from the examples that the tools used by states vary both in areas of focus and assessment modes. While desired formats and rubric properties may be largely a subjective decision based on state preferences, states are strongly encouraged to match the compliance areas assessed as closely as possible to the criteria used for *approving* providers (see Part I). As a result, greater consistency is achieved between the approval process, which focuses on potential program quality, and the monitoring process, which focuses on observed program quality.

Wisconsin. Wisconsin focuses on six compliance areas:

- ✍ Progress Reports and Parent Communication;
- ✍ Curriculum and Instructional Alignments with District/State Standards;
- ✍ Curriculum and Instruction;
- ✍ Compliance with Health, Safety, and Civil Rights Laws;
- ✍ District Agreements; and
- ✍ Online Provider Requirements.

The Wisconsin monitoring team uses a detailed checklist (see Table 1 in Appendix and also link in Websites Cited) to indicate whether or not specific evidence or events are observed during the visit. Note from the table that the checklist is divided into "Required evidence" and "Possible evidence." Inclusion of the latter is encouraged to provide a more complete picture of instructional strategies and organizational strengths.

North Dakota. North Dakota also uses compliance checklists, including checklists of documents to provide, as part of a self-monitoring process for SES providers. (See Table 2 in Appendix and link in Websites Cited). The general categories of program quality addressed include Evidence of Effectiveness, Evidence of Links between Research and Program Design, Connection to State Academic Standards and District(s) Instructional Program(s), Monitoring Student Progress, Communication with Schools and Districts, and Selection and Training of Site Visitors.

Typically, state department staff who are directly involved with SES participate in the monitoring visits. We suggest as a Promising Practice (and 73% of the cross-validation survey respondents agree) using more than one observer both to increase capacity to collect data and to help ensure the reliability of findings. In making home visits, increased safety is another advantage of having multiple observers. For reliability purposes, it is essential that all observers receive training on the observation protocol (e.g., what to look for, how to review, evaluate, and record). The training should specify expected procedures for (a) communicating with the provider before, during, and after the visit; (b) collecting data via interviews, observation, and document review; and (c) completing the rubric or rating form.

Selection of Providers and Sites to Visit

For a monitoring system to be unbiased and useful to all providers, it should be fully inclusive rather than selective as to which providers are monitored. Accordingly, over four-fifths (81%) of the respondents to the cross-validation survey corroborated "visiting all providers over time" as a Promising Practice. However, as we noted earlier, it may not be feasible for some states to observe all providers in a given year. In that case, one option is to select a random subset, with a different subset selected in future years, until all providers have been monitored. Another option is to target providers identified as having the most serious performance or compliance problems.

The selection of providers for on-site visits should include a full or proportional representation of those who tutor online and at student homes. Observations of online providers generally take place in three ways:

- ✍ The state monitor simulates a session by accessing an online lesson and participating in it as a student would. In this situation, no student is present.

- ✍ The state monitor logs onto an actual online session and participates as a passive viewer while a student is actively participating remotely.

- ✍ The state monitor attends and watches an actual online session that one or more students are receiving at school, a community site, or a home.

For monitoring online or conventional instruction at a student's home, the observers should obtain a list of participating SES students for each provider and randomly select parents to contact. Arrangements can then be made with one or more parents who are willing to host visitors. An alternative procedure, which reduces some burden on state personnel, is to require providers to arrange the home visits. The trade-off, however, is providers' natural bias toward selecting positive examples.

Preparation for the Visit

Finally, from the surveys and interviews, there was strong consensus (i.e., 85% agreement by cross-validation sample) that on-site monitoring is enhanced by knowing in advance what to look for. Specifically, a suggested Promising Practice is to preview providers' descriptions of sample lessons and curricula prior to conducting observations. Consequently, a monitor can form a more knowledgeable impression of the fidelity of the instructional approach to what the provider promised in its application.

Based on the survey and interview responses, several potential Promising Practices for conducting on-site visits are suggested below. The first practice listed, which was corroborated by 81% of the respondents on the cross-validation survey, acknowledges the value of conducting on-site monitoring visits in general. However, depending on the number of active providers and available resources for travel and staffing, states may not be able to visit *all* providers in a given year.

> ### Promising Practices: On-Site Monitoring
>
> To increase the value and richness of monitoring, states might consider:
>
> - **Conducting on-site visits of at least some providers each year;**
> - **Making some on-site visits unannounced to increase the likelihood of observing typical practices;**
> - **Developing rubrics, checklists, and/or rating forms (e.g., 1 to 4-point scale of quality) to systematize the review process;**
> - **Including at least two trained observers on each visitation team;**
> - **Ensuring that all providers are visited over time, even those who provide services online or at students' homes; and**
> - **Obtaining descriptions of samples of lessons prior to on-site visits to provide an expectation of what a session should look like.**

State Activity 3: Conducting Desk Monitoring

Survey responses confirmed that most states use desk monitoring of some type either as the sole monitoring process or in conjunction with on-site visitations. Variations range from a simple review of providers' SES participation and attendance rates to comprehensive reviews of providers' curricula, implementation activities, and evidence of student achievement gains. Examples of the types of data collected are:

- End-of-year reports from providers on the demographics of students served, instructional models used, group size, tutor qualifications, and provider pre-test/post-test results;

- Quarterly reports from providers on students served, funding received, evidence of academic progress, and successes and challenges;

- Online tracking of implementation including student enrollment and attendance data (via a data management system);

- Provider self-evaluation and submission of improvement plans for findings of non-compliance;

- Complaints submitted to the state or districts regarding provider compliance; and

- Comparison of a provider's enrollment data to the district's enrollment data to ensure accuracy.

Whether or not a state can conduct on-site visitations, desk monitoring is essential to document provider activities with regard to number of students served, attendance rates, conformity of services with proposed services, compliance issues, academic

progress of students, and other relevant information. In essence, desk monitoring not only provides the data necessary to characterize the nature and volume of services, but also creates a portfolio on each provider. Such information has obvious relevance to decisions involving improvements in the services of a provider and renewal of provider approval.

Clear Specification of Evidence Required

The more providers know about a state's expectations, the easier it will be to work toward demonstrating high performance. A comprehensive and valid desk monitoring process can be created by listing and defining all the data and information needed from providers to address federal and state policies as well as state and school district interests. An example is the process used by Arkansas (see Table 3 in Appendix), which requires providers to submit documentation on a given set of topics and, for each topic, defines the authorizing policy (e.g., the NCLB legal reference), the provider requirement (e.g., "the provider regularly measures students' progress"), and the documentation needed (e.g., name of pre-test and post-test used) as evidence.

With clearly specified requirements for submission of evidence, a desk monitor is better able to determine whether a provider meets or does not meet state expectations for a given topic or compliance area. Similar to Arkansas, Florida uses desk monitoring in combination with on-site observation in its highest-risk districts. (See Websites Cited for a link to the Florida reviewer tool.)
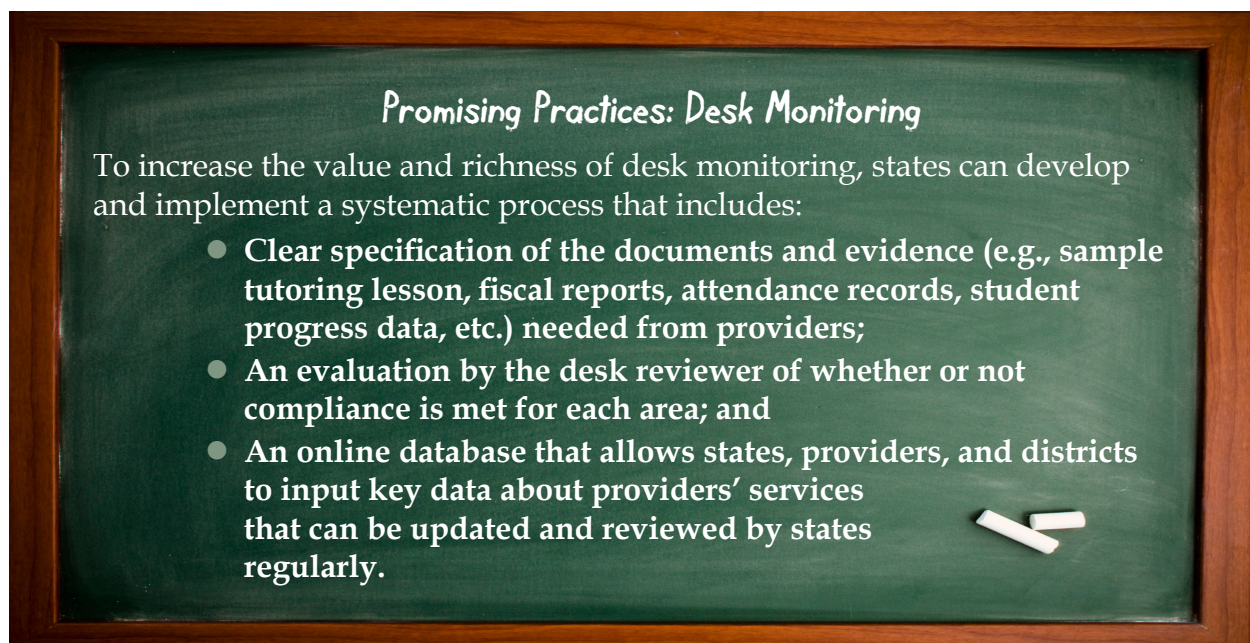
Online Data Collection

The survey results underscore the strong potential benefits of supporting desk monitoring with on-line data collection and management. Specifically, when asked what they'd like to improve about their state's monitoring process, several state directors expressed hope to begin or expand a statewide data management system. One director explained that purchasing and implementing such a system "would allow portions of the monitoring to be completed virtually," thus saving time and resources. Further, when asked to identify their state's most successful monitoring component, five directors described their collection and use of data, particularly in the form of online data tracking and management systems. For example, one director reported that the state's online system helps create "consistency across all stakeholders [e.g., providers, state, and district staff who enter and access data]." Similarly, another wrote that its system allows the state to "monitor monthly the services received by students" and to "gather a great deal of information about the services provided [i.e., duration, group size]."

States that report high satisfaction and success with desk monitoring (e.g., Texas) view the contribution of an effective *online data collection system* as highly significant. Online systems can be internally developed (as in the case of Maryland) or purchased from external vendors (as in the cases of Louisiana and Illinois). The obvious advantages to such a system are time savings and greater accuracy in entering, analyzing, and reporting data. Updates can be computed immediately after data entry to represent the

current status of districts, providers, and students. Providers that are struggling with compliance or performance issues can be quickly identified from on-line monitoring and targeted for follow-up review.

For example, Maryland requires that each provider use a data entry system to document student information, services provided, and academic progress for each student served. Providers must (a) enter contact information, customer satisfaction information, and parent involvement information; (b) list which reading and math assessments (pre- and post-tests) they utilized; and (c) describe any barriers they faced in the delivery of services. For each student served, the provider also records pre- and post-test scores for both the reading and math assessments administered. Finally, providers are required to list up to 10 progress goals, by subject, for each student in order to report progress using the designation "Met" or "Not Met." Data are submitted at the end of each reporting period (December 31, June 30, and September 30), which allows Maryland multiple opportunities to monitor each provider's progress. Consequently, the state SES monitors have easy access to continually updated records that permit review of participation, goals, and progress for the students served by each provider.

Drawing from our study of states' monitoring experiences and outcomes, the Promising Practice suggestions below appear likely to increase the effectiveness of the desk monitoring process. All three practices received strong corroboration (from 89-100% agreement) from state SES directors who responded to the cross-validation survey.

Promising Practices: Desk Monitoring

To increase the value and richness of desk monitoring, states can develop and implement a systematic process that includes:

- **Clear specification of the documents and evidence (e.g., sample tutoring lesson, fiscal reports, attendance records, student progress data, etc.) needed from providers;**
- **An evaluation by the desk reviewer of whether or not compliance is met for each area; and**
- **An online database that allows states, providers, and districts to input key data about providers' services that can be updated and reviewed by states regularly.**

State Activity 4: Gathering Supplemental Information About Providers

Two additional forms of monitoring can provide useful supplementary information to that collected by the state: inclusion of districts in monitoring and provider self-monitoring.

District Inclusion in State Monitoring of SES Providers

In some states, school districts conduct on-site visitations and/or desk monitoring of providers. When asked to identify their most successful monitoring practices, seven state directors described various examples of district involvement. Specific benefits identified included district assistance in monitoring, collaborative processes, and more open lines of communication both within the state and with districts, providers, and families. For example, one director highlighted the "constant communication with district administrators and SES providers on expectations, regulations, and compliance issues," as well as its team approach for monitoring SES in which curriculum specialists from the state participate in the monitoring visits. Another state director stressed the importance of involving the district SES coordinators [in monitoring], because "they are in day-to-day contact with the providers and are very concerned that students succeed." In contrast, when asked to identify *least* successful components of their state monitoring process, two directors described difficulties with districts' participation in monitoring and providing needed information. District involvement, therefore, provides a potential but not guaranteed source of effective monitoring assistance.

Involving district personnel in monitoring SES providers is directly consistent with inviting them to serve with state staff and other participants on approval committees (as described in the separate brief on approving providers). Given that many states voiced concerns about the adequacy of their resources for administering SES programs, it is advantageous to make strategic decisions in assigning and engaging state and district personnel to help build internal capacity and reduce demands on SES staff.

School districts can support state monitoring in several ways. One means is to accompany state monitors on site-visits in supportive (unofficial) roles, thus increasing district knowledge about the provider while increasing the capacity of the state visitation team. About three-fourths of the respondents on the cross-validation survey corroborated this type of assistance as a Promising Practice.

As several state SES directors conveyed in interviews, districts are well-positioned logistically and geographically to observe local provider services and may be able to observe providers more frequently than states can. These district perspectives can be helpful as supplemental data because the services delivered by a provider approved to serve multiple districts may differ widely across locations. Not surprisingly, over 90% of the respondents to the cross-validation survey viewed as a Promising Practice obtaining feedback from districts about providers as background for conducting site visits.

To the extent that district and state monitoring processes use parallel standards and procedures, the data collected from each can be combined to increase the validity of findings. An exemplary system is that used in Maryland. Each school district observes every provider operating in the district at least two times a year. The state observes every provider operating in the state one time yearly at a selected location. Importantly, all observers receive the same training and follow the same monitoring protocol, culminating in completion of a standard checklist and feedback form. Consequently, Maryland obtains site monitoring data from multiple visits and sites for each provider.

In Arizona, district coordinators submit a performance report to the state for each provider who works in their district. The state uses this information to supplement desk monitoring and limited observations of tutoring conducted by the state. Performance reports are narrative in nature and allow the district personnel to document what they experience during the monitoring process. Categories addressed in the monitoring report include:

- ✍ Ease of working with the provider/communication with the provider;
- ✍ Provider's organization;
- ✍ Provider's use of progress reports;
- ✍ Quality of instructional staff;
- ✍ Compliance with state and district rules; and
- ✍ Provider's billing procedures.

Arizona has also used focus groups and initiated an SES advisory council to help increase communication between districts and providers. Technical assistance offerings by the state include workshops to address issues such as attendance and billing. According to the Arizona state SES director, through increased collaboration between district personnel and SES providers, the quality of services has been enhanced, and district implementation of SES has improved through the knowledge gained and personal contacts made with providers.

Provider Self-Monitoring

Obviously, by participating in monitoring, districts stand to gain much useful knowledge about the SES providers serving their students. But what about the providers themselves? Reviewing and responding to feedback, while certainly essential, may not always produce in-depth insights and commitment to change. A possible means of achieving these goals is to engage providers in conducting yearly self-assessments. Florida's process is illustrated in part by the Self–Evaluation Certification shown in Table 4 (see Appendix). It should be noted, however, that the cross-validation survey results yielded weaker support for this suggested Promising Practice (65% agreement) than for the others evaluated.

Florida SES staff described implementing such a system using criteria parallel to those of the state's monitoring process. They believe that this process engages providers in ex-

amining their instructional model and services in a manner consistent with state expectations, thereby creating a common framework for feedback and improvement.

Supplemental monitoring provides data that might otherwise not be obtained by the state processes alone. Promising Practices for supplemental monitoring are presented in the box below.

Promising Practices: Supplemental Monitoring

To increase their own capacity for monitoring and also increase engagement by districts and providers, states can:

- **Encourage district SES staff to join state on-site visiting teams in unofficial roles (e.g., as observers);**
- **Obtain feedback from districts about providers in advance of site visits to help frame the questions; and**
- **Require providers to conduct intermittent self-monitoring and submit a report.**

State Activity 5: Providing Monitoring Feedback

Although monitoring outcomes can be used to judge the quality and compliance of providers, an equally important application is to foster organizational and instructional improvements. Accordingly, the culmination of the monitoring process is communicating meaningful, constructive feedback to providers. Of some concern, almost one-fourth (22%) of the 44 states that regularly or intermittently monitor providers reported on the survey that "no feedback is typically given" to providers. Of those who do give feedback, the most common form (55%) is a written report, often with clear directives for improvements. Fewer states (39%) use informal communications (e.g., a phone call or email) or face-to-face meetings (23%). Other types of feedback include:

- ✍ A formal hearing when issues are more serious;
- ✍ Monitoring checklist results provided at time of the visit; and
- ✍ Feedback from school districts during on-site visits.

In most instances, states combine a written report with an oral review (either optional or required) by phone. It is also common and desirable for the provider to be required to submit a plan for addressing any areas identified as "unsatisfactory" or "out of compliance." Making monitoring reports public on the state website provides further accountability and incentive for providers to strive for excellence in their operation. See Websites Cited for link to Indiana self-monitoring reports.

Clear, Useful, and Timely Feedback

The suggested Promising Practices reinforce several qualities of monitoring feedback that increase its potential effectiveness. First and foremost, the feedback must be clear, useful, and timely. Although it is certainly advisable for providers to receive a full detailed report, summary information such as rubric ratings or overall performance-level classifications are easier to digest and draw immediate attention to areas of strength or weakness. Feedback not delivered in a timely fashion, however, may lose impact if providers rationalize that the data results are "old" and the problems already corrected (when they are not). Further, the greater the delay in providing feedback, the longer the problems will persist and negatively impact students.

Oral Review of Monitoring Report with Provider

Several state directors described the value of reviewing the results orally with providers. But, given the many providers that operate in most states, the limitations are time and resources. Thus, a triage system that directs greater attention to lower-performing providers may be the most practical alternative. For example, phone reviews take much less time than face-to-face meetings, and therefore might be used with all providers (if resources permit) or, if necessary, with those demonstrating moderate deficiencies. Face-to-face meetings could then be reserved for the providers having the most serious weaknesses.

Provider Response to Monitoring Report

The adage that "there are always two sides to a story" seems quite applicable to monitoring reports, given the intrinsic complexity of providers' business operations and services. On occasion, providers may have a legitimate objection to a state's findings based on having additional data or justification for a particular practice or outcome. Whether or not the provider is at fault, inviting the response in the first place sends the right message—that open communications facilitate achieving the states's and provider's mutual goal of offering effective SES to students.

There is clear consensus among the state SES directors that offering feedback to providers is an essential component of the monitoring process. By having such information, providers obtain much greater understanding of how the quality of their business operation and services are perceived as well as directions for improvement. However, despite the recognized importance of feedback, current practices by states vary considerably from giving no feedback at all to holding face-to-face meetings with providers to systematically review results. In the box below and ensuing discussion, we suggest several promising practices for providing feedback.

64

Promising Practices: Providing Monitoring Feedback

To inform providers of how their operation and services are perceived by monitors, states are encouraged to:

- Provide clear, useful, and timely feedback to guide providers' improvement efforts;
- Accompany written reports with oral review (phone or face-to-face), particularly where results indicate problems or deficiencies; and
- Allow providers the opportunity to respond formally to draft feedback reports received from the state.

Conclusions

Monitoring the implementation practices of SES providers requires confidence in the validity of the indicators that are measured, a systematic process for gathering the necessary information in a timely fashion, efficient means of analyzing the data collected, and reporting methods that are useful to both the state and the provider. By pooling data from multiple states, it may be possible to arrive at valid indicators and to develop rubrics and instruments for more effective monitoring.

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For SES: http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/targeted/general/supsrvcs.shtm
See Self-Monitoring Guide for Approved SES Providers
http://www.dpi.state.nd.us/title1/sfn_forms/sfn54253.pdf

U.S. Department of Education

www.ed.gov
For SES: www.ed.gov/nclb/choice/help/ses/index.html
See non-regulatory guidance at:
http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/suppsvcsguid.pdf

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
http://dpi.wi.gov/
For SES: http://dpi.wi.gov/esea/ses_index.html.
See SES Monitoring Handbook
http://dpi.wi.gov/esea/pdf/ses_monitoring_handbook.pdf

Appendix

Table 1: Wisconsin SES Monitoring Handbook—Curriculum and Instruction Aligned with District Practice (page 8)

I. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION ALIGNED WITH DISTRICT PRACTICE AND STATE STANDARDS

SES providers must ensure that instruction provided and content used by the provider are consistent with the instruction provided and content used by the school district and state, and are aligned with the State student academic achievement standards. [34CFR200.47(b)(2)(ii)(A) and (B)] (see Appendix A and Appendix B for state standards for reading and math)

Required evidence:
- ☐ Sample copies of curriculum materials used for reading
  - ☐ Documentation of how the materials align with district curriculum
  - ☐ Documentation of how the materials align with Wisconsin Model Academic Standards (WMAS for English/Language Arts)
- ☐ Sample copies of curriculum materials used for math
  - ☐ Documentation of how the materials align with district curriculum
  - ☐ Documentation of how the materials align with WMAS for Mathematics
- ☐ Sample copies of instructional materials used for reading
  - ☐ Documentation of how the materials align with district instructional strategies
  - ☐ Documentation of how the materials align with WMAS for English/Language Arts
- ☐ Sample copies of instructional materials used for math
  - ☐ Documentation of how the materials align with district instructional strategies
  - ☐ Documentation of how the materials align with WMAS for Mathematics

Possible evidence:
- ☐ Logs of phone calls and/or other communication made with the district to learn about the district curriculum
- ☐ Logs of phone calls and/or other communication made with teachers addressing specific achievement goals for the student, a description of how the student's progress was measured, and a timetable for improving achievement
- ☐ Site directors' and/or tutors' familiarity with district curriculum and state standards (on-site observation)
- ☐ Samples of the students' work (on-site observation)

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction: SES Monitoring Handbook
See Websites Cited for link to Wisconsin SES Monitoring Handbook.

Table 2: *North Dakota Self-Monitoring Guide for Approved SES Provider*s—sample of compliance checklists

Supplemental Services Provider:

Evidence of Effectiveness

Required Documentation Submissions:

☐ I can document that our supplemental services have a positive impact on student achievement for participating students on a state, district, and/or other independent, valid, and reliable performance test. (Please submit documentation of assessment results on performance testing, including pre- and post-tests and label as **Submission #1**.)

☐ I can document that our supplemental services have a positive impact on student performance us-ing a measure that is not national or statewide (e.g., a provider developed test) OR using another measure like school grades, homework completion percentages, school/teacher tests. (Please submit documentation of assessment results on performance testing and label as **Submission #2**.)

☐ I can document that our supplemental services have a positive impact on outcomes such as student attendance, retention/promotion rates, graduation rates, family/parent satisfaction, and/or student discipline. (Please submit documentation showing outcomes or other measures of improvement and label as **Submission #3.**)

Documents of Verification:

☐ Copies of assessment results on performance tests including pre- and post-tests
☐ Copies of national assessment results
☐ Copies of statewide assessment results
☐ Copies of school grades
☐ Copies of homework completion percentage
☐ Copies of school/teacher tests
☐ Copies of student attendance
☐ Copies of retention/promotion rates
☐ Copies of graduation rates
☐ Copies of family/parent satisfaction
☐ Copies of student discipline log
☐ Class time schedules including a combination of:
    ○ Direct instruction such as lectures and explanation of concepts
    ○ Guided instruction such as tutor-directed practice of concepts
    ○ Independent practice for students

See Websites Cited for link to *North Dakota Self-Monitoring Guide for Approved SES Providers*.

Table 3: Arkansas SES Providers Monitoring Checklist

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES PROVIDERS
MONITORING CHECKLIST   2007-2008

LEA _____   District _____   School _____   Monitor Initials _____

SES Provider _____   Provider Representative _____

Item	Authority	Provider Requirement	Documentation	Yes	No	Notes
1	NCLB (Public Law 107-110) Title 1, Part A, Section 1116 (e)(3)(B)	The provider regularly measures students' progress.	1. Name and Date of Pretest			
			2. Pretest results			
			3. Pretest consistent with application			
			4. Regular progress reports			
			5. Regular classroom assessments			
2	NCLB (Public Law 107-110) Title 1, Part A, Section 1116(e)(5)(A)	Communication with parents is in an understandable language and format, and regularly informs the students' parents and teachers of the students' progress.	1. Delivered to parent/guardian			
			2. Delivered to school			
			3. Copies of letters, or other documents to parents and dates			
			4. Copies of letters, or other documents to school and dates			
			5. Copies of translated documents			
			6. Understandable format and language			
3	NCLB (Public Law 107-110) Title 1, Part A, Section 1116 (e)(3)(A)	Student Learning Plan	1. Signatures of parent/guardian, provider, school representative			
			2. Outcomes of pretest			
			3. Specific learning objectives based on pretest			
			4. Timeframe for achieving goals			
			5. Progress indicated			
			6. Alignment with state frameworks			

Table 4. SES Self-Evaluation Form used by the Florida Department of Education

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2008-2009 No Child Left Behind Monitoring
Self-Evaluation Certification for State-Approved SES Providers

SES Provider: _____

District: _____

Program Self-Evaluated, Contact Information, and Outcomes

For each of the compliance items listed below, indicate with a check (✓) the appropriate compliance status: Requirements Met, Further Action Required, (System Improvement Plan required), or Not Applicable. For any compliance item where requirements are not met, a System Improvement Plan must be submitted. For providers that have been selected for desktop or onsite review, a System Improvement must be completed on the online monitoring system. In the column headed, "Contact Information," please provide the name, title, mailing address (including room/office number if applicable), telephone and fax numbers (including area code), and e-mail address.

Compliance Item	Compliance Status			Contact Information
	Requirements Met	Further Action Required*	Not Applicable	
FIAc-4				
FIAc-5				
FIAc-5a				
FIAc-6				
FIAc-7				
FIAc-8				
FIAc-9				
FIAc-10				

*For any compliance item where further action is required, a system improvement plan must be completed by September 29, 2008. The system improvement plan template is available on the Department's website at http://www.fldoe.org/NCLB/nclbmonitoring_forproviders.asp.

I, _____ *(Type or Print Name of Agency Head)* do hereby certify that all facts, figures, and representations reported herein are true, correct, and consistent with the requirements set forth in the No Child Left Behind Act. Furthermore, all applicable statutes, regulations, procedures, and administrative requirements have been implemented to ensure proper accountability for the expenditures of funds. All records necessary to substantiate these requirements will be available for review by appropriate state and federal personnel.

_____   _____

Signature of Agency Head   Date

Please submit this form with original signature (either electronic signature or a scanned original) and any required system improvement plan(s) to the Bureau of Student Assistance, Office of Public School Options via e-mail to bpscocontacts@fdoe.org by September 29, 2008.

Part III
Evaluation Process

Introduction

Part III: Evaluation Process is organized into two sections that examine the state's process for evaluating SES providers: (a) a description of federal requirements and expectations for evaluating providers under the law and regulations, and (b) a status report of states' activities, accomplishments, and suggestions based on a recent national survey conducted by the authors. An appendix is included to provide samples of state documents cited in the status report.

Included in the status report is an examination of Promising Practices based on the results of a survey of state SES directors, a follow-up (cross validation) survey, site-visit and telephone interviews with state directors, and the authors' experiences as SES evaluators and consultants over the past several years.

State evaluation of SES providers serves several important purposes. One is to meet the requirement of the NCLB statute that states determine the quality and effectiveness of providers in raising student achievement. Another is holding providers directly accountable for the quality of their services. A third is developing a process for continuous program improvement by sharing evaluation feedback with providers with the expectation that any weak areas will be improved. The Promising Practices discussed in Part III are intended to work collectively in increasing the validity and efficiency of the evaluation process by:

1. Ensuring the design of a comprehensive and valid evaluation system that is well adapted to state needs and in full compliance with NCLB requirements. To operate effectively, the evaluation system needs to be supported by adequate resources, state agency staff, and external expertise.

2. Supplementing student achievement outcome data with customer satisfaction and stakeholder feedback. Important sources of data therefore typically include parents, teachers, district coordinators, and school leaders. Strategies that increase participation rates in surveys or interviews increase the representativeness of respondents and thus, the validity of the results.

3. Employing highly rigorous statistical designs (such as matched student pairs and multiple linear regression models) to increase the precision of student achievement analyses. Part of this process is identifying minimal sample sizes for including providers in the analysis sample, hours of tutoring received for including students in the analysis, and effect sizes for defining positive impacts.

4. Developing clear and valid procedures for classifying providers in terms of performance status and assigning remedy plans where less than "full standing" is achieved.

5. Disseminating results to providers so that they can improve their products and services, and to consumers (i.e., parents of eligible students) to help them make more informed choices of effective providers in the future.

The Center on Innovation & Improvement (CII) maintains a periodically updated database of information about each state's SES practices, including links to key documents, at www.centerii.org. Also included at this site is a separate database of research, reports, and tools on topics including SES. The CII website also includes a directory of the 16 regional comprehensive centers and five national content centers funded through the U.S. Department of Education's Comprehensive Centers program. The regional comprehensive centers provide technical assistance on SES and other topics to state educational agencies (states), and CII and other national content centers assist the regional centers in their work with states.

Section A: Federal Requirements and Expectations

The evaluation of providers naturally begins with the requirements established by Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), and related regulations and guidance. To establish a framework for states' activities, a brief summary of the guidelines and requirements established by NCLB and the U.S. Department of Education is offered. For more detailed information and guidance on SES, please visit the Department's Web site (see Websites Cited).[1]

Under NCLB (Title I, Section 1116(e)(4)(D)), states are responsible for determining the effectiveness of SES providers and for removing from approved lists providers that fail, for two consecutive years, to contribute to increasing the academic proficiency of students. States should ensure that measures used to evaluate provider effectiveness are consistent and reflect the criteria established in the SES provider application and approval process. The evaluation process may require the state to collect data on an annual or periodic basis.

By comparison, the focus of *monitoring* (see Part II) is how effectively the program is being *implemented* by providers. The monitoring process, therefore, judges whether a provider is delivering what was promised and, if not, what refinements are needed to bring performance to an acceptable level. The SES *evaluation* process, in contrast, focuses

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[1] The U.S. Department of Education released new regulations regarding SES in October 2008, after the present national survey had been completed. While the survey results do not contradict new regulations, the survey also did not include questions that might probe practices relative to the new regulations.

on *provider effectiveness* following program implementation. The most critical variable is student achievement outcomes, but also relevant is assessing the degree of customer satisfaction with program quality by parents, teachers, and principals. Monitoring providers therefore serves a *formative* function (i.e., how well is the provider doing and what weaknesses need to be corrected?), whereas evaluating providers serves a *summative* function (i.e., how well did the provider perform?).

The SES provider approval, monitoring, and evaluation processes, though distinct in their purposes and procedures, are also complementary. All provide information and data for judging and improving program quality. But they uniquely take place at different phases of SES implementation—*prior to* (with focus on provider potential), *during* (with focus on performance), and *following* (with focus on outcomes) implementation, respectively. Given the parallel goals of the three processes, states should align them as much as possible with regard to the identification, definition, and weighting of performance criteria on which the providers are judged.

Because NCLB does not specify which assessments a state should use to measure provider effectiveness in raising student achievement, states must address the use of assessments when developing evaluation strategies. Some options for states to consider include:

- ✍ Student-level tests scores from state-mandated assessments;
- ✍ Additional individualized assessments in reading/language arts or math; and
- ✍ Provider-administered assessments.

Additional data collected in the evaluation process may include:

- ✍ Customer satisfaction surveys of all SES stakeholders including:
  - ■ District staff
  - ■ School personnel
  - ■ Parents
  - ■ Providers
  - ■ Students
- ✍ Student attendance records;
- ✍ Tutor qualification records;
- ✍ Measures of the fidelity of a provider's implemented program as compared to its proposed program in its application; and
- ✍ State monitoring records regarding compliance with all health, safety, and civil rights laws

While the state is responsible for evaluating SES providers, the state may ask districts to provide information regarding student participation and attendance in SES, as well as work with the state in facilitating the distribution and collection of customer satisfaction surveys from SES stakeholders.

Section B: State Activities, Accomplishments, and Suggestions

Survey Methodology

In 2008, the Center on Innovation & Improvement conducted a survey (Harmon, Ross, Redding, & Wong) of the SES directors in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The survey results included descriptions from each state of its methods for evaluating providers and its experiences with the process. Promising Practices were identified based on the survey responses, site visit interviews with states, forums, meetings, and prior research.

To attain field validation of the Promising Practices selected by the authors of this guide, a cross validation survey was administered to the state SES directors, asking them to indicate their level of agreement (on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) with each of 20 potential Promising Practices that were listed. In reporting directors' rating of Promising Practices on the cross-validation survey, the authors combined the percentages of those responding "agree" and "strongly agree" to derive an overall agreement rate. Slightly over half (52%) of the 52 directors contacted (27 respondents) completed the on-line cross-validation survey. Overall, respondents corroborated nearly all of the suggested practices presented on the survey. Accordingly, the promising practices highlighted in boxes and described below received sufficient validation to be suggested for consideration by states.

Survey Results and Promising Practices

The results from the study of state evaluation practices are organized by categories of recommended state activity for evaluating SES providers. For each category of activity, we summarize the survey responses from the state SES directors and present Promising Practice suggestions supported by the two surveys (original and cross-validation), follow-up interviews, and site visits.

State Activity 1: Administering a Systematic Evaluation Process

The goal of evaluation is to judge the effectiveness of programs in accomplishing their stated objectives. A systematic evaluation process is designed to collect data, preferably from multiple sources, to maximize accuracy, efficiency, and validity of outcomes and decisions.

Because proven effectiveness in improving student learning outcomes is both a requirement for an SES provider's approval to offer services in a state and a condition for the provider's continuation on the state's list of approved providers, an appraisal of the academic progress of students receiving a provider's services is central to any state's evaluation process. Arriving with reasonable certainty at a determination about a provider's impact on student learning requires a sufficient number of students receiving the services for a significant amount of time, and careful methods of analysis. Given these constraints, state evaluation systems should also examine indicators of successful program implementation that precede, in time, the availability of adequate student assessment data. To evaluate a provider's services in a manner that is valid, reliable, and fair, the state must design and carry out an evaluation plan that is comprehensive, rigorous, and transparent.

Notably, only 37 (58%) of the directors indicated that their state regularly implements an evaluation process. The remainder reported that they conduct provider evaluations intermittently or informally (13%) or not at all (29%). When asked if their state process for evaluating providers is *effective* in judging the quality of provider services, approximately half of the directors (49%) in the 37 implementing states agreed, whereas one-fourth (26%) disagreed. As described in a later section, weaknesses in their evaluation processes that states most commonly identified included limitations in the quantity and quality of test score data, lack of cooperation from districts, and insufficient resources for conducting rigorous evaluations.

Components of Provider Evaluations

Directors in the 37 states that are conducting regular (formal) provider evaluations were asked to indicate whether their evaluation processes included certain features or components. Their responses are summarized in Table 1. In responding to a separate question summarized in a later section, 34 of these 37 directors indicated that they evaluated student achievement effects using one or more analytical approaches.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage of States Including Particular Evaluation Components, Among States Conducting Regular or Intermittent Provider Evaluations

Evaluation Component	f	%
Analysis of student achievement outcomes	34	91%
Interview/survey of district SES coordinators	27	73%
Interview/survey of parents of participating students	24	64%
Use of an external evaluator	23	62%
Evaluation feedback to providers	22	60%
Interview/survey of school principals	19	51%
Interview/survey of teachers having participating SES students	17	46%
Public reporting of provider status	14	38%
Interview/survey of participating SES students	11	30%
Classification ratings of providers ("good standing," "probation")	10	27%
A process for removing one or more providers based on evaluation	10	27%

Note: Total n = 37 states that evaluate SES providers out of 52 respondents to survey

As shown in the table, state evaluations most frequently include, apart from student achievement analyses, interviews or surveys of district SES coordinators (f = 27) and SES parents (f = 24). Almost two-thirds (f = 23) of the 37 states that are conducting evaluations contract with external evaluators. Fewer states have developed processes for removing providers (f = 10) or classifying them (f = 10) based on evaluation results. Only 2 of the 10 states with a process for removing providers indicated actually following through with a removal. In one of these states, the director indicated that, technically, the state had not yet had to remove a provider, but that several providers "have been given the opportunity to remove themselves before they (the state) would have had to remove them." Those providers must wait a year to re-apply for state approval.

A synthesis of these results and follow-up interviews with SES directors shows that there is strong support by states for the concept and potential value of evaluating providers, but some frustration in knowing the processes that best support state needs. Thus, some states have tended to select evaluation components (see Table 1) reactively to fit perceived budgets or staff availability rather than proactively based on a systematic assessment of state resources and goals relative to NCLB requirements. In this regard, states may need an improved process to engage knowledgeable staff and external experts (e.g., Regional Comprehensive Centers, evaluation consultants) to carefully design an evaluation system that is well adapted to state priorities and needs.

Evaluation Resources

Conducting an effective evaluation requires a state to allocate sufficient resources for planning the study, collecting and analyzing data, and reporting and disseminating results. In responding to the national survey, however, over one-third (38%) of the SES directors noted limitations in their resources, some due to the availability of appropriate achievement data (11 states) and others to sufficient time and staff (9 states), that

impeded conducting a comprehensive evaluation study. For example, one director said that there was "not enough money to extensively look at the data. Also, our state assessment is administered in grades 3-10, so we are losing kids in 1st-3rd grade [in the evaluation]." Other state directors questioned whether their state assessment would be sensitive enough to pick up the effects of a small number of tutoring hours.

Although some states noted advantages of working with external evaluators (see next section) as a helpful resource, close to half (46%) of the states that have implemented an informal or formal evaluation performed them internally. For example, comprehensive in-house studies have been conducted yearly by Florida and Indiana, both of which assign knowledgeable department staff to collect and analyze the data. As conveyed in open-ended survey comments, while implementing the study internally saves money, the downside is extreme time demands for the staff involved.

External Evaluators and Online Tracking Systems

A suitably rigorous evaluation does not need to be expensive or cumbersome to perform. States that have implemented evaluations have expressed satisfaction and success with several components. Specifically, when asked on the survey what was the most successful component of their evaluation system, 10 (27% of the implementers) SES state directors named working with an external evaluator, and 3 (8%) identified having an on-line tracking system and/or a database that links student achievement to SES participation. External evaluators, according to several state directors, can bring needed expertise in working with data, writing computer programs to merge participation and outcomes data bases, and matching SES students to similar non-SES (control) students in the same schools (see data analysis section below). Another advantage is the independence of external providers, who have no personal stake in how individual providers or the SES program in general performs.

Online or electronic tracking systems can increase the accuracy and efficiency of data access. The main difficulty experienced by states that lack such systems is having to request SES student participation data (which are often in paper form only) from districts and then manually match the SES student IDs to those in the state assessment data base. These added demands can stretch already limited state resources for conducting a quality and timely analysis of student achievement effects. Electronic data processing systems may be purchased from several commercial vendors or, as done by Maryland, developed in-house. As described in Part II on monitoring providers, Maryland's system includes the following features:

> Each provider is required to use the state SES data entry system to document student information, services provided, and academic progress for each student served. Providers must (a) enter contact information, customer satisfaction information, and parent involvement information; (b) list which reading and math assessments (pre- and post-tests) they utilized; and (c) describe any barriers they faced in the delivery of services. For each student served, the provider also records pre- and post-test scores for both the reading and math assessments administered. Finally, providers are required to list up to 10 progress

goals, by subject, for each student in order to report progress using the designa-
tion "Met" or "Not Met." Data are submitted at the end of each reporting peri-
od (December 31, June 30, and September 30), which allows Maryland multiple
opportunities to monitor each provider's progress. Consequently, the state SES
monitors have easy access to continually updated records that permit review of
participation, goals, and progress for the students served by each provider.
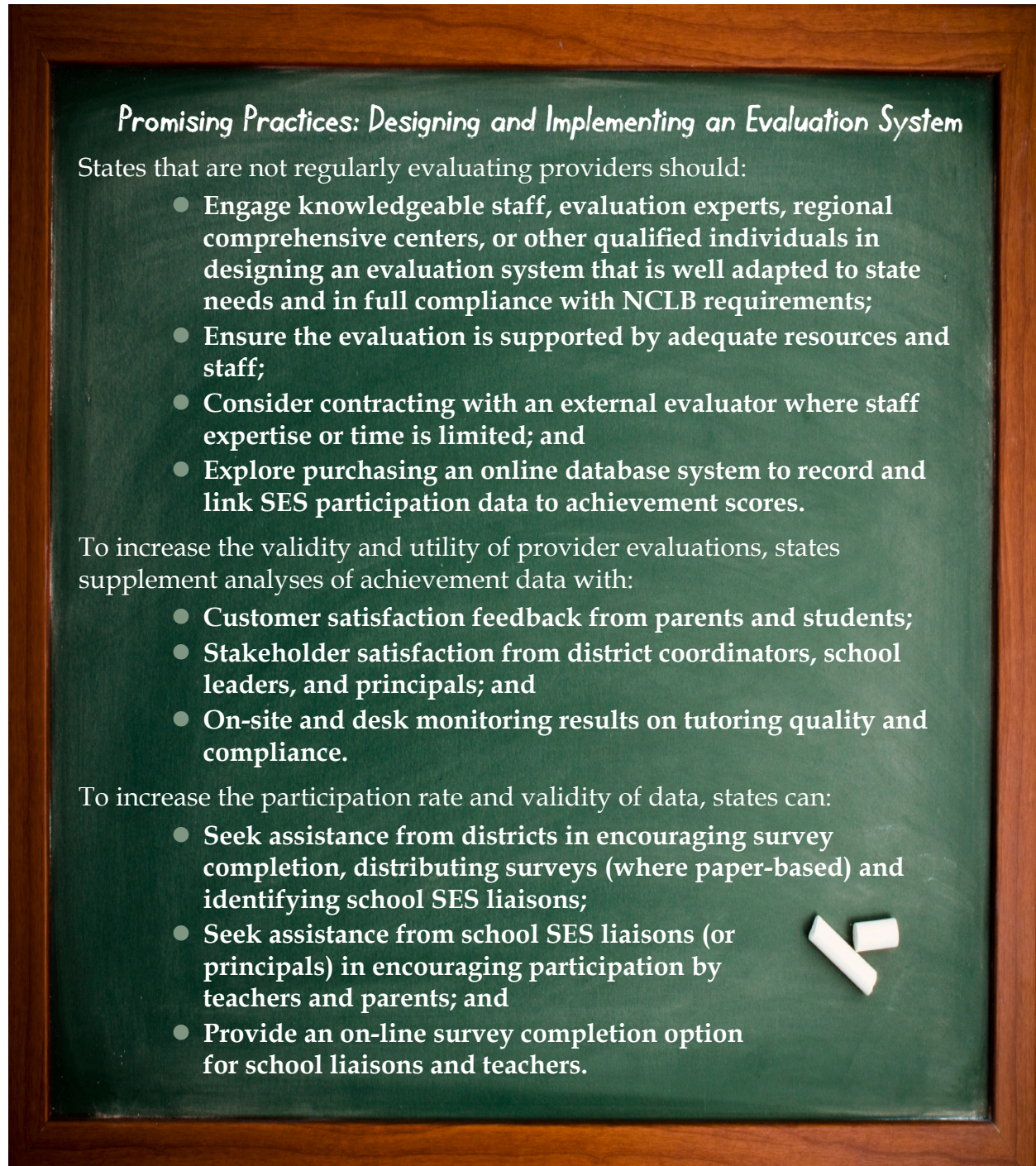
Sources of Evaluation Evidence

In general, evaluations of providers gain validity and credibility by employing mul-
tiple measures of service effectiveness. Although the fundamental goal of SES is to raise
student achievement, the challenges of demonstrating measurable gains from a limited
number of hours of tutoring are well documented (e.g., Rickles, Barnhart, & Gualpa,
2008; Ross, Potter, Paek, McKay, Sanders, & Ashton, 2008; Zimmer, Gill, Razquin,
Booker, & Lockwood III, 2007). To judge providers more fully and fairly, it is valu-
able to obtain impressions of provider effectiveness from the customers of the services
and other key stakeholders involved. Useful supplemental evaluation data can also be
obtained from desk and on-site monitoring of providers (also see Part II). Other supple-
mental data can come from pre-tests and post-tests administered by providers, although
states should be cautious in weighting such evidence as highly as state assessments.

The most common means of collecting consumer and stakeholder impressions is by
administering brief surveys. Examples of those used by Michigan (for district coordi-
nators), Hawaii (parents), and West Virginia (school liaisons/principals) are shown in
Tables 3-5 (see Appendix). Interviews, however, are sometimes preferred where the
respondent population is small (e.g., there are only 3 district coordinators). Not surpris-
ingly, although students are the group most directly affected by the tutoring services,
including them in evaluation studies can be relatively difficult due to issues of access,
limited verbal skills compared to adults, and confidentiality concerns. Nonetheless,
11 states (30% of the evaluating states) reported obtaining some perception data from
students. Regardless of the group selected, the evaluator's primary challenge in collect-
ing survey data is obtaining a sufficient and representative response, particularly from
parents.

In evaluating providers in multiple states, the authors have found that distributing
surveys to parents through the schools generally produces a very low return rate. Be-
cause the parents of SES students cannot be assumed to have home computers, on-line
surveys are not a viable option. Additionally, when paper surveys are administered by
the school, they can easily become lost in the mix of other school materials that the child
brings home. Also, parents often confuse the names of providers and select (or write
in) the wrong one. A more successful approach has been to randomly sample a selected
number of parents for each provider, pre-code the provider's identity on the survey,
and mail the survey to the home. If the target sample size is not reached, an additional
subsample can be selected and the process repeated. As corroborated by most SES di-
rectors, parent input can provide valuable perspectives on provider services, and there-
fore, is worth the effort to obtain in the evaluation study.

Based on successful experiences by a number of states, as reflected in survey and interview results, promising practices are offered in the box below. All received from 78% to 96% corroboration from respondents on the cross-validation survey.

Promising Practices: Designing and Implementing an Evaluation System

States that are not regularly evaluating providers should:

- Engage knowledgeable staff, evaluation experts, regional comprehensive centers, or other qualified individuals in designing an evaluation system that is well adapted to state needs and in full compliance with NCLB requirements;
- Ensure the evaluation is supported by adequate resources and staff;
- Consider contracting with an external evaluator where staff expertise or time is limited; and
- Explore purchasing an online database system to record and link SES participation data to achievement scores.

To increase the validity and utility of provider evaluations, states supplement analyses of achievement data with:

- Customer satisfaction feedback from parents and students;
- Stakeholder satisfaction from district coordinators, school leaders, and principals; and
- On-site and desk monitoring results on tutoring quality and compliance.

To increase the participation rate and validity of data, states can:

- Seek assistance from districts in encouraging survey completion, distributing surveys (where paper-based) and identifying school SES liaisons;
- Seek assistance from school SES liaisons (or principals) in encouraging participation by teachers and parents; and
- Provide an on-line survey completion option for school liaisons and teachers.

State Activity 2: Analyzing Student Achievement Outcomes

To be considered effective, SES providers are expected to contribute to increased student achievement in the tutored subjects. Thus far, of the 37 states that have conducted provider evaluations, 34 (92%) indicated using one of four different approaches to analyzing student achievement outcomes. These are summarized in Table 2 and described more fully in the discussion below.

Table 2. Frequency and Percent of States Using Particular Approaches for Analyzing Student Achievement (Out of Those Conducting Regular or Intermittent Provider Evaluations)

Analytical Approach	f	%
Descriptive analyses indicating student pre-test/post-test gains on provider tests	14	38%
"Matched pair" analyses of state assessment scores comparing SES students to similar control students	12	32%
Multiple regression-type analyses comparing SES and non-SES students gains on state assessments	10	27%
Descriptive analyses indicating SES student success at achieving performance benchmarks on state assessments	9	24%

Note: Total n = 37 states that evaluate SES providers out of 52 respondents to survey

Several state directors described using a combination of methods such as matched pair and regression analyses, or matched pair and performance benchmark gains. Other states described informal analysis approaches, such as examining student growth on formative assessments, or their plans to upgrade evaluation rigor in the future. The most frequently employed approach, used by 14 of the 34 states (41%) selecting one of the analysis options (Table 2), is also one of the weaker ones in terms of rigor—descriptive analyses of pre-test/post-test gains on *provider tests* (see Table 2). Limitations of this approach include the possibility of: (a) students demonstrating gains on post-tests due to maturation, "history" (e.g., classroom learning independent of SES), and test familiarity (practice); (b) the tests selected favoring the provider's particular tutoring approach or curriculum; and (c) biased test administration or scoring by tutors due to their natural stake in obtaining positive results.

Rigorous Evaluation Design

Two rigorous designs—matched pairs and regression—were used by 12 and 10 states, respectively (see Ross, Harmon, & Potter, 2006 for description of these designs). In the matched pair design, each SES student is matched to a similar "control" student who was eligible for SES but did not participate. Matching variables typically include prior achievement, school attended, gender, and ethnicity. In the regression-type design, the *actual* or *obtained* test scores of SES students are compared to their *predicted* scores derived from correlational analyses of prior achievement, demographic characteristics, and SES participation (e.g., none, low, high). If the actual scores significantly surpass predicted scores, positive effects of the services are inferred. Importantly, although they

use different methodologies, both designs involve comparisons between SES students and comparable control students who were eligible for SES but did not participate.

Benchmark Design

Slightly fewer states (f = 9) opted to employ a "benchmark-type" analysis. Various forms of this relatively weak design basically involve examining the percentage of students who, relative to the prior year, demonstrate (a) proficiency on the state assessment or (b) gains in their performance level (e.g., from Below Basic to Basic, or Basic to Proficient). The limitations, however, include the (a) imprecise nature of such broad performance classifications, (b) lack of control over student characteristics (e.g., ethnicity, gender, etc.) compared to more sophisticated analysis, and (c) the absence of closely matched comparison groups.

Established Parameters for Determining Sample

Once an evaluation approach is determined, the next question concerns which students and providers to include in the analysis. Interviews with SES directors indicated strong support for establishing clear parameters for including or excluding student achievement data based on such factors as hours of services received, percentage of instructional program completed, special education status, ELL status, and time of services (e.g., summer vs. academic year). In addition, states need to establish the minimum number of participating students necessary for a provider to be evaluated in a given year.

Based on the survey responses and other considerations discussed, analyzing provider effects on student achievement is obviously challenging. Accordingly, when asked to identify the "least successful" (most difficult) components of their evaluations:

- ✍ 12 directors noted limitations in the achievement data obtained or assessments in general (e.g., data restricted to only certain grades, many transient students, missing data);

- ✍ 6 directors commented that low numbers of students receiving services from some providers prevent the state from being able to conduct a rigorous analysis of those providers' impact; and

- ✍ 4 directors described problems in obtaining SES participation information or achievement data from districts that do not comply with their responsibilities or supply unreliable data to the state. One director wrote that some districts "do not complete surveys or relay information to the state," whereas another cited "difficulty getting student data regarding test results in a timely manner from [districts]."

Regarding decisions about student inclusion in the analysis sample, several states (Alabama, Louisiana, Maryland, and Virginia) have indicated progress by applying specific criteria such as:

- ✍ Students must have completed either a minimum of 18 hours of tutoring and/or at least 50% of their instructional program in the identified subject (reading or mathematics).

    ✍   Students must have a test score for the subject in the prior (pre-SES) year.[2]

    ✍   Students must have received services from only one provider during the year.

In addition, states need to establish the minimum number of participating students necessary for a provider to be evaluated in a given year. A criterion commonly used by several states (e.g., Alabama, Louisiana, Maryland, Tennessee, and Virginia) is there must be at least 10 students who have complete assessment data and meet the inclusion requirements discussed above.
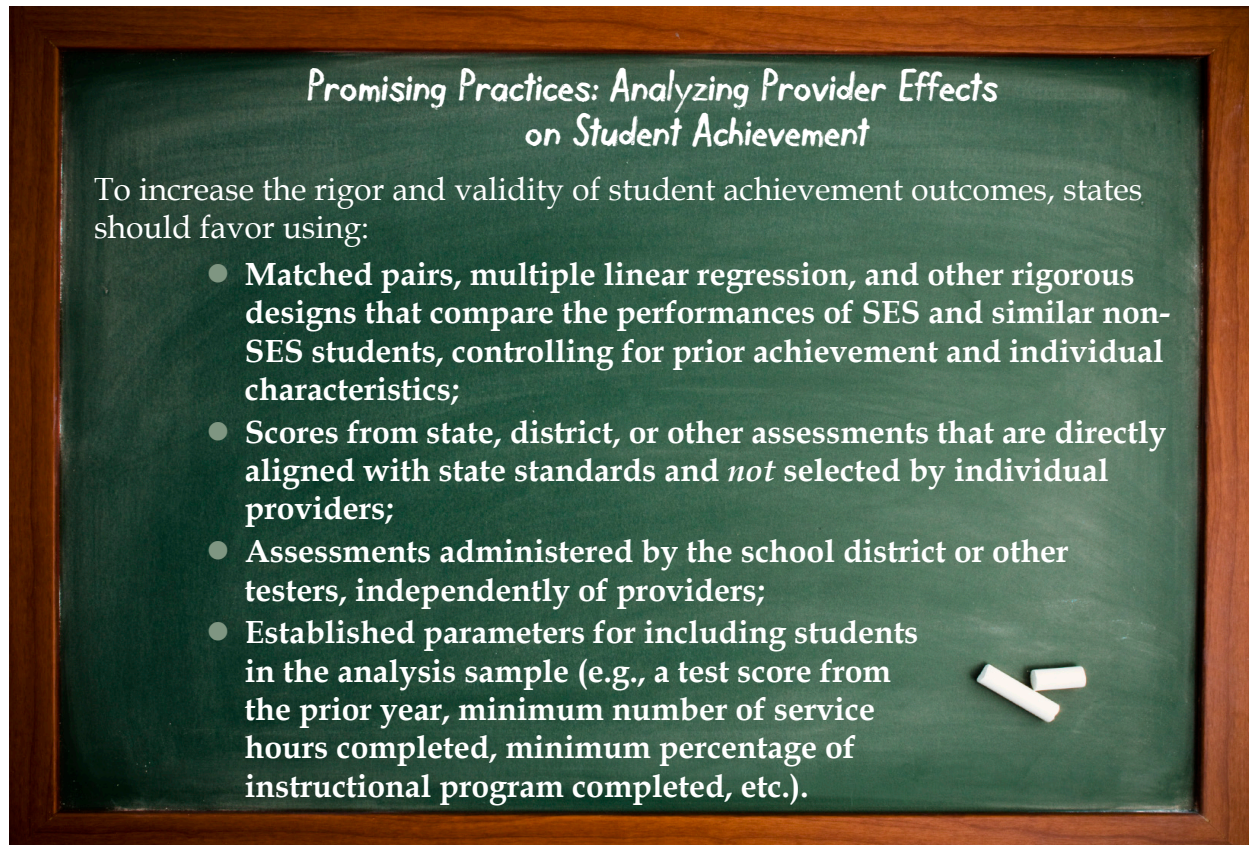
An additional sampling issue is deciding how to treat students who receive some or all services following the state assessment. Accordingly, several states (e.g., Louisiana, Maryland, and Tennessee) are using the following rules:

    ✍   Where provider services are formally offered as a summer program, achievement scores for participating students are analyzed in the *following* academic year.

    ✍   Where provider services are formally offered as an academic year program, achievement scores for participating students are analyzed in the current year.

In response to the cross-validation survey, the directors were most supportive (85%) of using student achievement scores from assessments that aligned with state standards. Nearly three-fourths (74%) corroborated use of matched pairs, multiple regression, and other rigorous designs as a promising practice. There was also strong agreement (70%) regarding the value of establishing parameters for including students in the analysis sample. Fewer but still a clear majority of directors supported as promising practices defining parameters for including providers in the analysis sample (67%) and using assessments administered by school districts or other testers (59%).

Despite the hurdles, a growing number of states are demonstrating success in conducting systematic evaluations. The advantages of adopting rigorous evaluation designs (e.g., matched pairs and multiple regression) and employing unbiased, standards-based achievement measures have been discussed above. Accordingly, promising practices that emerged from our surveys and interviews are suggested on the follow page.

---

[2] Note: Consequently, where state assessments are used, the elementary and middle grades analysis sample will usually be restricted to grades 4-8. That is, earlier grades will lack a pre-test score unless testing is conducted state-wide in grade 2 or lower.

> ## Promising Practices: Analyzing Provider Effects on Student Achievement
>
> To increase the rigor and validity of student achievement outcomes, states should favor using:
>
> - **Matched pairs, multiple linear regression, and other rigorous designs that compare the performances of SES and similar non-SES students, controlling for prior achievement and individual characteristics;**
> - **Scores from state, district, or other assessments that are directly aligned with state standards and *not* selected by individual providers;**
> - **Assessments administered by the school district or other testers, independently of providers;**
> - **Established parameters for including students in the analysis sample (e.g., a test score from the prior year, minimum number of service hours completed, minimum percentage of instructional program completed, etc.).**

State Activity 3: Analyzing and Interpreting Evaluation Results

Once evaluation data have been collected, states must determine the most appropriate strategies for analyzing data and evaluating provider effectiveness. As reported earlier (see Table 1), only 37 (58%) of the directors indicated that their state regularly implements an evaluation process. Of these, only about one-fourth (10 states) have systems for rating providers according to performance levels or removing providers based on the performance level attained.

Student Sample Size

Because student sample sizes for many providers are often too small to support meaningful statistical analyses of achievement scores, states are interested in strategies for interpreting the results in a given year and over time. That is, when sample sizes are small, unless the provider effect on student achievement is very strong, it will not be statistically significant and, therefore, will not be sufficiently reliable to support a confident evaluation decision.[3]

---

[3] Achievement effects are most commonly represented as "effect sizes," interpreted as the number of standard deviations by which the experimental group (SES student) mean differs from the control group (non-SES student) mean. For example, if SES students surpassed the comparison students by one-half standard deviation (a very large effect in real-life educational contexts), the effect size would be +.50. Prior studies of SES generally show small effect sizes in the 0.05 to 0.10 range (Ross, Paek, & McKay, 2008; Zimmer et al., 2007).

Small sample size example. Provider A tutors 10 students who collectively score 2 percentile points *higher* than do matched non-SES students. Because the sample size is small, statistical analyses determine this difference to be non-significant, with an unacceptably high probability[4] of being attributable to chance factors (e.g., this particular group of students is unusually motivated to achieve). Accordingly, it would be risky to conclude that Provider A was effective (or ineffective).[5]

A suggested practice, presently used by multiple states (e.g., Alabama, Tennessee, Maryland, and Virginia), is to treat non-significant achievement results as indeterminate or inconclusive if the student sample size for a provider is small or the evaluation process is still in its early years of implementation. On the cross-validation survey, this suggested promising practice received strong support from the directors (89% agreement). The directors also strongly concurred (89%) that minimum sample sizes (see suggestion below) should be defined for judging effectiveness. Each year, as additional SES students are served by the same providers, results can be aggregated to increase sample size and the reliability of determining provider effects. Recently, Tennessee and Maryland employed this procedure by supplementing their current-year analyses with the reporting of two-year average effects for individual providers.

Specific Parameters for Interpreting Achievement Results

To be fully developed and transparent, state evaluation processes need to define *specific* parameters for interpreting achievement results as positive, negative, or inconclusive. Without such parameters, uncertainties are bound to arise in situations such as the following:

✍ The provider's effects on student achievement are large (Effect Size = +.40), but are statistically nonsignificant. Sample size, however, is very small.

✍ The provider's effects are small (Effect Size = +.02), but are statistically significant. Sample size, however, is extremely large.

✍ The provider's effects are negative and nonsignificant, but sample size is small.

Discussions with several state directors revealed common frustrations in knowing where to draw the line in determining effectiveness. Illinois, for example, has made a useful start in this area by incorporating the following specific criterion for being Above Standards (see Table 6 in Appendix, Row 1—"Student Achievement"):

The effect size for students in the provider's program can be identified and exceeds +.25 (i.e., one-fourth of a standard deviation above the predicted mean score).

---

[4] In educational research, a probability level of 5% or less (called the "alpha level") is conventionally established as maximum acceptable risk of a chance result.

[5] Obtaining statistical significance for a given effect size increases as sample size increases. With extremely large samples of say, 400 or more students, even a very small effect might be statistically significant. Conversely, with a small sample, a large effect might be non-significant.

Synthesis of Evaluation Data in Decision Trees

Interpreting *student achievement* outcomes is only part of the picture. As reviewed earlier in Table 1, the majority of states that are conducting formal evaluations of providers include district coordinator and parent surveys as additional information sources. Others include surveys or interviews from teachers and students. To make an overall judgment of the quality of services, results from these multiple indicators need to be synthesized.

A growing number of states are developing rubrics or decision trees to guide the synthesis process. For example, Tennessee and Kentucky use the decision tree originally presented in the publication, *Evaluating Supplemental Educational Service Providers: Suggested Strategies for States* (Ross, Harmon, & Potter, 2006; available for download at www.centerii.org). This system classifies providers into the following five performance categories based on outcomes reflecting student achievement, customer satisfaction, and provider compliance with federal and state SES policies:

- ✍ Full Standing
- ✍ Satisfactory Standing
- ✍ Probation I
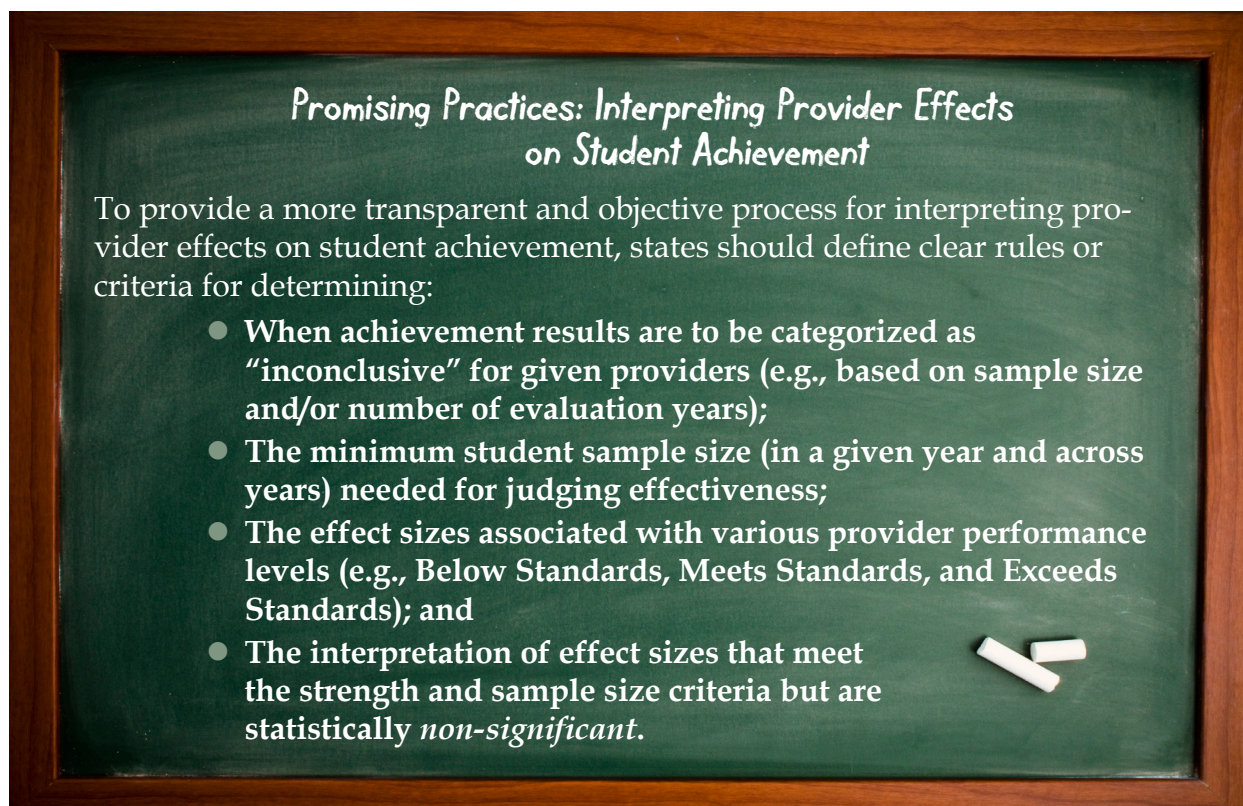- ✍ Probation II
- ✍ Removal

See Figure 1 in Appendix for the decision tree diagram from the above evaluation guide (Ross et al., 2006).

For illustrative purposes, Tennessee's descriptions of these levels are provided in Table 7 (see Appendix). Note that for all levels lower than Full Standing, a remedy requirement is imposed. In this way, the evaluation results are used not only for rating providers' services but also for encouraging their continuous improvement. In addition, Tennessee's rating system explicitly considers the results of the state's provider monitoring process based on both on-site and desk reviews (see link to Tennessee evaluation guide in Websites Cited).

Results from state monitoring, customer satisfaction surveys, and student achievement assessments are also integrated in Maryland's evaluation of providers. Using the rubric shown in Table 8 (see Appendix), reviewers numerically rate each provider and compute a total performance score based on six criteria: Achievement, Communication, Individualized Instruction, Alignment to Standards, and Customer Satisfaction. If the rating on any criterion or the total performance score is less than minimally acceptable, the provider is required to submit a Plan of Action to be monitored subsequently by the state during site visits. Consequently, evaluation and program improvement processes are intentionally integrated.

Drawing from these and other states' experiences, the promising practices listed below are suggested for evaluating overall provider effectiveness. All of these practices received strong support (ranging from 70% to 89% agreement) on the cross-validation survey. Most strongly endorsed were incorporating on-site and desk monitoring re-

sults in the evaluation (89%) and using decision trees or rubrics to integrate multiple evidence sources (85%). States' experiences with analyzing and interpreting evaluation results supported the promising practices listed below.

> ### Promising Practices: Interpreting Provider Effects on Student Achievement
>
> To provide a more transparent and objective process for interpreting provider effects on student achievement, states should define clear rules or criteria for determining:
>
> - **When achievement results are to be categorized as "inconclusive" for given providers (e.g., based on sample size and/or number of evaluation years);**
> - **The minimum student sample size (in a given year and across years) needed for judging effectiveness;**
> - **The effect sizes associated with various provider performance levels (e.g., Below Standards, Meets Standards, and Exceeds Standards); and**
> - **The interpretation of effect sizes that meet the strength and sample size criteria but are statistically *non-significant*.**

State Activity 4: Disseminating Evaluation Results

When asked on the survey whether their states publically report provider evaluation results, 14 of the directors (38% of the states that conducted evaluations) answered affirmatively. The most common dissemination mode, identified by 10 directors, is posting a full or partial evaluation report on the state's website. Other modes included posting data on providers, submitting a written report to the state board, and emailing the report to district administrators.

Consumer-Friendly Evaluation Summaries

One of the important benefits of evaluating providers is helping consumers—most essentially, parents—to make more informed choices. Few states thus far have engaged in systematic reporting of results to parents, but the modes most frequently identified as desirable possibilities are (a) on-line postings, (b) summaries accompanying application announcements, and (c) summaries distributed at informational meetings and provider fairs. Clearly recognized by states is that, for consumers, results on providers need to be simplified to eliminate technical or statistical language and convey overall performance ratings, as the examples below illustrate.

At least two states (Tennessee and Indiana) condense evaluation results to derive and post on their websites a consumer-friendly performance grade. Table 9 (see Appendix) presents instructions from Tennessee's website describing how to read the provider evaluation summaries. Briefly, Cell #1 reports student achievement outcomes as either (a) positive, based on two-year averages, (b) below standards, or (c) indeterminate, due to insufficient data. Cell #2 gives a 0-star (below standards) to 3-star (above standards) customer satisfaction rating for various types of service activities. Cell #3 presents a statement from the provider about its services. See Websites Cited for link to Tennessee's SES provider evaluation guide.

The Indiana system assigns letter grades to providers based on syntheses of the evidence in three areas: Customer Satisfaction, Service Delivery, and Academic Effectiveness. In the example (See Table 10 in Appendix for Indiana's Consumer Report), the provider earned its highest score, A-, in Service Delivery based on relatively positive ratings from parents, districts, and principals. Note that on-site monitoring/compliance is also considered in evaluating Service Delivery, but could not be arranged for this particular provider. See Websites Cited for link to Indiana's SES evaluation guide.

Feedback for Providers

Another important component of disseminating evaluation results is making feedback available to providers. However, in response to the SES survey, only two states specifically indicated having a process or plan for communicating with providers. Obviously, providers can access the same reports and performance ratings on state SES websites as can consumers. But the availability of evaluation results provides an opportunity for states to have richer conversations with providers to discuss their performance rating, status for re-approval, and, importantly, recommendations for correcting weaknesses to improve the effectiveness of services.

As indicated above, an essential purpose of evaluation is communicating results to consumers regarding the nature and effectiveness of the products or services examined. Another is communicating results to the product developers and service providers so they can improve their programs and business operations. Although many states post full or summary evaluation reports, the information presented in those modes is likely to be too technical, complex, and lengthy for consumers to digest. To the extent that customers, particularly parents, are knowledgeable about provider quality, they will make more informed choices of tutoring services for their students. Providers, in turn, will be more motivated to improve services to attract future business. Several potential promising practices to promote these goals are presented in the box below.

It is important to note that the results of the cross-validation survey produced varied levels of support for these strategies as promising practices. On the one hand, at least two-thirds of the directors were favorable toward providing timely postings of full reports (70%), providing consumer-friendly summary ratings (70%), and requiring improvement plans for low-performing providers (67%). On the other hand, only a plurality (44%) supported the practice of holding phone or in-person feedback sessions with low-performers.

Promising Practices: Disseminating Evaluation Results

To provide feedback on provider services to consumers, state and district leaders, and providers, states should:

- **Provide timely postings of full evaluation reports (for transparency) and other relevant evaluation/monitoring results for public viewing;**
- **Supplement full reports with consumer friendly summary ratings and associated data. Examples include letter grades, stars, and traffic light (red, yellow, green) icons;**
- **Require phone feedback sessions with providers evaluated as meeting or above standards; in-person feedback sessions with providers evaluated as below standards; and**
- **Require improvement plans for providers that are below standards.**

Conclusions

With experience and sharing of practices, states will arrive at more uniform and effective systems for evaluating SES providers and more confidence in the validity of their findings. Stronger evaluation processes will embolden states to set higher expectations for provider performance and to take action against providers that demonstrate unsatisfactory performance. At the same time, evaluation findings will be useful to all providers as they seek more effective strategies and learn from both the feedback that comes with evaluation of their own work and evidence that emerges from careful study of the methods of all providers.

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Illinois State Board of Education
http://www.isbe.state.il.us/

Indiana Department of Education
http://www.doe.state.in.us/
For SES: http://mustang.doe.state.in.us/dg/ses/welcome.html
See SES Evaluation guide
http://mustang.doe.state.in.us/dg/ses/Evaluations.cfm

Maryland Public Schools
http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE
See section on Supplemental Educational Services
http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/esea/Supplemental+Educational+Services

Michigan Department of Education
http://www.michigan.gov/mde

Tennessee Department of Education
http://www.state.tn.us/education/index.shtml
For SES: http://tennessee.gov/education/fedprog/fpses.shtml
See SES evaluation guide
http://tennessee.gov/education/fedprog/doc/evalguide.pdf.

U.S. Department of Education
www.ed.gov
See SES information
http://www.ed.gov/nclb/choice/help/ses/index.html

West Virginia Department of Education
http://wvde.state.wv.us/

Appendix

Figure 1: Decision Tree from Evaluation Guidebook
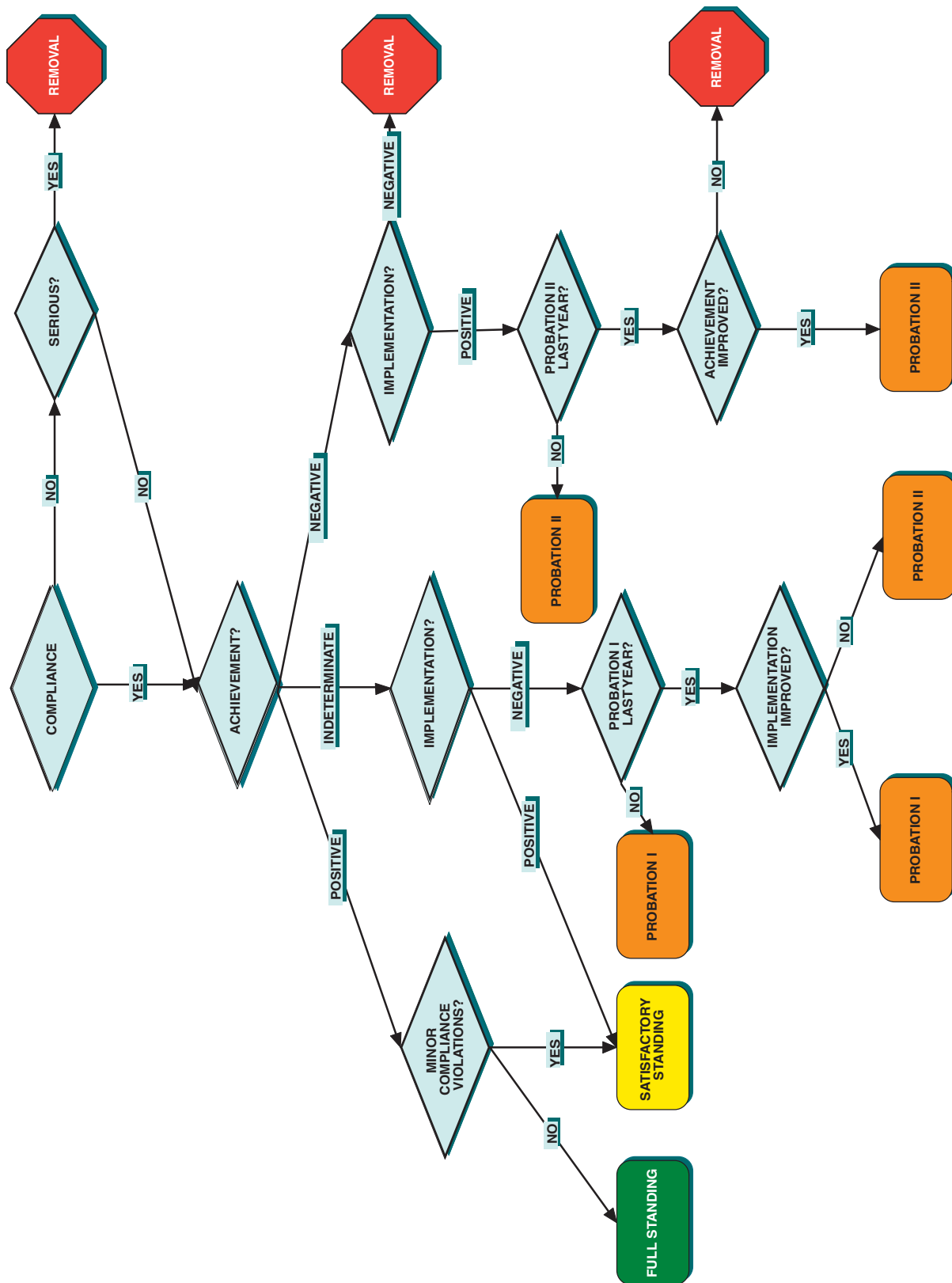
Table 3: District SES or Title I Coordinator Survey Used by the Michigan Department of Education

**Survey of District SES or Title I Coordinators
Regarding SES Provider Effectiveness**

This survey is being conducted by Public Policy Associates, Incorporated, on behalf of the Michigan Department of Education, to evaluate supplemental education services (SES) providers in the state. The study relies upon information from multiple sources in order to get a full understanding of each provider's effectiveness. This survey is one important component in this process. Title I Coordinators provide a valuable perspective on the impact of SES services.

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the effectiveness and quality of SES provided to students in the 2006-2007 school year and to identify areas where improvements are needed.

Please complete *one survey for each provider* serving students in your district. If you do not know the answer to any questions, please select "not sure" or leave blank.

We appreciate your time to complete this survey. Please return all district surveys by May 31, 2007.

General Information

1. School District: _____

2. Full name of Provider Organization/Agency and city: _____

3. In what subject areas does this provider offer SES in your district? *Check all that apply.*

<div align="center">

English language arts ☐   Mathematics ☐

</div>

Administrative Requirements

4. For each item listed below, please give information on the provider's efforts to meet administrative reporting requirements/performance on the activity.

	Required in District Contract?		Submitted by Provider?		Submitted in Timely Manner?		Materials are Accurate?		Materials are Complete?	
a. Submission of Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
b. Submission of student attendance data	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
c. Submission of student progress reports	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
d. Submission of invoices	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

5. Overall, how would you rate the responsiveness of providers to district requests for the required information?   Excellent   Good   Fair   Poor   Not Sure

Table 4: Parent SES Satisfaction Survey used in the Hawaii State Evaluation of Providers

Parent Satisfaction Survey
Your Child's Free Tutoring

1. Which agency tutored your child (check one of the following)?

_____ College Connections   _____ Read Right Systems

_____ Education Therapy   _____ Learning Hale

_____ Hui Malama Learning Center   _____ Kumon

_____ Hawaii Community Schools for Adults   _____ It's all About Kids

_____ Pacific Resource for Education and Learning (PREL)

2. How did you find out about this free tutoring (check all that apply)?

_____ School Letter   _____ Advertisement   _____ Other: _____

3. What kind of tutoring did your child receive?___ Reading ___ Math ___ Both

Please CHECK Yes, No, or Don't Know for the following questions	Yes	No	Don't Know
4. Were the time and place for tutoring convenient?			
5. Did the tutoring start on time?			
6. Were the tutoring goals clear for your child?			
7. Was your child's tutor knowledgeable and skillful?			
8. Was the tutoring well-organized?			
9. Did you receive reports on your child's progress in tutoring?			
10. Is your child doing better in school because of the tutoring?			
11. Did your child enjoy the tutoring?			
12. Would you use this tutoring service again?			
13. Would you tell other parents to use this tutoring service?			
Additional Comments:			

Table 5: Principal/School Liaison Survey used by the West Virginia Department of Education

State of West Virginia
Supplemental Educational Services
Principal/Site Coordinator Questionnaire
2008 Paek, J., McKay, D., McDonald, A.J., & Ross, S.M
Center for Research in Educational Policy, The University of Memphis, All Rights Reserved.

Provider name	
District name	
School name	
Title of Person Completing this Survey:	

1. Are you employed by the provider for which you are completing this survey?	○ Yes	○ No

Indicate your response to each of the following items.

How often did the provider	Frequently	Occasionally	Not at all
2. Communicate with you during the school year?	○	○	○
3. Collaborate with you to set goals for student growth?	○	○	○

	Frequently	Occasionally	Not at all
4. Communicate with teachers during the year?	○	○	○
5. Meet the obligations for conducting tutoring sessions?	○	○	○

The provider...	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
6. Started tutoring soon after the registration process was complete.	○	○	○	○	○
7. Adapted the tutoring services to this school's curriculum.	○	○	○	○	○
8. Integrated the tutoring services with classroom learning activities.	○	○	○	○	○
9. Offered services to Special Education and ELL students.	○	○	○	○	○

Overall provider assessment:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
10. I believe the services offered by this provider positively impacted student achievement.	○	○	○	○	○
11. Overall, I am satisfied with the services of this provider.	○	○	○	○	○

District assessment:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
12. Overall, I am satisfied with the way the school district helped our school implement services from this provider.	○	○	○	○	○

Comments	

Improving SES Quality

Table 6: Illinois Department of Education: Rubric for Provider Evaluations

Criterion		Insufficient Information	Below Standards	Meets Standards	Above Standards
Student Achievement	Reading	There is insufficient information available to determine student achievement outcomes.	The effect size for students in the provider's program can be identified and does not demonstrate any gains that can be attributed to tutoring received from the provider.	The effect size for students in the provider's program can be identified and does demonstrate gains that can be attributed to tutoring received from the provider.	The effect size for students in the provider's program can be identified and exceeds +.25 (i.e., one-fourth of a standard deviation above the predicted mean score).
	Mathematics	There is insufficient information available to determine student achievement outcomes.	The effect size for students in the provider's program can be identified and does not demonstrate any gains that can be attributed to tutoring received from the provider.	The effect size for students in the provider's program can be identified and does demonstrate gains that can be attributed to tutoring received from the provider.	The effect size for students in the provider's program can be identified and exceeds +.25 (i.e., one-fourth of a standard deviation above the predicted mean score).
Attendance		There is insufficient information to determine student attendance rates.	The provider's attendance rate is one full standard deviation below the mean attendance rate.	The provider's attendance rate is between one full standard deviation below and one full standard deviation above the mean attendance rate.	The provider's attendance rate is one standard deviation or more above the mean attendance rate.
Parent Satisfaction (1)		There is insufficient information available to determine parent satisfaction outcomes.	Fewer than 75% of respondents indicate overall satisfaction with the provider.	75-89% of respondents indicate overall satisfaction with the provider.	90-100% of respondents indicate overall satisfaction with the provider.
Parent Participation (2)		There is insufficient information available to determine parent participation outcomes.	Fewer than 75% of respondents indicate they were consulted in the development of the student's individual learning plan.	75-89% of respondents indicate they were consulted in the development of the student's individual learning plan.	90-100% of respondents indicate they were consulted in the development on the student's individual learning plan.

Table 7: SES Provider Status Categories Used by Tennessee Department of Education

SECTION III: PROVIDE STATUS AND CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIREMENTS

It is the intent of the Office of Federal Programs to work with providers, when possible, to provide technical assistance for improvement if survey results, provider evaluation, and/or monitoring indicate less-than-desirable outcomes. Results of monitoring for compliance, analyses of student data to determine provider effectiveness, and analyses of parent and school staff survey to determine satisfaction with implementation of SES tutoring will be used to categorize each provider's status as follows:

Full Standing

The provider has demonstrated positive achievement effects, has shown acceptable or above standards implementation outcomes (customer satisfaction and service delivery) and a "closed" or "closed with recommendations" monitoring status, and is approved without reservations to continue services in the upcoming year.

Satisfactory Standing

The provider has demonstrated "indeterminate" achievement effects due to insufficient data or equivocal effect sizes, but has shown acceptable or positive implementation outcomes (customer satisfaction, service delivery, compliance.)

OR

The provider has demonstrated positive achievement effects but has minor compliance violations in which compliance was achieved within the allotted two-week period following the monitoring visit.

Remedy Requirement: Submit improvement plan for improving student achievement where lack of positive evidence is due to equivocal outcomes (neither sufficiently positive nor negative effect sizes) *not* to insufficient sample size OR for avoiding future noncompliance violations that were identified in the previous monitoring visit.

Probation I

The provider has demonstrated <u>one or more</u> of the following:

- "Marginal" or "Negative" achievement effects;
- Less than "Acceptable" implementation outcomes; and/or,
- Noncompliance findings in the monitoring visit that required a Compliance Action Plan agreement.

Remedy Requirement: Probation I status begins immediately during the current year. The provider shall submit an improvement plan with timeline for improving implementation quality, avoiding future compliance violations related to those specified in the Compliance Action plan, and improving student achievement where lack of positive evidence is due to equivocal outcomes (neither sufficiently positive or negative effect sizes) *not* to insufficient sample size. Compliance violations shall be addressed within the timeline of the Compliance Action Plan. The provider's status for the following year will become "Probation II" if

- The provider's achievement effects are not at least "Acceptable" for the following school year;

- A Compliance Action Plan is required for compliance during the monitoring visit in the following year; and/or,
- The provider's implementation quality is less than acceptable.

Probation II

The provider has demonstrated one or more of the following:

- "Marginal" or "Negative" achievement effects for more than one consecutive year;
- Less than "Acceptable" implementation outcomes for more than one consecutive year;
- Noncompliance findings in the monitoring visits for more than one consecutive year.

Remedy Requirement: Failure to achieve improvement for the current school year will result in automatic removal (see Section I).

Table 8: Maryland Department of Education: Overall Rubric for Provider Evaluation

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SUPPLEMENTAL SERVICES

Rubric of Overall Evaluation of Provider Effectiveness (Draft July 2008)

Date: _____

Provider: _____

Instructions:

Review the documented evidence for this Provider. For each criterion below, read the description under each rating. Determine which rating most accurately represents the evidence. Record this rating in the "Rating" column. Multiply that rating by the weight and record the result in the "Score" column. The score for each criterion as well as the total score must be at least the "Minimum Acceptable Score." If this requirement is not met, the Provider will be required to submit a Plan of Action for approval, and MSDE program managers will confirm implementation of the Action Plan at future site visits.

Criterion/ Outcome	Insufficient Information NA	Unacceptable or Below Standards 1	Needs Correction or Marginal Quality 2	Meets Standard or Acceptable 3	Exemplary or Above Standards 4	Source of Evidence (External Evaluator, Database, Site Visit, Other)	Rating	Weight	Score	Minimum Acceptable Score
Student Achievement	There is insufficient information available to determine student achievement outcomes.	There is evidence that the Provider has had a *negative impact* on academic outcomes, or *few or no students* have shown gains related to tutoring received.	There is no evidence of a negative impact, but there is *little or no evidence of a positive impact, or fewer than half* of the students have made some gain related to tutoring received.	There is *some* evidence that the Provider has had a *positive impact* on academic outcomes, or *about half* of the students have made some gain related to tutoring received.	There is *strong, consistent* evidence that the Provider has had a *positive impact* on academic outcomes, and *most* students have shown gains related to tutoring received.		—	x 3	= —	9

Criterion/Outcome	Insufficient Information NA	Unacceptable or Below Standards 1	Needs Correction or Marginal Quality 2	Meets Standard or Acceptable 3	Exemplary or Above Standards 4	Source of Evidence (External Evaluator, Database, Site Visit, Other)	Rating	Weight	Score	Minimum Acceptable Score
2. Communication	There is insufficient information available to determine communication outcomes.	Provider has *not* communicated with the principals, teachers, or parents of students served.	There has been *limited* communication between the provider and *at least two* of the following: principals, teachers, and parents of students served.	There has been *some* regular communication throughout the year between the provider and the principals, teachers, *and* parents of students served.	There is an *ongoing and sustained system of communication* between the provider and the principals, teachers, and parents of students served.		—	x2	_ =	6
3. Instructional Plans-Individualized Instruction	There is insufficient information available to determine instructional plans of the provider.	Provider does *not* plan instruction explicitly geared to student needs or to reinforce their regular academic program.	Provider is in the *planning stages* of gearing instruction to student needs and reinforcing their regular academic program.	Provider has made *some* attempt with the *majority* of students to plan instruction explicitly geared to student needs and to reinforce their regular academic program.	Provider instructional plans are explicitly geared to the needs of most or all students and reinforce the regular academic program.		—	x2	_ =	6
TOTAL									_ =	33

Other concerns (Please identify):

Notes:

Evaluation Process

Table 9: SES Tennessee Department of Education: Public Report of Provider Performance

Reading the Supplemental Educational Services (SES) Provider List

The list, in table form, includes names of and information about all the companies and organizations that the state has approved to provide free tutoring to eligible students in the 2008-2009 school year.

Provider	Session Information	Description of Services	Available to Serve
Contact Information	Tutoring session information and the amount of money per hour the provider charges the school district for your child's tutoring.	Tutoring service information including the subjects, group size, and tutor qualifications.	The school districts that the provider will serve and the tutoring site locations.
Cell #1–Student Achievement *Reading/Language Arts* *Insufficient data* *Math* *Insufficient data*	**Cell #2–Customer Satisfaction** *Communication* ☆☆☆ *Instructional Plan* ☆☆ *Local & State Standards* ☆☆☆ *Special Ed. and ELL Students* ☆ *Assessment of Provider Overall* ☆☆	**Cell #3** **The provider says this about its services: 75 words or less**	

Cell #1 shows the provider's effectiveness in raising student achievement in reading/language.

Cell #2 shows the results of surveys from parents, teachers, principals, school district SES coordinators, and SES providers.

Cell #3 shows what the provider says about its services.

☆☆☆ **Above Standards**   ☆☆ **Acceptable**   ☆ **Marginal Quality**   **No Stars=Below Standards**

The three cells on the lower portion of the table give the results of an evaluation conducted by the Center for Research in Education Policy (CREP), University of Memphis.

Cell #1–Student Achievement: Shows the provider's effectiveness in raising student achievement on the state tests in reading, language arts, and mathematics. Results may be listed as follows:

a. **Two year averages indicated positive effect on student achievement.**
b. **Below Standards in Student Achievement:** Students did not show significant gains in achievement after tutoring.
c. **Insufficient data:** There was not enough information available that would indicate effectiveness or satisfaction. This could mean that the provider tutored small numbers of students, or small numbers of parents, teachers, principals, and district SES coordinators responded to surveys about the particular provider.

Cell #2–Customer Satisfaction: Shows the results of survey responses from parents, teachers, principals, school system SES coordinators, and SES providers.

a. **Communication:** Respondents' perception of how well the provider communicated with parents, teachers, and principals about students' progress.
b. **Instructional Plan:** Respondents' perception of how well the provider planned to meet each student's academic needs.
c. **Local and State Standards:** Respondents' perception of how well the provider aligned its tutoring to the school district and state standards for student learning.
d. **Special Education and ELL Students:** Respondents' perception of how well the provider served the needs of special education and English Language Learners (ELL).
e. **Assessment of provider overall:** Respondents' satisfaction with the provider's services.

Cell #3–A statement that the provider makes about its services.

Table 10: Indiana Department of Education: Public Report

2006-2007 SES PRELIMINARY EVALUATION REPORT

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

PROVIDER NAME: A-Z In-Home Tutoring

DISTRICTS SERVED: Ft. Wayne Com. Schools, East Allen Cty. Sch. Corp., Logansport Com. Sch. Corp., Muncie Com. Schools, Elkhart Com. Sch. Corp., New Albany-Floyd Co. Con. Sch. Corp., Vincennes Com. Sch. Corp., School City of East Chicago, Gary Com. Schools, School City of Hammond, Anderson Com. Sch. Corp., MSD Decatur Twp., MSD Lawrence Twp., MSD Perry Twp., Indianapolis Public Schools, Monroe Cty. Com. Sch. Corp., Evansville-Vanderburgh Sch. Corp., Nettle Creek Sch. Corp.

 # OF STUDENTS SIGNED UP: 395 (English/Language Arts and Mathematics)

2006-2007 EVALUATION GRADES (see report below for details)

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: B

(How satisfied are districts, schools, and parents with the services that the provider offered)?

SERVICE DELIVERY: A-

(How well did the provider implement services, and to what extent did the provider implement its program with fidelity to its originally approved application)?

ACADEMIC EFFECTIVENESS: B-

(Is the provider increasing the academic achievement of the students it served)?

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

PARENT REPORT

% of parents reporting: 19%

Overall score: 3.6 out of 4.0

DISTRICT REPORT

% of districts served reporting: 100%

District recommends continuation?: 83% of districts served recommend continuation

PRINCIPAL REPORT

% of principals reporting: 24%

Overall Score:	2.6 out of 4.0

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION GRADE: **B**

SERVICE DELIVERY

PARENT REPORT

% of parents reporting:	19%
Overall score:	3.5 out of 4.0

DISTRICT REPORT:

% of districts reporting:	100%
Overall score:	91% (274/300 possible points)

PRINCIPAL REPORT:

% of principals reporting:	24%
Overall score:	3.1 out of 4.0

ONSITE MONITORING/COMPLIANCE: n/a

(Due to scheduling conflicts, no onsite visit could be conducted to A to Z in the 2006-2007 school year)

SERVICE DELIVERY GRADE: **A-**

ACADEMIC EFFECTIVENESS

COMPLETION RATE:	39%
% OF STUDENTS MEETING GOALS	80.3%
TYPE OF ASSESSMENT USED BY PROVIDER:	SBTS
% OF STUDENTS SHOWING GAINS	93.7%
% OF STUDENTS WHO ATTENDED 80% OR MORE SESSIONS: (Based on # attending 80% / # served who attended at least one session)	62.0%

In order to be included in the ISTEP+ analysis provided below, students must have completed 80% of their SES sessions, must not have been retained from 2006 to 2007, and must have ISTEP+ scores for both 2006 and 2007.

ISTEP+ DATA (included in academic effectiveness grade):

SES STUDENTS ONLY: ISTEP+ RESULTS

For students served by A to Z In-Home Tutoring in 2006-2007, 69% made scale score gains on ISTEP+ in English/Language Arts (below the statewide average for all SES students) and 78% made gains for Math, exceeding the statewide average for all SES students. 42% of students served by A to Z In-Home Tutoring showed substantial (one year's) growth in E/LA, below the state average for all SES students, and 64% showed substantial (one year's) growth in Math, exceeding the statewide average for all SES students. The percentage of students passing ISTEP+ decreased from 25% to 19% for English/Language Arts but increased from 33% to 47% in Math.

Category	A to Z In-Home Tutoring (E/LA)	All SES Students Statewide (E/LA)*	A to Z In-Home Tutoring (Math)	All SES Students Statewide (Math)*
# of students	36	1675	36	1645
% showing growth on ISTEP+ scale score	69%	71%	78%	73%
% showing substantial (one year's) growth on ISTEP+ scale score**	42%	49%	64%	49%
% passing ISTEP+ (2006)	25%	43%	33%	52%
% passing ISTEP+ (2007)	19%	42%	47%	51%

*Includes all students participating in SES who completed 80% of their sessions, were not retained from grades 2006-2007, and have ISTEP+ scores for 2006 and 2007.

**Substantial growth (one year's growth) is defined as making a large enough scale score gain to pass ISTEP+ from one year to the next.

SES AND NON-SES STUDENTS MATCHED: ISTEP+ RESULTS

When possible, each student who participated in SES, completed 80% of his or her sessions, and had ISTEP+ scores for both 2006 and 2007 was matched with a similar student who was eligible for but did not participate in SES. SES students were matched with other students from their school on a number of characteristics, including grade in school, race, free/reduced lunch eligibility, special education status, limited English proficiency, and 2006 ISTEP+ scale score. The charts below provide the results of the matched comparison. The matched comparison provides a context in which to place the gains or losses made by SES students. By looking at the charts below, it can be determined whether students served by this SES provider performed about the same as similar students who did not participate in SES; worse than similar students who did not participate in SES; or better than similar students who did not participate in SES. For A to Z In-Home Tutoring, 24 matches out of 36 participating students (67%) were made for Math, and 22 matches out of 36 participating students (61%) were made for English/Language Arts.

MATHEMATICS					
	# Matched	% Matched	% showing growth	% showing 1 year's growth	Average growth	% passing (2007)
SES			71%	67%	41.1	50%
Not SES	24	67%	67%	58%	22.5	33%

Evaluation Process

As shown in the chart above, 71% of the 24 SES students included in the matched comparison showed any growth on ISTEP+ scale score, and 67% showed substantial (one year's) growth. Comparatively, 67% of the similar but non-participating students showed any growth, and 58% showed substantial growth. More SES students (50%) passed ISTEP+ in 2007 than non-SES students (33%).

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS						
	# Matched	% Matched	% showing growth	% showing 1 year's growth	Average growth	% passing (2007)
SES			73%	46%	15.9	27%
Not SES	22	61%	73%	50%	14.4	27%

As shown in the chart above, 73% of the SES students included in the matched comparison showed any growth on ISTEP+ scale score. The same percentage of similar non-SES students showed growth. However, 50% of the non-participating students showed substantial (one year's growth) on ISTEP+ English/Language Arts scale score, compared to slightly fewer (46%) of the SES students. The same percentage of SES and similar non-SES students passed ISTEP+ in 2007.

Note that information provided in the ISTEP+ analysis represents descriptive statistics only (averages and percentages). Additional statistical analyses, including results disaggregated by district and grade level, will be conducted in the statewide evaluation of SES 2006-2007, to be released by the fall of 2008.

ACADEMIC EFFECTIVENESS GRADE: **B–**

OVERALL GRADE: B

For resources on Supplemental Educational Services and other topics see:

www.centerii.org