

California's SPDG

In 2007, the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) awarded California's Department of Education - Special Education Division its third State Improvement Grant (SIG), now named "SPDG" (State Personnel Development Grant). The SPDG is administered through CalSTAT (California Services for Technical Assistance and Training), a special project of CDE's Special Education Division.

Purpose: The central purpose of the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) is to continue to reform and improve California's system of personnel preparation and professional development to increase student achievement and improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

Project Design: To achieve these goals, California's SPDG has been:

- providing and scaling-up high quality professional development, training, and technical assistance in scientific or evidence-based literacy and positive behavioral supports to school teams of teachers, principals, administrators, paraprofessionals, other personnel, and parents/families;
- supporting personnel in further developing, implementing, and sustaining their knowledge and skills through wrap-around training and TA, intensive coaching, and web-based tools and communications;
- involving the parents and family members of students with disabilities; and
- enhancing California's ability to recruit and retain highly qualified special education teachers.

Project Activities: Specific areas of activity include:

- Multi-year professional development, training and technical assistance for school sites in scientific or evidence-based interventions in literacy (**Effective Reading Intervention Academy or ERIA**) and positive behavioral supports (**Building Effective Schools Together or BEST**);
- The Leadership Community (**Regional Leadership Institutes and Leadership Site Award Program activities**) focused on disseminating and developing knowledge and skills in the evidence-based CDE-approved "core message" areas, and characterized by extensive general and special education collaboration;
- **Centrally coordinated TA** provided by project consultants and site-to-site TA provided by the Leadership Community centered around the evidence-based "core message" areas;
- **Tools** for data-informed decision-making at the state and local levels, including: the training events database TED, a CST Charting program, the site academic meta-measures database SAMM, and the ERIA and BEST Rubrics in Excel;
- The **Family Participation Fund** and **Parent Training and Information Centers** parent/family outreach;
- Expansion of the capacity of the California State University Los Angeles (**CSULA**) **education specialist credential intern program**; and
- Improvement of the **TEACH California website** (teachcalifornia.org) to help recruit special education (SE) teachers.

SPDG Program Objectives and Performance Measures

OSEP establishes federal level program objectives and performance measures to guide the work of the SPDGs. OSEP periodically adjusts the objectives and is currently in the process of doing so. The new objectives will be in effect when California applies for its next SPDG grant, as well as becoming reportable for the final years of the current SPDG.

OSEP's Original SPDG Performance Measures

- Measure 1.1- **Evidence-Based Practices (Personnel)**: The percent of personnel receiving professional development through the SPDG based on scientific-or evidence-based instructional practices.
- Measure 1.2 - **State Performance Plan (SPP) Alignment**: The percent of SPDG projects that implement personnel development/training activities that are aligned with improvement strategies identified in their SPP.
- Measure 2.1- **Evidence-Based Practices (Training)**: The percentage of professional development/training activities provided through the SPDG based on scientific-or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practices.
- Measure 2.2 – **Sustained Practices**: The percentage of professional development/training activities based on scientific-or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practices, provided through the SPDG program, that are sustained through on-going and comprehensive practices.
- Measure 3.1 - **Teacher Retention**: In states with SPDG projects that have special education teacher retention as a goal, the statewide percentage of highly qualified special education teachers in state identified professional disciplines (e.g., teachers of children with emotional disturbance, deafness, etc.) who remain teaching after the first two years of employment.
- Measure 4.1 – **Scale-up Scientific- or Evidence-Based Practices**: The percentage of SPDG projects that successfully replicate the use of scientific- or evidence-based instructional/behavioral practice in schools.

OSEP's New SPDG Objectives

- Projects use **evidence-based professional development practices** to support the attainment of identified competencies
- Participants in SPDG professional development demonstrate **improvement in implementation of SPDG-supported practices** over time.
- Projects use SPDG professional development **funds to provide follow-up activities** designed to sustain the use of SPDG-supported practices. (Efficiency Measure)
- Highly qualified special education teachers that have participated in SPDG supported special education teacher retention activities **remain as special education teachers two years after their initial participation** in these activities.