



SISEP

State Implementation and Scaling-up
of Evidence-based Practices

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SISEP eNote

Sweatpants, Yoga Pants or No Pants: We Can Still Talk and Assess Capacity Building

The evolving situation with the COVID-19 pandemic this year has forced us to develop new ways of learning and being together in our communities. In a short period of time, education has taken what we know about identifying and utilizing evidence-based practices and applied this to online learning. Within the current complexity of many transitions are the same questions that have been pervasive in improving outcomes for students. How do we build capacity for continuous improvement? In our current context, how do we continue to support our schools, teachers, students and families?

To answer these questions, we need to consistently assess our capacity at the state, region, district and school levels and action plan our steps to improvement. This means that, like classroom instruction, our assessments need to be thoughtfully planned for virtual implementation. We need to quickly adapt to online platforms while having the same depth and quality of conversations and decision making. Our colleagues in partner states have successfully risen to the challenge and are doing just that!

Tips for Virtual Administration

For successful virtual administration of capacity assessments, [check out these tips for remote teams](#) developed by the Minnesota Implementation Team led by Ellen Nacik and John Gimpl, State Implementation Specialists with the Minnesota Department of Education. Ellen is one nimble online facilitator!



[Download the Tip Sheet](#)

Virtual capacity assessments can be successful, but it may not be for everyone. Virtual administration works best with teams that have moved beyond forming, storming and norming and into supportive decision making. Having familiarity with the team, tools and purposes allows for fluent navigation through the process. If your context necessitates moving forward with a newer team in order to keep your improvement momentum going, be sure to spend more time prior to administration reviewing the tool and developing a deeper understanding of the content and purpose.

“Our invested MTSS leadership team was able to have meaningful discussions and generate action items throughout the virtual administration. Using the polling functions to capture the scoring process worked well and ensured all of our diverse participants’ voices were heard, regardless of position or authority.”

—Sheila Alles, Chief Deputy Superintendent for Michigan Department of Education

For More Information on Capacity Assessments:

- [SISEP Resources & Tools](#)



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