

LSC Core Update

2000-2001 DATA COLLECTION

2000-2001

Reporting Guidelines

The Reporting Guidelines for the 2000-2001 data collection year are now available on the Web. To find the reporting guidelines for your project, log in to your project-specific Lead Evaluator or PI section and go to "Data Collection Requirements." (Copies of all versions of the reporting guidelines can be found in the Core Evaluation Data Collection Manual posted on the Web.)

As in the previous data collection year for the core evaluation system, the level of effort required for reporting will vary depending on the type of data collected. Year Two and Final Year projects will submit a narrative report and ratings along with a rationale for their ratings. Other projects (Baseline, Year One, and Interim Year projects) are required only to submit ratings and rationales for their ratings. Evaluators writing reports for Year Two and Final Year projects are reminded to address all of the areas included in the reporting guidelines for that project. NSF has indicated that all incomplete reports should be returned to the evaluator for revision. If you have any questions about the core evaluation or reporting guidelines, e-mail HRI.

Questionnaire Data and Composites: 2000-2001

Data from teacher and principal questionnaires administered in spring 2001 are now available via the Web. Tables for individual items and composites are posted on a flow basis, in the order in which questionnaires arrive. Lead Evaluat-

ors and PIs will be notified via e-mail when tables and data have been made available for their project. In addition to the data tables and composites, raw data files for both types of questionnaires are also provided. Composite reliability figures will be available late in the summer, when all projects have sent their questionnaires for scanning and processing. Those projects administering the short version of the LSC Principal Questionnaire will **not** have principal composite results, since those items were not included in the questionnaire.

Files providing the link between project ID and LSC ID for 2001 are available to Lead Evaluators under "Samples and Links" on the project-specific Lead Evaluator section of the Web. Teachers and principals are assured of confidentiality when they complete a questionnaire or agree to be observed, so we do not release these links to the PI or project staff.

Reminder to Baseline and Final Year Projects

The core evaluation focuses on collecting data on the system the project is attempting to change, as well as on teachers and their teaching. At the beginning of an LSC project, and again at the end, projects are asked to submit information on the context of the districts participating in the LSC; the focus is on policies and practices in these districts and the amount of support from stakeholders for the reforms the LSC is charged with implementing. PIs of Baseline projects should complete a "District Information Sheet: Prior to the LSC" for **each** participating district and send copies to their evaluator and HRI by August 31.

PIs of Final Year projects should complete a "District Information Sheet: Conclusion of the LSC" for each district or a sample of three districts (see the Core Evaluation Manual for guidelines on selecting these districts) and send copies to their Lead Evaluator and HRI. Final Year projects should complete this requirement as soon as possible if they have not already done so (deadline of June 30, 2001) since their evaluator will need this information to write the final core evaluation report due to HRI in October. PIs can check the Core Evaluation Manual for copies of this form and guidelines for its completion.

Project Strategies

As part of the reporting process this year, PIs and evaluators will be asked to collaborate on describing the design of the project by completing a Project Strategies form. PIs may remember completing a pilot version of this form prior to the Lessons Learned conference last June. While the PIs and evaluators are asked to collaborate on completing the form, **either** the PI or evaluator can submit and view the form via the Web. The Project Strategies form is currently in the final editing stages and will be available in mid-July.

REPORT AVAILABLE

Year Six Cross-Site Report Now Available

The "Local Systemic Change through Teacher Enhancement: Year Six Cross-Site Report" is now available. Copies have been sent to the PI and Lead Evaluator of each project. It is also available on the Web at:

www.horizon-research.com/LSC

2001-2002 DATA COLLECTION

Sampling Frames Now Due in December

Last year, the sampling frame due date was moved up to October 15 so that NSF would have teacher participation data in order to make decisions about project continuation funding. A number of projects had a great deal of difficulty with the mid-October deadline, noting that district staffing decisions often had not stabilized by this date. In order to allow projects more time to compile this information, and still get the information to NSF in a timely fashion, the school and teacher sampling frames will be due on **December 3, 2001**.

To facilitate this process, by mid-September HRI will return the project's 2000-2001 sampling frames "pre-formatted" for the project to update the appropriate fields. Projects should update these fields and submit the sampling frames no later than December 3. Sampling frames will be "cleaned" and samples drawn in the order that they are received. Projects who would like their samples early so they can be ready to begin data collection in early February are encouraged to submit their sampling frames as soon as possible.

Important Information on Data Collection Requirements

Once again this fall, PIs will be asked to confirm their data collection schedule, based on the projected end date of their project. In the past, the "Final Year" of data collection followed the project's final summer of professional development. For example, if a project was scheduled to offer professional development in the summer of 2001 (but not the next summer), their "Final Year" of data collection would take place from September 1, 2001 to August 31, 2002. This plan was devised in order to maximize the

likelihood of detecting the impact of the LSC projects on teachers and their teaching.

That definition of "Final Year" has proved problematic for some projects as it has in some cases entailed collecting data after the official end of their award. NSF has decided to allow projects to designate the final core evaluation spring data collection as *no earlier than* the last spring for which the project is scheduled to receive funding. A project with a no-cost extension at the end of the project may choose to do final data collection that spring, or else delay it to the next year.

Meeting Dates Set

Dates have been set for the 2002 Lead Evaluator meeting and training for new classroom observers:

January 14-15

Lead Evaluator Meeting

February 7-8

Classroom Observation Training

Both meetings will be held in Chapel Hill, NC. Specific information on these meetings will be sent to the PIs and Lead Evaluators in the fall.

Monitoring Data Collection

PIs are reminded that they are responsible for ensuring thorough, timely core evaluation data collection and reporting. The LSC PI can access the PI section of the LSC Website by using their PI-specific username and password. In this section, PIs have access to the project's data collection requirements; they can call up a data collection summary that will indicate the number of interview and observations the evaluation team has submitted to date, both partial and complete. This area of the PI section will be expanded this fall to include other required elements of the core such as reporting and data collection schedule acceptance. If you do not have a PI-specific username and password, simply go to "Log-in Help" at the PI site to request that the username and password be e-mailed to the PI contact.

IMPACT OF THE LSC ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Science Program Study

HRI is currently completing the pilot administration of the program study of student achievement in science. Twelve science LSCs participated in the pilot, administering the assessment to approximately 3,500 students. Over the summer, HRI will analyze the data for item difficulty, instructional sensitivity, and achievement by demographic subgroups. The results of the analyses and feedback from the participating projects will be used to revise the student assessment, the questionnaire completed by teachers involved in the study, and the test administration procedures.

Plans for the full study in the 2001-2002 academic year call for projects to administer the pre-test in the fall and the post-test in the spring sampling classes at the selected grade level (4th, 5th, or 6th), each as close to the beginning or end of the school year as possible. Each project's staff will be responsible for distributing the assessment materials to sampled teachers, collecting the materials after the administration, ensuring correct completion of necessary information, and returning all of the materials to HRI.

Study participants are required to administer the assessment to at least six classes in the projects. Projects interested in receiving project-specific results can opt to administer the assessment to an entire grade level; in this case, HRI will send the project an electronic copy of the data set after the post-assessment.

A number of science LSCs have already indicated that they plan on participating in the full study this coming year. If your project would like to participate in the study and you have not notified HRI, or if you need additional information, please contact Eric Banilower by August 1, 2001 at:

erb@horizon-research.com

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q *Our project's evaluator will be retiring after she completes the 2000–2001 core evaluation report. We have identified a new Lead Evaluator, but don't know what is involved in preparing her for this role.*

A The first thing you need to do is to get the new Lead Evaluator approved by your NSF program officer and send this individual's contact information to HRI.

The amount of training new Lead Evaluators require depends on their previous experience with LSC projects and whether they plan on conducting classroom observations for the core evaluation. Experienced

LSC Lead Evaluators have likely already attended all of the necessary training to work on new projects.

Assuming that your evaluator is new to LSC, she would need to attend the New Project Orientation (typically, held the first week in May in DC) to get oriented to the core evaluation and receive training in assessing the quality of professional development. If this individual also plans to conduct classroom observations, there are two training opportunities available in the spring of 2002. The first training will take place in February 7–8 and the second training occurs two days prior to the New Project Orientation meeting.

Please note that all Lead Evaluators are required to attend a meeting each January. It would be use-

ful for your new evaluator to attend this meeting, in addition to the other training. Feel free to contact HRI if you have any questions.

Q *I attended the Lessons Learned Conference held last summer and am interested in obtaining any information summarized from this meeting. Is this information available?*

A A summary of the lessons learned report and other core evaluation reports can be found on the LSC Website in "News, Reports, and Presentations." The title of this report is *What Have We Learned? Local Systemic Change Initiatives Share Lessons From The Field*.

Focus on the Teacher Interview

The purpose of the teacher interviews is to collect information on teachers' perceptions of the quality and utility of the LSC professional development, the impact of professional development activities on their instruction, and the extent to which their school district context is supportive of the LSC reforms. Between February and May, each project (with the exception of projects in their Baseline Year of data collection) conducts interviews with ten teachers who have already been involved in the project's professional development activities. These interviews are an important part of the cross-site evaluation and are also a good source of data for Lead Evaluators in providing feedback to the projects.

For the core evaluation, interviewers are asked to complete a Teacher Interview Summary for each of the 10 interviews conducted, providing information on how the teacher responded to questions in the interview. Most of the items on the Teacher Interview Summary include three parts (A, B, and C). Part A asks the interviewer to code *everything* a teacher mentions in response to the question, using a number of categories relevant to the question. Given that the interviewer is asked to code every area a teacher mentions in response to a question, several different codes can be selected in Part A. HRI plans to use Part A to report **quantitative** data on teachers' responses to interview questions.

Part B asks the interviewer to transcribe the one "most salient" direct quote, taken from the teacher's response to the question; in Part C, one code should be selected to characterize the transcribed quote provided in Part B. HRI plans to use Parts B and C to **illustrate** the codes being used to categorize teacher responses. With this purpose in mind, evaluators should be aware of the following in reviewing the teacher interview summaries:

1. The code selected in Part C should apply *only* to the quote from Part B, and not to anything else the teacher may have mentioned in his/her response that was documented in Part A.
2. Ideally, the quote selected should both be salient *and* illustrate the code that is associated with it without the need for any additional context. Quotes that do not appear to "fit" the code would likely not be useful for the purposes of core evaluation reporting.
3. The purpose of these quotes is to get a teacher's opinions in his/her own words. Quotes submitted to HRI on the Teacher Interview Summary should be the actual responses of the teacher, exactly as stated in the interview, rather than paraphrased.

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Dates to Remember



August 31, 2001
End of 2000–2001 Data
Collection Year

September 4, 2001
Report Ratings and Project
Strategies Forms Available
for Completion on the Web

October 15, 2001
Due at HRI:
Classroom Observation Protocols
Prof Dev Observation Protocols
Teacher Interview Data
Evaluation Report (if applicable)
Evaluation Ratings/Rationales
Project Strategies

November 15, 2001
PI Annual Report Due at NSF

December 3, 2001
Sampling Frame Due at HRI

January 14–15, 2002
Lead Evaluator Meeting

February 7–8, 2002
Classroom Observation Training

Annual LSC Core Evaluation Requirements

All Projects:
Professional Development Observations
(5–8 per year, 2–5 for Baseline)
Principal Questionnaires
(population)
Individual Teacher Interviews
(10; not conducted Baseline Year)
Project Team Interviews

**In addition, Baseline Year, Year
Two, and Final Year Projects:**
Classroom Observations
(16 per subject; in 2000–2001 this will
vary)
Teacher Questionnaires
(300 per subject, plus program sample)

Most data collection activities are conducted February–May annually, except Professional Development Observations and the Project Team Interviews, which may be conducted throughout the data collection year (September 1–August 31).

The PI is responsible for making sure that core evaluation data are collected in a timely fashion and reported to HRI each fall for inclusion in the annual

Contact Information

If you need help with any aspect of the LSC Core Evaluation, please e-mail Elizabeth Arnold at:

lsc@horizon-research.com

We prefer that you e-mail first. If a follow-up call is needed, someone from HRI will contact you.

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(This newsletter is available on the Web.)