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**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Multi-Site Evaluation of the Safe Schools Healthy Students State Program**

**State Key Informant Interview
Verbal Consent Script and Interview Guide**

Interviewer:	Date:	Start Time:	End Time:
Participant ID:			
Participant's Title / Role:			

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Substance and Mental Health Services Administration is sponsoring a multi-site evaluation of the Safe Schools / Healthy Students (SS/HS) State Program in seven states. The Program funds participating states to disseminate and support planning and implementation of the SS/HS Framework for early childhood development, violence and substance abuse prevention, mental health services, and school safety in three select school districts in each state. The purpose of the multi-site evaluation is to gather and assess information on state and district implementation, collaboration and delivery of evidence-based services for children and youth. Evaluation findings will identify challenges and successes experienced by states and districts in implementing the SS/HS program, and may improve guidance for broad dissemination of the SS/HS framework nationwide.

To better understand the implementation, collaboration and delivery processes, ICF International (ICF) is conducting key informant interviews with select SS/HS State Education Authority administrators and other individuals involved in the SS/HS initiative.

PARTICIPATION

- We are asking you to provide information on the current status of [STATE NAME] SS/HS program because of your involvement in its development to date, and your continuing role in the program. The interview should last approximately 1 hour. We are conducting up to 14 interviews.

- I will be asking questions about your role in the program, the State comprehensive plan preparation process, characteristics of your state’s policy environment that may impact the SS/HS program, the current implementation status of the program, facilitators and barriers to implementing the SS/HS framework program objectives and strategies, and plans for evaluating the program. A summary of the findings will be shared.
- To ensure the accuracy and completeness of the information you provide, we would like to get your permission to record the interview. However, if you do not agree to be recorded, we will not record the interview. If the interview is not recorded, we will still take notes during the interview. If you agree to be recorded, only the ICF evaluation team will be able to use the recording. To protect your privacy, we will keep the notes and recordings in password protected files. Only ICF team members will be allowed to use them. Your name will not be used in any of our references to the material, so your statements will be confidential. All recordings will be destroyed one year after completion of the contract.

Do I have your permission to record the interview?

YES NO (Participant will verbalize Yes or No)

Do I have your permission to contact you in the future if clarification about the responses you offered today is needed?

YES NO (Participant will verbalize Yes or No)

PROCEDURES

- You may ask questions about this evaluation at any time before, during or after the interview.
- You may stop answering questions at any time, for any reason, and you may choose not to respond to any questions that you do not want to respond to.
- We will provide you contact information for the project director, who you may contact with any questions that arise after your participation in this interview.
- The interviewer will record (if permission is given) and/or take notes during the interview.
- The interview will take about 1 hour.
- You will receive a copy of this consent form via email.

RISKS

This study is considered to be low or minimal risk. However, if any question makes you uneasy you are free to stop the interview or skip that question.

BENEFITS

Participation may not benefit you personally. However, the information gathered in this study may be valuable for developing policies, practices, and skills for improving prevention and mental health services, involving families and community, and improving safety and climate in schools throughout your state. Lessons learned in your state may also benefit programs in other parts of the country.

1 Compensation

Participation in this study will involve no cost to you. You will not be paid for participating in this study.

PRIVACY

We will take every precaution to protect your identity. We will protect your privacy by NOT including your name or position title, the name of your school district, or any other identifying information when we present the study or publish its results. Findings will be reported in aggregate and organized by theme. No one in the school district administration or SAMHSA will have specific knowledge of your responses to interview questions and your responses will not be linked to any review or evaluation of your professional performance. Information identifying your school district will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team. Your privacy and the evaluation data will be kept confidential and secure.

Contact Information

Any questions you have about the study can be directed to Mary Spooner, 3 Corporate Square, NE, Suite 306, Atlanta, GA 30329 or 404-321-3211. To contact the Institutional Review Board that reviewed this study, call 1-877-556-2218.

By agreeing to participate in this interview, you confirm that we have discussed the points on this form, that you understand them, and that you freely agree to participate.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview.

(Potential prompts are italicized.)

Key Informant Role

To get started, I would like to hear about your current role in the SS/HS grant?

1. What is your current position, and your role and responsibilities in the SS/HS grant?

Does the agency / organization you represent have roles or responsibilities in the SS/HS State Program beyond what you have mentioned?

With what teams, Committees or work groups associated with the State SS/HS grant do you work?

In the first grant year, what was your role in developing (STATE's) Comprehensive SS/HS Plan?

2. To what extent are collaborator roles and responsibilities clearly defined, and to what extent are they defined through mutual suggestion and agreement?

Comprehensive Plan Development

Preparing a comprehensive SS/HS Plan for (STATE) was a major charge to the State Management Team (SMT). Plan development was to be guided by the SS/HS framework that specifies objectives (elements), strategies, and guiding principles. However, states must adapt framework emphases, strategies, and activities to fit local context and circumstances. My next questions concern your

perceptions of how the State Comprehensive Plan was developed and adapted to meet the needs of (STATE).

3. What is your experience or understanding of how the (STATE) comprehensive plan for the SS/HS grant was developed? Who was primarily involved in developing it? How were decisions made? How was input gathered from different interests and sources?

What was your involvement?

Who prepared drafts (grantee staff, consultants, multiple agency staff)?

How was review and revision carried out? How were decisions made?

What was the SMT's involvement? What State agencies were most involved?

How was input gathered from other stakeholders, particularly from vulnerable and diverse families and youth?

Were local districts and schools involved? How?

4. What were the major differences in perspective, priority, or strategy that had to be worked out in the STATE plan preparation process?

How were these resolved?

What are the major remaining points of contention?

5. Thinking of all the guides, opinions, data and other inputs to the planning process, what would you say were most important?

SS/HS framework? Other funder guidelines?

STATE proposal? STATE needs assessment? Specific state agencies or organizations? Which ones?

LEA's and schools? State context (e.g., culture, legislation, resources)?

6. Review of the STATE comprehensive plan emphasis on (list elements, age groups, and specific guidelines or strategies). To what extent do these emphases reflect a considered, data-based assessment of STATE needs and capacity?

Please explain.

7. Finally, in your estimation, how much importance does the comprehensive plan have for guiding specific activities and decisions in implementing the STATE SS/HS state program?

SS/HS State Program Partnership and Collaboration Activities

Let's talk about the state-level activities on which your agency/organization and other agencies/organizations are collaborating. The SS/HS framework identifies collaboration as one of six central strategies in SS/HS networks. I would like to hear your experience and observations concerning collaborative activities currently occurring in the STATE SS/HS State Program, and how they contribute to other strategies, principles, and objectives identified in the framework. Remember that each state must implement the framework in ways that fit its environment and resources, so approaches will be different. I want to hear about yours.

8. What are the major organization features (e.g., SMT, committees, task forces, work groups) through which collaboration takes place in the STATE SS/HS? Tell me about their major responsibilities and activities.

How are decisions made in the collaboration? Who are the major decision makers? Do partners develop and pursue their own ideas and initiatives in collaboration with others?

What are the major ways in which communication takes place in the collaboration?

9. SS/HS is designed to bring together different community sectors, e.g., education, childhood mental health, behavioral health, justice and law enforcement, to better support schools and their students. What are the specific ways in which the STATE SS/HS state program is doing this?

What steps are being taken to improve cooperation and shared purpose across sectors?

What steps are being taken to increase services, integrate services, and improve student access to services?

What are the major resource and expertise contributions made by each of the SMT member agencies / organizations? Do they commit specific fiscal, human, or other resources? What are they?

10. The SS/HS State Program is specifically designed to generate lessons concerning taking the SS/HS framework statewide. It supports collaboration across state, district, and school levels as well as across sectors at each level. How is collaboration between the state and sub-grantee districts and schools in STATE being accomplished?

To what extent will decisions about policy, program, resources, and practices (e.g., EBP's) be made at the state level or at the sub-grantee (district/ school) level?

What resources / supports does the state provide to support SS/HS collaboration and programming at the district and school levels?

Training and TA

Program materials and other resources

Information

Other

To what extent do State member agencies and partners provide support by working directly with local agencies in their sector?

To what extent do State member agencies and partners work together to provide these supports?

11. The SS/HS framework identifies five elements of school and community educational performance on which SS/HS State Programs are expected to make a difference. What resources, supports, and programs is the STATE SS/HS state program using to increase capacity and improve outcomes in each of the following areas:

Promoting early childhood social emotional learning and development;

Promoting mental, emotional, and behavioral health;

Connecting, families, schools, and communities;

Preventing and reducing tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use;

Creating safe and violence-free schools.

12. The SS/HS framework sets forth guiding principles to guide collaborative work. What steps is the STATE SS/HS state program taking to promote the following principles:

Cultural and linguistic competency;

Serving vulnerable and at-risk populations;

Youth guided and family driven processes and programs;

Developmentally appropriate materials, programs, and practices;

Resource leveraging;

Sustainability;

Evidence-based Interventions;

Reductions in health disparity.

For those principles / objectives that are receiving less emphasis, why is this the case?

Challenges and Opportunities

Next, I would like to learn what you perceive to be the major challenges and opportunities to implementing SS/HS objectives in STATE.

13. What do you see as the major barriers and difficulties in implementing the comprehensive plan and achieving the objectives of the SS/HS state program?

Are challenges greater for some elements of the SS/HS framework than others? Explain?

What barriers exist in STATE's legislation, administrative structures, or administrative practices?

What barriers or difficulties are there in other parts of the state environment (e.g., culture, traditions)?

What barriers are due to resources?

14. What do you see as the major opportunities and facilitators in implementing the comprehensive plan and achieving the objectives of the SS/HS state program?

Are challenges greater for some elements of the SS/HS framework than others? Explain?

What opportunities and supports are provided by STATE's legislation, administrative structures, or administrative practices?

What opportunities or supports are there in other parts of the state environment (e.g., culture, traditions)?

15. To the extent possible at this stage of the project, briefly summarize what you anticipate to be the most important changes and accomplishments that the (STATE) SS/HS initiative will bring in each of the following areas.

Promoting mental, emotional, and behavioral health.

Connecting families, schools, and communities.

Preventing and reducing alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use.

Creating safe and violence free schools.

Early childhood learning and development

Thank you for your time and willingness to participate in this interview