Data Leadership Competencies for Part C and Part B 619

Introduction to the Data Leadership Competencies

The value of data is increasingly recognized by organizations and programs, including Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C and Part B 619 programs. Data can help Part C and Part B 619 program coordinators, data managers and staff improve outcomes for children and families by strengthening their understanding of the needs of the children and families served and by operating the program more efficiently and effectively. Data also are critical for ensuring that all children and families have equitable access, services and supports, and outcomes.

Using data to improve programs requires data leadership. Data leaders are defined as those who:

- build one's own capacity and the capacity of staff and other stakeholders to use data,
- build and enhance the data infrastructure needed for data collection, management, analysis, reporting and use, and
- create a culture of data use (e.g., uses data to guide decision-making and sets expectations that others in the organization are expected to do the same).

DaSy developed this set of Data Leadership Competencies to support Part C and Part B 619 staff in acquiring the knowledge and skills required to be effective data leaders. Competencies are a set of performance behaviors that are observable, measurable, and critical to successful individual, team, and agency performance.

Who are the competencies designed for?

The DaSy Data Leadership Competencies are designed to build the capacity of potential data leaders in the IDEA Part C and Part B 619 state and territory programs, including coordinators, data managers, and their teams. The competencies are relevant for any state agency staff who are responsible either directly or indirectly for the IDEA Part C and Part B 619 processes and systems for collecting, managing, analyzing, reporting, and using data because all these individuals can be data leaders. Although these competencies were developed for leaders of state programs, many are applicable to local program leaders as well.

Does an individual state leader have to possess all the competencies to be an effective data leader?

States and territories differ in the configuration of their agency personnel and their respective roles and responsibilities with some states having more staff than others. The DaSy Data Leadership Competencies identify a set of knowledge and skills that data leaders need to possess. One or two individuals may possess all the competencies in small states or a team of individuals may share the competencies across the team in states with more staff. State teams should collectively possess all the DaSy Data Leadership Competencies. The more competencies each team member possesses, the better positioned they will be to support the rest of the team in exercising data leadership.

How are the competencies organized?

The 37 competencies are organized around the three components of data leadership: foundational data skills (FD), infrastructure (IN), and building a culture of data use (DC). Within each component, the competencies are ordered from basic to advanced, with two caveats. The first caveat is that the continuum is somewhat imprecise in reflecting the judgment of the developers who readily acknowledge others might see a different ordering. The second caveat is that several competencies did not fit well on a basic-to-advanced continuum, so their placement on the continuum was somewhat arbitrary. Users are encouraged to make use of the ordering to the extent it is helpful to them.

DaSy readily acknowledges that all the competencies are about building human capacity, the first component of data leadership. However, major subsets of competencies address the knowledge and skills needed to build a culture of data use and others refer to the data system infrastructure, so these are labeled as such. The infrastructure competencies address the skills needed to lead the collection, storage, analysis, transfer and security of data. Also, in the competencies, we distinguish between the knowledge and skills needed for the collection, reporting, and use of data in state data systems and those needed for evaluation. Evaluation in the competencies refers to the set of data collection, reporting, and use activities that are likely to be one-time or time-limited and are implemented to answer a specific set of program evaluation questions. Although many of the skills are the same regardless of whether the data are from the state data system or were collected specifically for an evaluation, some of the skill sets differ, especially if the state opts to contract for an evaluation.

How will the competencies be used by DaSy?

The competencies were developed as brief statements that will be used by DaSy as a framework to communicate the specific skills that technical assistance (TA) activities and products are designed to address. Future professional development activities and a self-assessment will provide additional insight into each competency.

How can the competencies be used by program leaders?

DaSy recommends that state Part C and Part B 619 leaders review the competencies to identify those areas where they and their team members already have the competency and those where they would benefit from additional professional development. As DaSy links TA activities and products to individual competencies, state staff will be able to identify what resources are available, for example, to learn about the aspects of data quality or lead a process for the development of a new data system.

What is the relationship of the Data Leadership Competencies to the Leadership Knowledge and Skills (ECPC)?

The competencies developed through the Early Childhood Personnel Center (ECPC) address the entire set of knowledge and skills needed by Part C and Part B 619 coordinators. As such they include several competencies that address IDEA data and evaluation. In developing the Data Leadership Competencies, DaSy sought to incorporate all the concepts contained in the ECPC competencies related to data and to use the same or similar wording whenever possible. Sometimes, the Data Leadership Competencies are written at a more detailed level than an ECPC competency which resulted in more than one Data Leadership competency addressing content from a single ECPC competency.

What is the relationship of the Data Leadership Competencies to IDEA Part B Data Manager Competencies?

The Part B 619 Data Manager Competencies developed by the IDEA Data Center were written specifically for the data manager role and all that it entails. The Data Leadership Competencies address much of the same content as the Data Manager Competencies, for example, knowledge of reporting requirements, high-quality data, and how to communicate about the data. However, the Data Leadership Competencies are intentionally less detailed because they focus on supporting state staff including the data manager in serving as data leaders. The two sets of competencies complement each other but serve different purposes.

How were the Data Leadership Competencies developed and how do they relate to the DaSy Data System Framework?

DaSy convened an internal team of staff to develop an initial draft of the DaSy Data Leadership Competencies. The team reviewed existing competencies to guide their work and developed a purpose statement for the competencies. The team used the DaSy Data System Framework and the definition of data leadership to guide the development of the competencies.

DaSy invited experts from the IDEA Part C and Part B 619 programs, including coordinators and data managers, and other TA centers to review and provide input on the draft introduction and the competencies. The internal DaSy team reviewed the feedback and revised the draft based on the reviewer's suggestions. The DaSy leadership and OSEP reviewed the revised draft and additional feedback was incorporated.

Data Leadership Competencies

Leadership Competencies: Foundational Data (FD) Skills

FD-1. Demonstrates basic data literacy skills.

FD-2. Demonstrates understanding of 616 Annual Performance Report (APR) and 618 data collection and reporting requirements.

FD-3. Is knowledgeable about relevant policies such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and state regulations that address the privacy and security of Part C/Part B 619 data/records.

FD-4. Is knowledgeable about the various aspects of data quality such as: accuracy, completeness, timeliness, and the processes that are needed to ensure high-quality data statewide.

FD-5. Is knowledgeable about various methods for collecting data, including quantitative and qualitative methods, when to use various methods, and the advantages and limitations of such methods with different groups of respondents, especially those from historically underserved groups.

FD-6. Is knowledgeable about data analysis methods, their strengths and limitations, and their use in developing data products to meet the needs of intended users including how to use data analysis and presentation techniques to portray data for historically underserved groups appropriately.

FD-7. Is knowledgeable of policies and procedures required for the governance and management of Part C/Part B 619 data, including those related to the quality and integrity of the data, and the security of and access to those data.

FD-8. Is knowledgeable about the processes involved in designing evaluations, including developing evaluation questions, logic models, and short-term and long-term outcomes; and identifying appropriate measurement strategies.

FD-9. Demonstrates the ability to assess data knowledge and skills of state team members and stakeholders.

FD-10. Demonstrates the ability to provide opportunities for state team members, local program staff, and (other) stakeholders to learn data knowledge and skills essential to their respective roles (e.g., data collection, reporting requirements, data literacy)

Leadership Competencies: Infrastructure (IN)

IN-1. Demonstrates the ability to establish policies and procedures to ensure that all data processes, communications, products, reports, and other data-specific state resources are compliant with federal and state regulations.

IN-2. Demonstrates the ability to establish policies and procedures that address the quality and integrity of Part C/Part B 619 data.

IN-3. Demonstrates the ability to establish policies and procedures that address the security of and access to Part C/ Part B 619 data.

IN-4. Demonstrates the ability to identify staff needs for access to data consistent with their roles and responsibilities and ensures that access.

IN-5. Demonstrates the ability to delineate appropriate roles and responsibilities for decision-making authority, accountability, and management related to collection, analysis, use, and dissemination of Part C/ Part B 619 data.

IN-6. Demonstrates the ability to explain key components and features of the data systems, including strengths and limitations.

IN-7. Demonstrates the ability to manage a data system to collect programmatic information from multiple sources for federal and state reporting and system management.

IN-8. Demonstrates the ability to embed principles of equity in systems for data collection, analysis, reporting and use (e.g., inclusive categories for collection of gender and race/ethnicity).

IN-9. Demonstrates the skills necessary to secure and manage the human and fiscal resources for the development, maintenance, and enhancement of the data system.

IN-10. Demonstrates knowledge of changing federal and state policies and requirements, programmatic and user needs, and technology to identify and prioritize data system enhancements.

IN-11. Is knowledgeable about the processes involved in developing and enhancing database applications.

IN-12. Demonstrates the ability to lead a process for the development of a new data system or major enhancement.

IN-13. Demonstrates ability to elicit and process stakeholder input about state data system(s)/applications and communicate that input to the technical team.

IN-14. Demonstrates ability to effectively identify and communicate programmatic data needs to the technical team responsible for developing/enhancing the data system.

Leadership Competencies: Data Culture (DC)

DC-1. Demonstrates the ability to articulate a vision across the program on the value and potential of its data.

DC-2. Demonstrates the ability to analyze and use data to develop the state performance plan and annual performance report (SPP/APR).

DC-3. Demonstrates understanding of how to use data for accountability, program operations, and program improvement.

DC-4. Demonstrates the ability to establish a data culture through norms and expectations for the ongoing use of data.

DC-5. Demonstrates ability to implement an approach to data-based decision-making (e.g., Plan-Do-Study-Act)

DC-6. Demonstrates ability to lead team members and stakeholders in discussions about the interpretation of program data (e.g., 616, 618, other) and development of action steps in response to what was learned from the analysis.

DC-7 Demonstrates the ability to make effective and timely decisions based on available data even when those data are limited and infer the implications of those decisions.

DC-8. Demonstrates the ability to use data to ensure equitable access, services and supports, and positive outcomes for children and families.

DC-9. Demonstrates the ability to use fiscal data to address the current and future needs of the program e.g., budget development, utilization and allocation of funding sources, and fiscal monitoring.

DC-10. Demonstrates the ability to use workforce data to inform the development and maintenance of a comprehensive system of personnel development.

DC-11. Demonstrates the ability to effectively communicate data to policymakers, OSEP, the general public, and other stakeholders through presentations, websites, reports, etc.

DC-12 Demonstrates the ability to support local programs and districts to build a culture of data use.

DC-13. Demonstrates the ability to manage an evaluation and to actively participate in all phases of the evaluation from the design through the development of a report and presentations of findings.

Acknowledgments

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About Us

The DaSy Center is a national technical assistance center funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. The DaSy Center works with states to support IDEA early intervention and early childhood special education state programs in the development or enhancement of coordinated early childhood longitudinal data systems.

To learn more about the DaSy Center, visit the DaSy Center website at http://www.dasycenter.org/.