



MIDWEST Comprehensive Center

at American Institutes for Research ■

Iowa

The **Midwest Comprehensive Center** (MWCC), funded through a U.S. Department of Education grant, provides technical assistance to the state education agencies (SEAs) of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. MWCC services focus on building capacity and providing support to SEAs, districts, and schools to improve student outcomes. MWCC provides support across a number of areas, including school improvement, educator development and effectiveness, college and career readiness, and standards and assessments. MWCC brings experience in engaging stakeholders in policy design and implementation, providing research and content expertise to inform initiatives, and planning for high-quality implementation and sustainability.



Stakeholder Engagement—MWCC provides expertise in bringing together internal and external stakeholders to give input on the design and implementation of policies. MWCC has extensive experience with facilitating groups to achieve desired outcomes and synthesizing stakeholder input into clear and actionable recommendations. MWCC has helped SEAs convene task forces, advisory groups, and cross-division teams in a number of content areas.



Research and Content Expertise—MWCC offers expertise in identifying and compiling relevant data and information, as well as in translating complex information into accessible resources. MWCC's extensive experience with applying evidence and research to inform decision making and deep content knowledge allow MWCC to provide strategic guidance in the development of initiatives.



Implementation and Sustainability—MWCC supports initiative or policy implementation through the development of a course of action. MWCC has extensive experience with leading processes to help SEAs, districts, and schools achieve specific tasks and outcomes outlined in the course of action, assess progress, and document lessons learned to inform sustainability. MWCC provides support in developing guidance, trainings, tools, and other resources that are key to the successful implementation and sustainability of initiatives.

Year 7 (October 2018–September 2019) Projects

INTENSIVE PROJECT 1 | Equity Review

Goal | To help the Iowa Department of Education (IDE) understand the current equity-related initiatives, practices, and policies across all its divisions and develop an action plan to address any equity gaps identified.

Activities | MWCC is conducting interviews with IDE staff and key stakeholders, developing and presenting a findings report, codeveloping an action plan, and providing thought partnership and coaching to IDE during plan implementation.

INTENSIVE PROJECT 2 | Implementation Science

Goal | To deepen IDE's previous implementation science work through intensive support to select IDE projects that are positioned to take advantage of implementation science approaches.

Activities | MWCC is providing facilitation, thought partnership, and access to tools and resources for project teams and facilitating communication and knowledge management for the benefit of all projects within the IDE Division of Learning and Results.

FAST RESPONSE | Standards

Goal | To support IDE's English language arts, mathematics, social studies, computer science, and leadership standards implementation in 2018–19, building on previous MWCC support provided since 2012.

Activities | MWCC is serving as a thought partner with IDE consultants as they work with state-level leadership teams and is providing differentiated support for content areas in different stages of implementation.

REGIONAL PROJECT 1 | Social and Emotional Learning

Goal | To support SEAs in Minnesota and Iowa as they develop social and emotional learning (SEL) tools and resources and to engage with districts around SEL implementation.

Activities | MWCC is codeveloping SEL tools and resources with SEAs, pilot testing the tools and resources, and providing thought partnership and content expertise on resource creation and collection of feedback.

REGIONAL PROJECT 2 | Civic Performance Assessment Item Bank

Goal | To collaborate with the Center on Standards & Assessment Implementation and the McCormick Foundation to support Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin SEAs in creating a performance-based assessment item bank for teachers.

Activities | MWCC is providing thought partnership and content expertise and participating in cross-state meetings focused on creating and implementing a strategic plan for the database.

REGIONAL PROJECT 3 | Cross-State Competency-Based Education Conversation Series

Goal | To lead a community of practice for Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, and Ohio staff to share competency-based education (CBE) strategies and promising practices to better prepare students for postsecondary success.

Activities | MWCC is providing coaching and CBE implementation approaches, convening and facilitating cross-state meetings and events, acting as a liaison to national CBE experts, curating and synthesizing CBE research and resources, and facilitating action projects such as identifying microcredential learning opportunities.

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