DCA Overview

State Implementation & Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices

An overview of the District Capacity Assessment

What is the DCA?

The District Capacity Assessment is an action assessment. It is designed to help district leaders and staff to more precisely align resources with intended outcomes to effective support the use of effective innovations.   District staff can use the DCA assessment information to develop action plans that support schools in meaningful ways.

The DCA is administered with a specific innovation (e.g. Early Literacy, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, Multi-Tier System of Supports) in mind. *An **Effective Innovation** is any set of operationally defined practices used in a defined context (e.g. schools) to achieve defined outcomes.* It is important to choose one innovation and answer the DCA questions with that innovation in mind.

What is the purpose of the DCA?

The primary purpose of the District Capacity Assessment (DCA) is to assist school districts to implement effective innovations that benefit students. The "capacity" of a district to facilitate building-level implementation of effective innovations refers to the systems, activities, and resources that are necessary for schools to successfully adopt and sustain effective innovations.

How is the DCA administered?

The DCA is administered by a trained administrator external to the district and is completed as a team comprised of district leadership and other staff intentionally selected for their role in supporting the use of the innovation (e.g., District Implementation Team).

How much time is involved?

Given the importance of the process and the complexity of the items, the anticipated time required to complete the DCA is one to two hours. Exact times will depend on the number of individuals participating in the DCA and familiarity of the team with the constructs assessed by the instrument.

What are the outcomes from participating in a DCA administration?

The DCA administration process allows district leadership and teams to reflect on their current processes and practices in supporting instructional staff in their use of innovations. Using this information and the results , a district implementation team can create an action plan for building their capacity to effectively implement innovations.