

Section D: Creating a Needs Assessment Committee

Step 1: Preliminary Work		
Activity	Recommended Tasks	Highly Recommended
Create a Needs Assessment Committee (NAC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine commitment of time and effort necessary • Choose members to assure geographic representation • Include Parent Advisory Council (PAC) representatives, other non-MEP staff, stakeholders at various levels in MEP • Invite selected individuals to join the NAC • Communicate to NAC members the time and work commitment involved 	<p>Make sure NAC includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject matter expertise • Areas of Concern expertise (e.g., healthcare) • Coordinating agencies • Data specialists • Recognized MEP leaders • Other Federal program directors (for example, Title III)

A Needs Assessment Committee (NAC) will bring a range of stakeholders, expertise, and viewpoints to the table to inform the Comprehensive Needs Assessment process and will meet the requirement of making the process participatory. As the state director, you will determine the composition and scope of work of the NAC.

The NAC will help

- Ensure that the perspectives of all key role groups and regions are included in the discussion
- Analyze existing data and help identify areas where additional data are needed
- Think strategically about the data
- Develop concerns relevant to the purpose of the MEP and identify root causes of the concerns
- Develop Need Statements
- Review and analyze data
- Select and prioritize solutions that will address needs
- Communicate the CNA process and share input from other stakeholders and colleagues

D.1 Identifying Categories and Role Groups of Participants

You should include a range of perspectives on your committee. Consider:

- Who will bring clarity to the process?
- How will their perspective or expertise assist with identifying critical needs of migrant children in the state?
- What will they be able to contribute to generating strategies to meet the needs of migrant children in the state?

Consider the following categories:

Within the Migrant Education Program (MEP)

- State MEP representatives from across staffing levels
- Regional or local coordinators representing key geographic areas in the state
- State Migrant Parent Advisory Committee
- Migrant parents
- Migrant (or former migrant) students
- Teacher for migrant students
- Migrant recruiter
- Parent involvement coordinator
- MEP evaluator
- Data specialist

Within the State Educational Agency (SEA)

- Federal program administrators (e.g., Title I, Part A; Homeless Education; Title III, etc.)
- State initiatives in school readiness, college transition, etc.
- After school programs

Outside the MEP or SEA

- Community service providers
 - Health services
 - Employers
 - Housing agencies
 - Head Start
 - Staff from MEPs from partnering states
- Experts in issues of concern
 - Reading
 - Mathematics
 - Graduation and dropout prevention
 - School readiness/early childhood education
 - English language learning
 - Data collection and analysis

- Standards and assessments

D.2 Determining the Size of the NAC

The actual number of members on your NAC will depend on a number of factors:

- Size of the state MEP
- Resources available for the CNA process
- Key stakeholders
- Other teams or Expert Work Groups needed for the CNA (e.g., Data Work Group, Content Work Groups)
- Key perspectives needed

Consideration for Small States: While the CNA process must be participatory even in small states, small states might consider an alternative approach to the NAC, such as convening a core team of two to four people to participate throughout the process (this could be the Management Team) and convening subgroups or consulting key individuals at strategic points for short periods of time throughout the process.

D.3 Soliciting Nominations

Use the Management Team for collective thinking on the size of the NAC, the types of perspectives that provide focus and clarity, and specific individuals who would make strong committee members. Check with trusted colleagues for recommendations about who should serve on the NAC.

Appendix D.1 Needs Assessment Committee Nominations Chart provides a template for brainstorming the nominations process.

D.4 Recruiting Team Members

Use a consistent approach to invite participation on the NAC. Contact prospective members and explain the following:

- Purpose of the CNA
 - Provide perspective team members with the summary of the purpose and process you developed as you conceptualized the project – See *Appendix C.1 Sample One-Page Description of the CNA Process*
- Why they have been nominated
 - Explain the particular viewpoint, expertise, and experience you feel they will add to the process
- Overall time they will need to commit

- Provide the Timeline and Task Plan – *See Appendix C.2 Template for a Timeline and Plan for the CNA Process* that lists the timeframe of the CNA process and the number and types of meetings
- Roles and responsibilities
 - *See Appendix D.2 Needs Assessment Committee Roles and Responsibilities*
- Support for participation (travel, lodging, etc.) that they can expect

For more detailed notes on what to discuss with prospective NAC members, see *Appendix D.3 Talking Points for Recruiting Needs Assessment Committee Members*.

It is suggested that you follow up the contact with a formal letter, signed—if feasible—by a SEA administrator. If you are able to follow up with a letter, make sure the letter clearly describes the level of commitment needed for participation, which may include the following activities:

- Attending all meetings, including face-to-face meetings, virtual meetings, and conference calls
- Reviewing all materials provided prior to the meetings
- Sharing their expertise and perspectives
- Participating in Expert Work Groups or other ad hoc committees as needed
- Developing concerns relevant to the purpose of the MEP
- Analyzing data and developing Need Statements
- Helping to identify gaps in migrant student (including PFS) outcomes
- Selecting and prioritizing solutions that will close those gaps
- Communicating the CNA process and sharing input from other stakeholders and colleagues
- Possibly continuing to participate in the development of the Service Delivery Plan

D.5 Manager’s Checklist and Reflection

Here are some key accomplishments for *Section D: Creating a Needs Assessment Committee*. Take a moment to jot down your progress on the items below. Also note any issues or challenges.

Manager’s Checklist

- Select reliable NAC members with appropriate breadth of knowledge
 - Wide range of experience
 - Migrant parents involved in a meaningful way
 - Members who will contribute to the implementation of solutions
- Size of committee is realistic and manageable
- Identified missing perspectives that can be added during subsequent phases (e.g., Expert Work Group)

Reflection

1. What is the appropriate size and composition of the NAC for my state?
2. What are my skills as a team facilitator? What additional expertise do I need? On whom may I call for assistance in facilitating the team?
3. Considering the mix of people in your NAC, what group dynamics might play out at the first meeting?
4. How might the facilitator of the meeting prepare in order to make the discussions productive?

D.6 Resources and Tools in Appendix D

Appendix D.1 Needs Assessment Committee Nominations Chart

Appendix D.2 Needs Assessment Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Appendix D.3 Talking Points for Recruiting Needs Assessment Committee Members

Appendix D.1 Needs Assessment Committee Nominations Chart

NAME	CATEGORY	LEVEL	GEOGRAPHIC (County, Region)
		<input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Regional <input type="checkbox"/> Local	

Note: The categories listed are for consideration as you brainstorm nominees.

Suggested Categories:

- State MEP personnel
- Federal programs administrators (e.g., Title I, Title III, homeless education)
- Regional migrant coordinator
- Local migrant staff – recruiter
- Local migrant staff – advocate
- Local migrant staff – teachers, tutors, paraprofessionals
- Local migrant staff – data entry specialists or clerks
- District and school administrators
- Migrant parents
- State or local Parent Advisory Committee representatives
- Migrant students or former migrant students
- State or local coordinating agency staff (e.g., county health department staff)
- Subject matter experts (reading, mathematics, school readiness, graduation/school completion)
- Research and evaluation specialists
- Data collection and analysis experts

Appendix D.2 Needs Assessment Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Members of the Needs Assessment Committee (NAC) should commit to the following:

- Attend all scheduled meetings. This commitment is important as this process builds on the insights and decisions that the group makes in previous meetings.
- Participate at a high level. Members speak for the interests of the children and families that they serve as well as their colleagues who do similar work.
- Represent others who have the same position. Members should be asked to poll their colleagues for their opinions concerning the assessment and to report back regularly to update them on progress. This feedback loop enriches the NAC's conversation and informs others as the CNA advances.
- Analyze data and make decisions. Members are selected based on their experience and job responsibilities. The NAC will need broad representation to help the group understand the information gathered and make decisions when solutions are offered.
- Recommend solutions. Members will identify research-based and effective strategies that will address the needs identified in the CNA process.

Appendix D.3 Talking Points for Recruiting Needs Assessment Committee Members

- **PURPOSE:** The [STATE] Department of Education is conducting a Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) of its migrant education program (Title I Part C). The CNA will identify the special educational needs of migratory children and youth to inform state planning to ensure that these students “have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic content standards and challenging State student academic achievement standards that all children are expected to meet” (1 ESEA, Title I, Part C, Sec. 1306).
- **NEEDS ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE:** The CNA process will be guided by a Needs Assessment Committee, a group of stakeholders who serve migrant children and youth and can provide advice on ways to meet their needs. Members of [STATE’S] Committee will include [fill in categories from your nominations matrix, e.g., MEP coordinators and staff, parents, reading specialists, etc.].
- **PERSONAL INVITATION:** You have been nominated to serve as a NAC member and [the MEP director] is calling/emailing to confirm your willingness and availability to serve on the committee.

(Note: If appropriate - mention the contact who recommended the nominee and why he/she was recommended (e.g., the experience, perspective, or expertise the nominee will bring to the Committee).

The final selection will be made by the [STATE] Department of Education, confirmed with a formal letter of invitation.
- **COMMITMENT:** The Committee will meet [Use the CNA Management Timeline and Task Plan to inform this part of the Talking Points sheet; include meeting purpose, dates, and locations, if possible.]
 - Specify expectations for tasks to be accomplished between meetings or participation on work groups.
 - And ask the nominee to commit to attending all meetings (to ensure continuity).
- **LOGISTICS:** Explain whether Committee members will receive compensation and what level of travel support they will receive to attend meetings.
- **CLOSURE:** Reinforce how much his/her participation will be valued and what an important role he/she will play in improving educational outcomes for migrant students. You might note that Committee members will also gain by learning from colleagues in other agencies or roles who have an interest in serving migrant students.