21st CCLC Data Entry and Monitoring Guidance

In 2018, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) created two new monitoring measures regarding the fidelity of data entry within 21st CCLC programs. Each of these two measures will be accompanied by an explanation of what each measure means, and best practices that programs can implement to utilize data management fidelity. The two measures are below.

Monitoring Area: **Program Management Review**

Measurement #11. The program has procedures in place to maintain up-to-date and timely data collection. Citation: US Government Accountability Office.

Explanation

This measure is essentially asking, "what methodology does the program use to collect data?" and "what artifacts are in place to ensure proper data collection?"

Best Practices

There are several best practices programs can implement to ensure compliance with this measure that are outlined below.

- **Data Due Dates and Accountability.**
  - Make it very clear data due dates are written in policy/procedure manuals and reviewed with staff on a consistent basis.
  - A monthly calendar reminder to staff that data is due on certain dates can be beneficial, as well.
  - Include data due dates in employees' monitoring and/or yearly evaluation. This can be used as concrete and achievable measures for all staff.

- **Data Steward.** Programs can assign a data steward, or an employee who is in charge of overseeing data collection. It is recommended that this duty be outlined in the job description for this employee. Duties can include:
  - Review data no later than five days after the data due date;
  - Provide guidance and technical assistance to program staff on data entry;
  - Send weekly/monthly reminders to staff to enter data; and
  - Provide training to staff, or provide access to training for staff.
  This employee would be well-trained and accessible to staff regarding all program data collection and analyzation.

- **Accountability**. Include data due dates in employees' monitoring and/or yearly evaluation. This can be used as concrete and achievable measures for all staff.

- **Written Guidance.** Policies that are easily accessible and reviewed frequently.
  - These practices can be the same descriptors as used in the Data Steward job description.
  - As noted above, have data guidelines including due dates in employee handbooks.

- o Create training documents including webinars, YouTube videos, and other artifacts regarding data entry and its importance. Have these documents easily accessible to employees, as well.

- **Create a Data Culture.** It is important to communicate "why" data collection is important, and imbed this into your workplace culture. Below are some key points and ideas that can a program can communicate:
  - o Frequently communicate the importance of "why" proper data collection is valued:
    - Funding opportunities;
    - Accountability;
    - Informed and accurate decision making;
    - Accurate reporting to the public; and
    - Quality assurance.
  - o Create a running staff meeting agenda item regarding data. Review the data process at each staff meeting.
  - o Provide an update to staff frequently on program data and have a conversation about it.

Measurement #12. The program has systems in place to review and "clean" data after it is submitted. Citation: US Government Accountability Office.

Explanation

This measure is looking for the processes in place after data is collected and submitted.

Best Practices

Again, there are several best practices programs can implement to ensure data is accurate and reliable.

- **Random Quality Checks.** Have a quality assurance procedure in place. This can include random quality checks by the Data Steward and/or Director. Also, ensure that there is a clear procedure about how to maintain accurate data records. This may include retaining paper copies for reference, or keeping back-up electronic copies of all raw data collected.

- **Monitoring.** Monitoring data after entry can take place in several ways:
  1. Meeting monthly with the Data Steward and asking this team member how data entry is going.
     a. Ensure staff have a clear understanding about what types of program data are needed.
  2. Have a communication system in place in which each staff member would notify their supervisor/Data Steward when data entry has been completed.
  3. Discuss the previous month's data entry at monthly staff meetings.

  There is no "right" way to monitor data entry. Programs can develop a system that works best for them.

- **Data Teams.** Create a data team. This team could comprise of the Data Steward, Director, and a staff member. Have data teams review data after collection on a consistent basis. Ask questions and document discussions.

- **Document Procedures.** As in Measurement 11, document all post-data monitoring procedures. Make these procedures easy to access and understand.