



Quick Guide

The LEA Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA), developed by the Utah State Board of Education (USBE), provides a framework for local education agencies to effectively meet federal Title program needs assessment requirements. This tool supports the following programs:

- Title I, Part A - Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged
- Title I, Part A - Foster Care Program
- Title I, Part A - Parent Engagement Program
- Title I, Part C - Education of Migratory Children
- Title I, Part D - Programs for Neglected or Delinquent Children
- Title II, Part A - Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers, Principals, and Other School Leaders
- Title III - Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students
- Title IV, Part A - Student Support and Academic Enrichment
- Title IV, Part B - 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- Title V, Part B - Rural Education Initiative
- Title IX, Part A - McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Introduction and Purpose

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) is a structured, systematic process that empowers LEAs to identify, analyze, and address educational challenges in a prioritized manner. It serves as a diagnostic tool, revealing the gap between a district's current performance and its desired future state. By leveraging data analysis, leaders can strategically set priorities and refine systems and processes. The CNA plays a critical role in shaping program goals, strategies, and actionable steps. It's important to emphasize that the CNA is not a test or evaluation; rather, it provides a comprehensive overview of an LEA's adherence to evidence-based practices and effective school system models.

Engaging in a thorough Comprehensive Needs Assessment is a vital first step for LEAs committed to continuous improvement. By examining and correlating multiple data sources, including demographic, student learning, and staff assignment data, school systems gain a deeper understanding of what is working effectively and what requires improvement, including the identification of underlying factors contributing to current outcomes. Data disaggregation is essential for uncovering gaps and inequities in student achievement and outcomes. A well-conducted CNA enables the evaluation of past initiatives and the strategic development of new or adapted strategies, processes, and programs to effectively meet the diverse learning needs of all students.

The USBE CNA synthesizes data from a variety of sources to generate a comprehensive needs analysis that is responsive to district requirements and recommendations.

Outcomes

Adhering to the CNA process with fidelity allows school systems to conduct a thorough evaluation of existing strategies, practices, and programs. This analysis facilitates the prediction and implementation of new, more effective initiatives designed to address the learning needs of all students.

The primary outcome of the CNA is to equip district/charter teams with the tools and data necessary for informed decision-making. By integrating research, data analysis, and diverse stakeholder perspectives, teams can pinpoint and implement evidence-based practices, programs, or strategies, resulting in a comprehensive and effective LEA continuous improvement plan.

Overview

This section provides an overview of the CNA process. For detailed descriptions of each step, please refer to the Utah LEA Needs Assessment and Improvement Guide.

1. Preparation and Planning

Who Should Be Involved

A successful Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) team requires individuals who can work collaboratively throughout the process. Effective team members bring expertise in program knowledge, data and assessment, stakeholder engagement strategies, and the ability to plan and manage funding for program enhancements.

The team should include members of the LEA leadership team, as well as a broad spectrum of stakeholders to ensure diverse perspectives are represented.

Time

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) process involves several phases, each requiring dedicated time for completion with fidelity:

- **Preparing:** 1-2 hours.
- **Planning:** 1-2 hours for an initial planning meeting, plus up to a full day for gathering and preparing local data.
- **Initial Analysis:** 2-4 hours, depending on the chosen protocol and team size.
- **Root-Cause Analysis (Digging Deeper):** 2-4 hours, following the collection of additional data identified during the initial analysis.

It is crucial to allocate sufficient time between phases for necessary research and preparation, which may extend over multiple days.

Leading the Conversation

Structured facilitation is essential for successful initial analysis and root-cause analysis. Facilitators are encouraged to implement discussion protocols to guide team members through focused conversations that generate potential next steps. While the CNA tool provides the 5 Whys root-cause analysis protocol, LEAs have the flexibility to choose the root-cause analysis method that aligns with their specific context and preferences

| Initial Analysis of Data | Root Cause Process Examples |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Large Group Reflection/Discussion | 5 Whys |
| Independent Review to Large Group Consensus | Fishbone |

Leadership will employ the CNA Final Summary to verify the thorough completion of all sections, specifically ensuring all items within the data review and data summary are addressed.

Modifications or Variations

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) process allows for several modifications and variations. The following is a non-exhaustive list of potential adaptations:

- **Expanded Data Sources:** LEAs are encouraged to supplement the CNA with additional local data and evidence to enhance the assessment's scope.
- **Root-Cause Verification:** Following the CNA and root-cause analysis, leadership teams may seek further data to validate their assumptions. For example, if a team hypothesizes that school climate is a root cause of low graduation and attendance rates, as well as high behavior incidents, they may need to gather student or family perception survey data to substantiate their findings.
- **Phased Implementation:** LEAs may choose to implement the CNA in a phased approach, focusing on specific areas or program components in each phase, allowing for deeper analysis and targeted intervention.

- **Customized Discussion Protocols:** While the 5 Why's is provided, LEAs may develop or adapt existing discussion protocols to better suit their team's dynamics and the specific challenges being addressed.
- **Focused Data Disaggregation:** LEAs may prioritize specific data disaggregation strategies based on identified equity gaps or areas of concern, ensuring a more targeted analysis of student subgroups.
- **Utilizing External Facilitators:** For complex or sensitive situations, LEAs may choose to engage external facilitators to guide the CNA process, ensuring objectivity and promoting productive discussions.
- **Using the CNA to inform resource allocation:** LEAs may use the findings of the CNA to directly inform resource allocation decisions, ensuring that funding is aligned with identified needs and priorities.

2. Data Collection and Analysis

Qualitative Data Analysis:

- Engage in a data-driven self-assessment of each of the Four Domains.
- Through the analysis of qualitative data and the use of guiding questions, determine prevailing trends and patterns to inform the identification of critical needs.

Quantitative Data Analysis:

- Systematically review, analyze, and reflect upon the quantitative data within each designated section.
- Develop a comprehensive reflection summary, utilizing the provided sample summary questions as a framework.

3. Needs Identification and Root Cause Analysis

Trends and Patterns: Consolidate the trends and patterns summaries from each section of the data analysis process. For each of the Four Domains, write a comprehensive reflection summary that synthesizes the key findings and insights.

Strengths and Areas for Growth: Utilize the data from the CNA and other local sources to identify the LEA's strengths and areas for growth. Provide clear

descriptions of the data points that support the identified strengths and areas for growth.

Identification and Prioritization of Overarching Needs: Based on the analysis of trends, patterns, strengths, and areas for growth, identify the overarching needs of the LEA. Determine the priority order of these needs by considering data analysis, team member expertise, and stakeholder input.

Root Cause Analysis (RCA): Select the top 2-4 overarching needs identified in the final summary. Conduct a separate root cause analysis (RCA) for each prioritized need. Utilize any preferred RCA tools and resources, including the 5 Whys protocol provided in the CNA tool.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment Tool

Key Design Features of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment Tool

- The CNA tool is a web-based application
- The tabs at the bottom of the tool are color coded and aligned to the Four Domains Framework
i.e., The Instruction Domain tab is blue, and all the academic data tabs are blue.
- There is a dropdown arrow on the quantitative data pages to select your district. This will populate the charts and graphs on each page.
- Primary Needs, Trends and Patterns and Summary data will be pulled automatically to the final summary page.

Additional Features

- The CNA allows for identifying needs within the Four Domains Framework: Leadership, Talent, Instruction, Culture.
- The CNA quantitative tabs include the LEA's most recent data.
- The CNA has required and/or recommended reflection questions based on the data related to that section of the tool.
- LEAs are encouraged to use other internal data sources as they complete the needs assessment.
- The tool provides an opportunity for LEA leadership teams to analyze their data, identify areas of improvement, and collaborate on primary needs in order to improve student achievement.

Directions for Use

- Access the **Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA)** from the USBE website.
- All users with LEA User permissions will be able to review and edit the open fields in the tool.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Open and print the **CNA Rubrics for each of the Four Domains** and distribute to appropriate teams or work groups to use in the discussions, data analysis and determination of the current state for each domain. Once all Domains are complete, meet as a team to determine the current state of the district.

Start with:

Domain 1

- Read each practice, indicator description, example of potential evidence, and corresponding rubric one at a time.
- Gather, analyze, and discuss data and other evidence you have related to each indicator.
- Record evidence reviewed and notes for each indicator in the corresponding box.
- Using the drop-down arrow in the score box for each indicator, select a data-informed self-rating (1-4) that reflects the current state of the district.
- After each Practice is complete an average score will be calculated and displayed under each practice.
- Analyze your data and identify and determine trends and patterns for the domain, record this in the corresponding box.
- Analyze your data and identify and determine possible primary needs for the domain, record this information in the corresponding box.

Repeat this Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis process for each of the Domains.

Domain 2

Domain 3

Domain 4

Quantitative Data Analysis

Analyze the LEA's data and answer the guiding questions to determine existing trends and patterns that support the identification of student achievement needs.

- There are multiple tabs for the Quantitative Data Analysis, depending on the make-up of your district, you might not need to open all the data sections.
- Open each tab one by one
- Click on the drop-down arrow next to the word "district" at the top right-hand side of the page.

- Select your district from the drop-down menu.
- The charts and graphs on the page will populate with your district's data.
- Review and analyze the data.
- Provide a summary of the data analysis in the corresponding box, example data analysis prompts are provided.

Repeat this quantitative Data Collection and Analysis process for each of the sections as they apply to your district.

Final Summary

After you have completed the information required in the qualitative and quantitative data analysis sections, you are ready to move to the Final Summary section. On the Final Summary sheet, you will see:

- Qualitative Data Summary: data pulled from the information provided on each of the qualitative data sections for each of the domains.
 - Scores for the Practices in the domain
 - Identified trends and patterns
 - Identified needs
- Quantitative Data Summary: data pulled from the reflection summaries on each of the quantitative data sections.
- Summary of Needs Assessment:
 - Summarize the district's strengths and areas for growth as key findings from the Comprehensive Needs Assessment.
 - Describe the supporting data points.

Root Cause Analysis

Select the top three or four overarching needs identified in the CNA Summary. Conduct separate root cause analysis (RCA) for each selected need.

- With data-driven root causes identified through evidence and leadership team collaboration, formulate clear goals and actionable strategies to address these underlying issues.
- Having established your LEA's goals and strategies to address identified needs, you will proceed to develop and create your annual LEA Title funding

plans within Utah Grants Management, ensuring that funding directly supports the plan's implementation.

- As leadership teams implement improvement plans, it is essential to establish robust monitoring strategies to track both the progress of implementation and the achievement of outcome targets.