

Proposal to the National SAM Innovation Project (NSIP)

June 2023

Policy Studies Associates (PSA) appreciates the invitation to propose studies of the SAM Process rubrics and the all-school approach to use of the SAM Process. This proposal provides an overview of the two studies. They will be directed by Brenda Turnbull, PSA's co-founder who has studied the SAM Process in the past. Study team members will include researchers with recent practitioner experience in school leadership. A total budget of \$40,000 is proposed, with approximately \$25,000 allocated to the study of rubrics and approximately \$15,000 to case studies of two schools using the all-school approach. The studies are described below.

Study of the SAM Process Rubrics

The PSA team will review the available data from rubrics and will gather data, through interviews and surveys, from users in schools, the SAM Process experts who support them, and NSIP leadership. We describe a proposed set of study questions, followed by a schedule of activities and deliverables.

Study Questions

1. What do the available data from the rubrics show us about all users?

Can we see how cohorts of users have moved through the stages (e.g., for those who were new to the process in fall 2021, where they were in spring 2022 and then in spring 2023)? Are there patterns in schools' *rates* of progression based on school or district characteristics? Do these patterns suggest opportunities for tailoring support?

2. How do the rubrics currently support learning and improvement for practitioners using the SAM Process? For Implementation Specialists and Time Change Coaches? For NSIP leadership?

What benefits do **practitioners** gain from using a rubric to consider their progress (e.g., a sense of satisfaction, information about what they may need to work on)?

What are the observations of **Implementation Specialists and Coaches** about the ways in which practitioners use and can benefit from the rubrics?

How and to what extent do these rubrics inform the support that they provide in the field?

How has **NSIP leadership** used the rubrics to inform their understanding of progress and challenges?

What would they like to know that analysis of rubric data could potentially tell them?

What potential do they see for rubrics like these to inform improvement in the work of practitioners?

3. How might we refine the rubrics – and routines around rubrics - to support even more learning?

What suggestions do **users, Implementation Specialists, Coaches, or NSIP leadership** have for improving the rubrics (e.g., adding or subtracting particular items, etc.)?

What suggestions do they have for improving the routines around use of the rubrics (e.g., who should look at the rubric items or rubric data, for what purposes; how should the data be broken out for review; and who might help them in using the information)?

Activities, Deliverables, and Dates of Completion

1. Interview NSIP leadership, including board members, and deliver a final study design reflecting NSIP perspectives and feedback on this proposal (August 2023)
2. Analyze available data on user progress on the rubrics (November 2023)
3. Interview selected users, implementation specialists, and coaches (about 10 interviews in total) to gather initial data and inform survey development (November 2023)
4. Develop and administer short surveys to gather data on the study questions from samples of users, implementation specialists, and coaches (February 2024)
5. Deliver a briefing and report summarizing findings and the study team's recommendations for specific improvements in the rubrics and their use (May 2024)

Exploratory Case Studies of the All-School SAM Process

This proposed study will explore key features of an all-school SAM Process, readiness conditions necessary for implementation, and types of results to look for from this approach.

Two case studies, each based primarily on interviews with school leaders implementing the SAM Process on an all-school basis, will shed light on the opportunities and challenges of this approach. Interviews will gather school leaders' reports on:

- Specific practices they have put in place for collaboration, data use, and accountability
- Results in terms of their own practice and benefits for teaching and learning
- Challenges that arose as they launched and implemented an all-school approach, how they overcame these, and what helped
- What they believe was key to their team's readiness to undertake this approach

The school's coach will be interviewed on the same topics, with emphasis on what the coach sees as the factors that made this particular team and school ready to use the SAM Process with an all-school approach. To the extent feasible, a few teachers in each school will also be interviewed about their perceptions of instructional leadership in the school.

Activities, Deliverables, and Dates of Completion

1. In consultation with NSIP leadership, identify schools for case studies (August 2023)
2. Develop interview protocols (October 2023)
3. Collect data (March 2024)
4. Deliver a report describing highlights of each school's approach and experience, analyzing strengths and challenges seen in their experiences, and suggesting options for NSIP's next steps in moving forward with an all-school approach (May 2024)

Payment

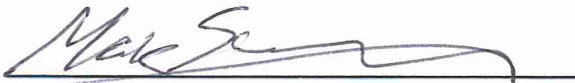
NSIP shall pay \$20,000 by July 31, 2023 and \$20,000 upon completion of the proposed work. PSA's federal tax ID is 52-1265755. The routing number for ACH payments is 054001547 to Truist Bank checking account #1090001080825. Checks may be sent to:
Policy Studies Associates, Inc.
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Signed for PSA



Brenda Turnbull, Principal

For NSIP



Mark Shellinger, Director

7/5/23