NCCSD State Lessons Learned Webinar Series

Notes from 10/8/2021
Pre-Planning + Planning

This document consolidates that the lessons learned from the four presenters and places them into each Topic and Subtopic shown in the graphic below.   See the longer Notes By Presenter for PowerPoints and notes from each presenter individually:

Pre-Planning + Planning

PRE-PLANNING - IV&V/QA Vendors:
How did you:
Make sure everyone was clear on the difference between Independent Verification and Validation ("IV&V") and Quality Assurance ("QA")?
Determine and differentiate their roles for your project needs and decide whether to procure both (since IV&V is mandatory for system replacement projects, but QA is not)?
Decide timing on the procurement(s) (e.g., do you need a QA vendor to come in early)?

PLANNING - Executive/Key Stakeholder Support:
With an official Streamlined Feasibility Study submission, OCSE also wants assurances that the state has funding commitments and executive support for the entire project. Furthermore, given the cost and length of these projects, ensuring broad support is critical from the outset.
What was your strategy for ensuring official support for the project from the Governor/Legislature/Fiscal/Other key agency executives?
What statistics/presentation materials were needed for these groups?

PLANNING - Creating the IAPD:
Who was charged with writing your Implementation Advance Planning Document ("IAPD")?
What were OCSE's expectations for both the IAPD and the Advance Planning Document ("APD") documents for your existing system?
How much time was needed to write this, vet it internally, and receive approval from OCSE?
Creating or updating all the plans (e.g., Resource, Project, Risk Management, etc.). When, how, and by whom?

PLANNING - DDI Planning:
When did you begin discussing Design, Development, and Implementation ("DDI") steps in more detail in preparation for your procurement documents (and what did you ultimately decide), including, but not limited to:
Implementation and rollout strategies - Big bang or incremental approach?
If incremental, pilot system modules, regional rollout, etc.?
Do you need to expand your office space for additional vendor or state project staff?
Who is providing equipment (laptops, monitors, etc.)?
What were your final decisions on tools, or will you ask your vendor to propose them?
Staff support and training approach during implementation?
How will you determine and document any data quality issues so that potential vendors are aware of them?
Data conversion – do you have a preference on how to conduct, (e.g., mock conversions, manual and automated conversion)?
Testing – requirements for test plans, managing bugs and change requests identified during testing, monitoring progress. What about a Backout strategy?

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PRE-PLANNING - IV&V/QA Vendors:

1. Make sure everyone was clear on the difference between Independent Verification and Validation ("IV&V") and Quality Assurance ("QA")?
   - QA is pro-active and forward looking.
   - IVV typically provides a retrospective review; however, they may also be asked to provide a forward looking (6 month) review.

2. Determine and differentiate their roles for your project needs and decide whether to procure both (since IV&V is mandatory for system replacement projects, but QA is not)?
   - PM governance plans reviewed by QA vendor.
   - Large projects may need QA based on state requirements.
   - QA staff on site daily working with the project team. Provides written feedback on deliverables before the agency accepts.
   - QA vendor review of PM governance plans.
   - QA monthly assessments of entire project may be provided to multiple groups (Project Steering Committee, Legislative Audit, CIO, Joint Finance)
   - QA vendor needs the skills and experience to assess the DDI approach, e.g., agile.
   - Enterprise services within the state may not be able to provide IVV services.

- Similar to QA vendor, IVV vendor needs the skills and experience to assess the DDI approach.
- IVV reports are intended for OCSE; however, the reports may be useful for local stakeholders as well.
- Could combine PM/QA – PM needs to have skill sets to support DDI development approach.

3. Decide timing on the procurement(s) (e.g., do you need a QA vendor to come in early)?
- Onboard the QA vendor before the DDI vendor (6 months) to review project governance documents and risk assessment. QA vendor brings an objective POV to the project, can assist with early detection of issues and issue prioritization, and talk through change requests. Perform initial risk assessment.
- IVV vendor may be brought on 90 days before the DDI vendor starts or when the DDI vendor starts/project kickoff.

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PLANNING - Executive/Key Stakeholder Support:

1. With an official Streamlined Feasibility Study submission, OCSE also wants assurances that the state has funding commitments and executive support for the entire project. Furthermore, given the cost and length of these projects, ensuring broad support is critical from the outset. What was your strategy for ensuring official support for the project from the Governor/Legislature/Fiscal/Other key agency executives?

- Develop a communication strategy to inform Governor's Office, state Budget Office, CIO, legislature, and other key stakeholders.
- May need to meet with individual legislators.
- "Chicken and Egg:" State may not want to commit to state funding until OCSE does; OCSE may not want to commit to funding until the state does. Consider a joint meeting of state officials (Legislative Fiscal Office) and OCSE.
- Key points:
    - Multi-year funding need
    - Stress the risks of not moving forward with modernization.
    - Demonstrate a full understanding of the coordination needed
    - Provide realistic project estimates (based on other states and other state assessment).
    - Share that a risk assessment has been completed.
    - Legislative stakeholders wanted to know ROI.
    - Legislative stakeholders want to know that a system replacement will not be needed in the 10-15 years after implementation; however, make it clear that modernization is not a once-and-done effort, e.g., upgrades will be needed.
    - Identify the vendors needed.
    - Do not promise that performance will go up; assume that there will be a settling period after system implementation.
- Anticipate that stakeholders will change over time. Need to document everything, all decisions made with justifications.
- IV-D Director led the communications; IV-D Director should be involved in every step of the project.
- Stakeholders became more engaged after FS approved.

- Understand who is involved in the contractual process. Who sits on what committees? Who represents the project in these meetings? Observe meetings in advance to know how to prepare.
- Have a fall back plan for funding. State approval is conditional. Project delays will diminish support.
- Money will always be an issue.

2. What statistics/presentation materials were needed for these groups?
- Briefing materials can be synthesized from FS; executive summary from the FS may be appropriate for some stakeholders.
- Key communication materials:
  o Project Journey Map – highlight timelines of go/no go decisions, reviews, decision points, funding decisions, impacts of not moving forward.
  o "Distribution At A Glance" document from the NCCSD Systems committee
  o What is happening nationwide? What are other states doing?
  o QAs and talking points tailored by audience.
  o One pager for executives that emphasizes the risk of not modernizing.

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PLANNING - Creating the IAPD:

1. Who was charged with writing your Implementation Advance Planning Document ("IAPD")?

- Varies from state to state – vendor drafted, vendor assisted, and state drafted.
- Consider who should review the IAPD before submission, e.g., project steering committee.

2. What were OCSE's expectations for both the IAPD and the Advance Planning Document ("APD") documents for your existing system?

- After IAPD approval, one APD document with two sections – one with planned and actuals for the legacy system, the other for the modernization project.
- Submit the Master Schedule and Master PMP annually with the APDU.
- Have periodic calls with OCSE (monthly, quarterly).

3. How much time was needed to write this, vet it internally, and receive approval from OCSE?

Range of time frames:
- For one state, it took about 4 months to draft the IAPD, pulling materials from the FS. The OCSE review took 60 days; during that time, there was back and forth communication and modifications to the document.
- For another state, the entire process took 14 months and 3 rounds of Q&A with OCSE.

4. Creating or updating all the plans (e.g., Resource, Project, Risk Management, etc.). When, how, and by whom?

- PM vendor trained staff on project plans, risk plans, change control plan, interagency coordination plan, and more.
- May need multiple contract managers.

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PLANNING - DDI Planning:

1. When did you begin discussing Design, Development, and Implementation ("DDI") steps in more detail in preparation for your procurement documents (and what did you ultimately decide).

   - Planning for DDI started as a part of IAPD.
   - Inviting vendors in for discussions prior to official procurement starting will help solidify details.
   - The more granular detail when drafting the DDI RFP.
   - Align RFP with DDI development approach.
   - Considerations for selecting a DDI vendor:
     - Vendor knows child support (do not subcontract for child support expertise)
     - Vendor knows the as-is platform
     - Vendor has proven deliverables in the technology you will be using (certified, works, provided on budget)

2. Implementation and rollout strategies - Big bang or incremental approach? If incremental, pilot system modules, regional rollout, etc.?

   - Fewer risks with incremental approach.
   - Pilot – 3 months with large and small agencies followed by 3 geographical rollouts with 2 month between each.
   - AZ and OR both used incremental approaches.

3. Do you need to expand your office space for additional vendor or state project staff?
   - DDI work performed onsite in OR. Vendor had to stand up a facility for entire team.
   - Indiana started the project virtually. Initial goal was face-to-face.
   - AZ is also working virtually.

4. Who is providing equipment (laptops, monitors, etc.)?
   - OR purchased all computer equipment based on state requirements.

5. What were your final decisions on tools, or will you ask your vendor to propose them?
   - Ask the vendor to identify the tools needed based on their experience.
   - Have the vendor specify the tools upfront and be responsible for procuring tools. Specify tools upfront. May need to have security reviews of the tools before contract award; make sure this time is accounted for in the plan.
   - The PM vendor needs to understand all the tools that are used.

6. Staff support and training approach during implementation?
   - Just in time training – train within 20 days of implementation.
   - On-site support – consider a presence before deployment (arrived one week before implementation) and longer period after implementation (stayed for 30 days after go-live).
   - Options:
     - DDI vendor writes training material and trains the trainers; state trainers conduct user training.
     - DDI vendor writes the OCM plan; state administers.
   - May need to plan for other training -- agile training prior to RFP posting, training on SalesForce, additional technical training.

7. How will you determine and document any data quality issues so that potential vendors are aware of them?
    - The best time to start data cleanup varies – well before the DDI vendor starts or the time the DDI vendor starts.
    - Data cleanup may be driven by what the data model will look like; do not clean up data you will not bring over to new system.
    - Consider case closure clean up

8. Data conversion – do you have a preference on how to conduct, (e.g., mock conversions, manual and automated conversion)?
    - Implementation strategy will impact data conversation strategy.
    - Mock conversion using a full load of production data may require pre-approval from IRS.

9. Testing – requirements for test plans, managing bugs and change requests identified during testing, monitoring progress.
    - Consider having QA vendor independently test during system and UAT.
    - Define in contract severity level of testing issues
    - Establish a change control plan and change control board
    - In an agile development model, second testing team follows up every 3 months with solution validation testing (different than UAT.)

10. What did you do about a Backout strategy?
    - In the implementation roll out plan, identify go/no go decision points as well as back out points.