

North Carolina School Improvement Planning Implementation Guide

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Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction

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How to Use This Guide

The *North Carolina School Improvement Planning Implementation Guide* is organized into five sections:

- **Section One** provides a brief introduction and offers background as well as contact information for providing feedback on this document and the associated template.
- **Section Two** presents the legal foundations of school improvement planning in North Carolina, including the legal requirements for districts and schools.
- **Section Three** introduces the recommended guiding principles for school improvement planning from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI). Schools and school districts are strongly encouraged to follow these best-practice principles when implementing their planning process.
- **Section Four** introduces the NCDPI planning model, aligned with the guiding principles outlined in Section Three.
- **Section Five** provides a series of appendices designed to give schools and districts additional information and assistance.

The school improvement planning model presented in this guide is the NCDPI-recommended model. It is based upon a continuous improvement approach to school improvement and on generally-accepted best practices for planning. The model aligns with the North Carolina Standards for School Executives and has components relevant to each of the standard areas.

This school improvement planning model is NOT a mandate from the NCDPI. School improvement planning should always be focused on student learning, and districts and schools should use the planning approach that offers the greatest effectiveness for their situation and that results in positive change for their students.

Section One – Overview of School Improvement Planning

School improvement planning provides a mechanism for identifying needs and establishing a common approach to meeting those needs at the school level. Effective school improvement planning contributes to overall school performance by:

- Establishing an understanding of the “big picture” of a school's current state, including student achievement, school environment, teacher community, parent community, and administrative issues;
- Reaching consensus across the school community on which needs represent the highest priorities for action based upon the potential to improve overall student and school performance; and
- Identifying for implementation objectives and tasks, including specific targets, effective practices and milestones required to address the school priorities.

Purpose of this Guide

The North Carolina School Improvement Planning Implementation Guide is intended to provide a best practices approach to the school improvement planning process. This guide offers schools and districts interested in re-focusing their planning efforts guidance and a model for conducting school improvement planning. While certain aspects such as the legal requirements for school improvement planning and the referenced teacher and executive standards are applicable regardless of a school or district's planning approach, **the model presented in this guide is NOT a mandate from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI)**. Schools or districts may continue using existing school improvement planning processes if these best serve their current needs.

This guide resulted from feedback from several school districts across North Carolina that identified problems with the school improvement planning process, such as a lack of guidance from the NCDPI, the volume of planning that occurs at the school and district level, and the frequent duplication of efforts. To address these problems, NCDPI staff developed the North Carolina School Improvement Planning Implementation Guide for use by all districts. As part of this effort, NCDPI personnel met with many district, school, and internal representatives to understand current practices and to collect recommendations for a comprehensive approach to school improvement planning. Areas researched and reviewed included the following:

- Legal requirements for school improvement planning;
- Current school/district practice, to include progressive, best practice approaches from districts in North Carolina;
- State-level school improvement planning guidance and School Improvement Planning (SIP) guidance from other states;
- Overall NCDPI direction with respect to serving schools and districts (i.e., District and School Transformation processes currently underway throughout the state);
- Available student, school performance, and Teacher Working Conditions Survey data;
- District- and school-level data analysis needs identified through other current agency initiatives; and
- Teacher, principal, and superintendent evaluation requirements.

G.S. § 115C-12 (19) directs NCDPI Department of Public Instruction, to consolidate all plans that affect the school community, including school improvement plans. Further, the law requires the consolidated plan shall be posted on each school's Web site for easy access by the public and by school personnel. While agency staff originally focused on plan consolidation, a review of improvement plans from schools across the state found a wide disparity in plan format and content. In particular, some plans included a collection of short, focused set of goals and strategies for every school program, but failed to outline overall goals or justification for the

programs and strategies. Consistent with the vision of NCDPI as a student- and school-focused service organization, the agency expanded its view to include plan consolidation as well as a review of current school improvement planning best practices.

In 2011, NCDPI began utilizing a web-based school improvement management tool, NCStar. NCStar is powered by Indistar® and was developed by the Academic Development Institutes (ADI) with the firm belief that district and school improvement is best accomplished when directed by people, working in teams, closest to the students. NCStar, guides school teams through a process of charting improvement and managing the continuous improvement process. NCStar builds accountability as well as helps schools track their improvement plans. NCStar requires a “culture of candor” in which district and school personnel talk openly and honestly about their professional practices that contribute to student learning. Since school improvement is such a unique process for each school, NCStar contains over 100 research based effective practices (indicators) and allows schools flexibility to personalize their school improvement plans to meet their distinct needs. More information about NCStar as well as a series of How to Videos may be found at www.ncstar.weebly.com

To further support district and school efforts in consolidating plans, schools designated as low performing according to G.S. 115C-105.37 will use the NCStar tool and receive feedback via the Statewide System of Support efforts. Through NCStar, needs and support can be identified and available resources deployed.

NCDPI encourages schools and districts to provide feedback on the North Carolina School Improvement Planning Implementation Guide and the associated web-based plan management tool. To provide your comments and improvement suggestions, please contact:

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Section Two – Legal Requirements for School Improvement Planning

Legislative Beginnings

In 1996, the North Carolina General Assembly established the School-Based Management and Accountability Program with the overall purpose of improving student performance (G.S. §115C-105.20). All school districts in North Carolina are required to participate in the program (G.S. § 115C-105.21 (a)). The law (G.S. §115C-105.27) specifies that each school shall develop a school improvement plan (SIP) that considers the goals set out in the mission statement for the public schools adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE), and the annual performance goals for that school as established by the SBE under G.S. §115C-105.35, which states annual performance goals shall:

- Focus on student performance in the basics of reading, mathematics, and communications skills in elementary and middle schools,
- Focus on student performance in courses required for graduation and on other measures required by the State Board of Education in high schools, and
- Hold schools accountable for the educational growth of their students.

Public Records

According to G.S. 115C-105.27 (a2), the school improvement plan, except for the school safety components of the plan, is a public record subject to Chapter 132 of the General Statutes and shall be posted on the school Web site. The names of the members of the school improvement team, their positions, and the date of their election to the school improvement team shall also be posted on the Web site. The school safety components of the plan are not public records subject to Chapter 132 of the General Statutes.

School Improvement Team

G.S. §115C-47 (38) mandates the duty of local boards to ensure each principal establishes a school improvement team and that the composition of the team complies with G.S. §115C-105.27 (a). (See also GS §115C-288 (l) – Powers and Duties of Principal.) G.S. §115C-105.27 (a) directs schools to establish a School Improvement Team (SIT) to develop a plan to improve student performance. School improvement teams shall consist of the following members:

- the principal of the school;
- representatives of the assistant principals;
- representatives of instructional personnel;
- representatives of instructional support personnel;
- representatives of teacher assistants assigned to the building; and
- representatives of parents of children enrolled in the school.

Representatives of the assistant principals, instructional personnel, instructional support personnel, and teacher assistants shall be elected by their respective groups by secret ballot. Participation in the school improvement planning process by the personnel noted above is a legal requirement. Principals do not have discretion to choose school improvement team representatives.

Parent Representation

G.S. §115C-105.27 states that unless the local board of education has adopted an election policy, parents shall be elected by parents of children enrolled in the school in an election conducted by the parent and teacher organization of the school, or, if none exists, by the largest organization of parents formed for this purpose. Parents serving on school improvement teams shall reflect the racial and socioeconomic composition of the students enrolled in that school and shall not be members of the building-level staff.

Parental involvement is a critical component of school success and positive student achievement. The law explicitly states “it is the intent of the General Assembly that parents, along with teachers, have a substantial role in developing school improvement plans. To this end, school improvement team meetings shall be held at a convenient time to assure substantial parent participation.”

These are non-negotiable, legal requirements. Schools not following these mandates of the law may be subject to legal action.

Principal's Role

General Statute §115C-105.27(c), states that the principal of the school shall present the proposed school improvement plan to all of the principals, assistant principals, instructional personnel, instructional support personnel, and teacher assistants assigned to the school building for their review and vote. The vote shall be by secret ballot. The principal shall submit the school improvement plan to the local board of education only if the proposed school improvement plan has the approval of a majority of the staff members who voted on the plan. There should be an understanding that with school improvement being a continuous improvement process, that the plan will be modified as needed throughout the year in order to ensure student success.

GS § 115C-105.27 (a1) requires the principal to ensure the school's compliance with state open meetings requirements. These requirements are outlined in Article 33C of Chapter 143 of the NC General Statutes (see Appendix A). Please note that teams and boards are permitted to hold closed sessions for the purpose of formulating and adopting the school safety components of school improvement plans by a local board of education or a school improvement team. Unlike the rest of the school improvement plan, safety components are not considered public records under Chapter 132 of the General Statutes.

Instructional and Support Staff Role

Staff members tasked with plan implementation are essential to improving student performance through the school improvement plan. Building staff support is best accomplished through active participation of the staff representatives in researching and developing the plan. NCDPI-recommended guiding principles found in Section Three of this document provide additional information about the value of distributed leadership. Staff representatives on the School Improvement Team can support this process by building support among the rest of the staff through information sharing and by soliciting ideas and feedback from colleagues.

Role of Data in Developing School Improvement Plans

G.S. §115C-105.27 (b) focuses school improvement teams on understanding and using relevant data. Specifically, this section directs that "...school improvement plans shall be, to the greatest extent possible, data-driven. School improvement teams shall use the Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) or a compatible and comparable system approved by the State Board of Education to (i) analyze student data and identify root causes for problems, (ii) determine actions to address them, and (iii) appropriately place students in courses.... School improvement plans shall contain clear, unambiguous targets, explicit indicators and actual measures, and expeditious time frames for meeting the measurement standards."

The NCDPI-recommended process identified in this document fully support and align with these legal requirements.

Required Strategies for Improving Student Performance

Per G.S. §115C-105.27 (b), strategies for improving student performance:

- Shall include a plan to address school safety and discipline concerns;
- May include a decision to use state funds in accordance with G.S. §115C-105.25 (budget flexibility);
- Shall include a plan that specifies the effective instructional practices and methods to be used to improve the academic performance of students identified as at risk of academic failure or at risk of dropping out of school;
- May include requests for waivers for state laws, rules, or policies for that school. A request for a waiver shall meet the requirements of G.S. §115C-105.26;
- Shall include a plan to provide a duty-free lunch period for every teacher on a daily basis or as otherwise approved by the school improvement team;
- Shall include a plan to provide duty-free instructional planning time for every teacher under G.S. §115C-301.1, with the goal of providing an average of at least five hours of planning time per week; and
- Shall include a plan to identify and eliminate unnecessary and redundant reporting

requirements for teachers and, to the extent practicable, streamline the school's reporting system and procedures, including requiring forms and reports to be in electronic form when possible and incorporating relevant documents into the student accessible components of the Instructional Improvement System.

On June 2, 2015, the General Assembly enacted Session Law 2015-46, An Act to Repeal Personal Education Plans and Modify Transition Plans. S.L. 2015-46 modified G.S. 115C-105.41 (b) and “Local boards of education shall adopt policies that direct school improvement teams to develop plans to include successful transition between elementary and middle school years and between the middle school and high school years for students at risk, as defined by the State Board of Education.” While the law does not require transition plans to be included in the School Improvement Plan, inclusion in the plan ensures that that strategies to improve student achievement are addressed within a comprehensive approach.

School Safety Requirements

GS §115C-105.27 (c1) requires superintendents to review and assess the school safety components of each school improvement plan and to make written recommendations to the local board. Local boards must review the safety components as well and develop findings on these components. The safety components as well as the local board’s findings should not be documented in the meeting minutes.

“School safety” is a broad term and might be interpreted to include facilities-related information that directly addresses physical safety of staff and students on campus as well as incident response procedures and other safety-related items. This information is appropriately part of the publicly available portion of the school improvement plan and discussion of the plan. Review and discussion of incident-response-related portions of school improvement plans shall occur in closed session, and this shall not be part of the publicly released improvement plan for each school. NCDPI legal staff recommend that local boards consult with their local attorney(s) anytime they have questions about what to include as part of the public portion of the plan.

Local Board Acceptance

Local boards of education must either accept or reject the school improvement plan for each school within its jurisdiction. (G.S. §115C-105.27 (d)). The local board shall not make any substantive changes in any school improvement plan it accepts. If the local board rejects a school improvement plan, the local board must specify its reasons for rejecting the plan. The school improvement team may then prepare another plan, present it to the principal, assistant principals, instructional personnel, instructional support personnel, and teacher assistants assigned to the school building for a vote, and submit it to the local board once again. If the school improvement plan is not accepted within 60 days after initial submission to the local board, the school or the local board may ask to use the process to resolve disagreements recommended in the guidelines developed by the SBE under G.S. §115C-105.20 (b)(5). If this request is made, both the school

and local board shall participate in the process to resolve disagreements. If there is no request to use this process, the local board may develop a school improvement plan for the school. The General Assembly urges the local board to utilize the school's proposed school improvement plan to the maximum extent possible when developing such a plan.

General Plan Submission Requirements

In general individual school improvement plans are not required to be submitted to the NCDPI. State of North Carolina legal requirements for SIP submission are met upon acceptance of a school's plan by the local board of education. This should not be confused with the requirement specified in General Statute 115C-105.37 and 115C-105.39A, regarding low performing schools and low performing administrative units. (*See Exceptions to Plan Submission Requirements section*)

Exceptions to Plan Submission Requirements

If a school has been identified as low-performing as provided in § 115C-105.37. and the school is not located in a local school administrative unit identified as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.39A, within 30 days of the initial identification the superintendent shall submit to the local board of education a preliminary plan for improving both the school performance grade and school growth score, including how the superintendent and other central office administrators will work with the school and monitor the school's progress. Within 30 days of its receipt of the preliminary plan, the local board shall vote to approve, modify, or reject this plan. Before the local board votes on the preliminary plan, it shall make the plan available to the public, including the personnel assigned to that school and the parents and guardians of the students who are assigned to the school, and shall allow for written comments.

State law requires that the local board shall submit a final plan to the State Board within five days of the local board's approval of the plan. The State Board shall review the plan expeditiously and, if appropriate, may offer recommendations to modify the plan. The local board shall consider any recommendations made by the State Board and, if necessary, amend the plan and vote on approval of any changes to the final plan. Beginning with the 2016-17 school year, the plans for state-identified low-performing schools will be submitted through NCStar. More information on state requirements for low-performing schools may be found in Appendix B.

G.S. 115C-105.39A Within 30 days of the identification of a local school administrative unit as low-performing, the superintendent shall submit to the local board of education a preliminary plan for improving both the school performance grade and school growth score of each low-performing school in the unit, including how the superintendent and other central office administrators will work with each low-performing school and monitor the low-performing school's progress and how current local school administrative unit policy should be changed to

improve student achievement throughout the local school administrative unit. Within 30 days of its receipt of the preliminary plan, the local board shall vote to approve, modify, or reject this plan. Before the local board votes on the plan, it shall make the plan available to the public, including the personnel assigned to each low-performing school and the parents and guardians of the students who are assigned to each low-performing school, and shall allow for written comments.

State law requires the local board to submit a final plan to the State Board within five days of the local board's approval of the plan. The State Board shall review the plan expeditiously and, if appropriate, may offer recommendations to modify the plan. The local board shall consider any recommendations made by the State Board and, if necessary, amend the plan and vote on approval of any changes to the final plan.

Both district or school plans shall be accessible through their website and the Department of Public Instruction's website.

Allowable Waivers

Effective July 1, 2015, the State Board of Education is only permitted to grant waivers for the following:

- Class size requirements only as provided in G.S. 115C-301(g); and
- School calendar requirements in order to provide sufficient days to accommodate anticipated makeup days due to school closings only as provided in G.S. 115C-84.2(d).§ 115C-105.26.

Except as otherwise provided for in this section, the State Board of Education shall not grant waivers of State laws or rules to local boards of education.

Waiver Requests

Waiver requests of state laws, rules, or policies as part of a school improvement plan permitted in General Statute §115C-105.26 shall be submitted to the State Board of Education (G.S. §115C-105.26 (a)) and include:

- Identify the school making the request;
- Identify the state laws, rules, or policies that inhibit the school's ability to improve student performance;
- Set out with specificity the circumstances under which the waiver may be used; and
- Explain how the requested waiver will permit the school to improve student performance.

The State Board shall act within 60 days of receipt of all requests for waivers under this section (§115C-105.26 (f)). In addition, the State Board shall, on a regular basis, review all waivers it has

granted to determine whether any rules should be repealed or modified or whether the Board should recommend to the General Assembly the repeal or modification of any laws (G.S. §115C-105.26 (g)).

Waiver Timelines

Approved school improvement plan waivers are valid for the duration of the relevant school improvement planning cycle. For example, a waiver request submitted and approved in August 2014 for the 2014-2016 cycle will expire at the end of the 2015-2016 school year. A waiver request submitted in January 2016 also will expire at the end of the 2015-2016 school year and must be re-submitted during the next planning cycle if the conditions motivating the request have not changed.

Duration, Amendments, and Revisions of Plans

School improvement plans shall remain in effect for no more than two years (G.S. §115C-105.27 (e)). However, the school improvement team may amend the plan as often as is necessary or appropriate. If, at any time, any part of a school improvement plan becomes unlawful or the local board finds that a school improvement plan is impeding student performance, the local board may vacate the relevant portion of the plan and direct the school to revise that portion. The procedures set out in this subsection shall apply to amendments and revisions to school improvement plans. Changes to an accepted school improvement plan – for instance, a change to strategies for a particular goal – do not have to be re-submitted to the local board for approval.

School administrators and improvement teams should be aware that state law allows for the fact that a school improvement plan may include information, goals, and strategies that address other requirements or plans. G.S. §115C-105.27 (f) states that if a school improvement plan adequately covers another required plan, there is no need to complete an additional plan.

Compliance with Planning Laws

G.S. §115C-105.27 (g) encourages any employee, parent, or other interested individual or organization to notify the principal of any concerns regarding compliance with the law. In addition, any employee, parent, or other interested individual or organization may submit in writing to the superintendent concerns regarding compliance with this section. The superintendent shall make a good-faith effort to investigate the concern. The superintendent shall provide a written response to the concern upon request.

Section Three – Guiding Principles for School Improvement

Introduction

A review of school improvement and strategic planning literature provides several guiding principles to establish a conceptual framework for school improvement in North Carolina. These principles are discussed below. The process model provided in Section Four aligns with these guiding principles.

1. The vision of the North Carolina State Board of Education is that every public school student will graduate ready for post-secondary education and work, prepared to be a globally engaged and productive citizen. The State Board of Education established the following five goals for public education: Every student in the NC Public School System graduates from high school prepared for work, further education and citizenship.
2. Every student has a personalized education.
3. Every student, every day has excellent educators.
4. Every school district has up-to-date financial, business, and technology systems to serve its students, parents and educators.
5. Every student is healthy, safe, and responsible.

District-Role in School Improvement

Central office staff should actively participate in school improvement efforts in their district to generate both practical and cultural improvements. First, if district-level staff understand school-level goals across the district, they can pinpoint areas where applying resources across the district may help. Second, regular participation can develop a symbiotic relationship. The school improvement process ultimately benefits students, and resulting student- and school-level improvements help districts achieve their goals and meet state and federal performance requirements.

The NCDPI recommends that districts form a District Support & Improvement Team (DSIT) that will regularly coach and assist schools throughout the stages of their school improvement cycle. Decades of research shows that regular feedback improves goal- setting effectiveness, and some researchers have argued that feedback is a necessary condition for goal-setting to enhance performance. The DSIT should ensure that administrators, teachers and the school improvement team receive the feedback needed to determine how well their chosen practices are working. Moreover, DSIT should coach school improvement teams so that they are able to make informed decisions about ineffective tasks and continue to expand those that are working. The DSIT should guide schools in using all data to drive decision making about school improvement.

Distributed Leadership

Implementing distributed leadership provides an opportunity to strengthen cooperative culture and increase buy-in for the SIP across the organization and all stakeholders. Legislative requirements directly reinforce the collaborative nature of the SIP process. Additionally, distributed leadership increases the odds of school improvement being sustainable. School improvement research (Harris, 2001; Spillane & Diamond, 2007) supports the concepts of distributed leadership and collaboration among a team to help drive improvement. For example, *Improving Quality of Education for All* (IQEA), is one of the most successful school improvement initiatives in the United Kingdom. (Harris 2001) This initiative focuses on creating conditions in schools that promote quality teaching and learning. Like school improvement teams, IQEA “school improvement groups” work together to understand school problems, to set priorities for improvement, and to select opportunities for making change. (Harris 2001) Additionally, Spillane and Diamond (2007) note that the school improvement planning process can be a valuable mechanism for creating collaboration within the school and developing a sense of shared purpose and collective reflection. Achieving this perspective among the leadership and faculty within a school is an NCDPI-recommended best practice. A collaborative environment creates an opportunity for diverse ideas, perspectives and experiences to surface from team members.

Execute with Fidelity

A school improvement plan may be well-developed, built on relevant data, loaded with evidence-based practices to improve learning, and focused on the school’s critical needs – but the plan is only as good as the fidelity of implementation. School improvement teams should include fidelity measures when planning to ensure there is some way to measure the implementation process and to make mid-course corrections when needed.

Goal Alignment

Local school boards should align district goals to the five SBE goals, and schools should align school improvement plans to their district goals. This process will help schools address all critical components of educational reform and focus on local school needs. School improvement teams should recognize this as a *guiding* principle – that is, it should generally be followed unless there is a sound reason to diverge from it. For instance, if data analysis indicates a need to focus school-level goals in one area such as student instruction or teacher quality, then the team should include tasks that specifically address these needs.. For detailed information regarding the State Board’s goals and strategic plan, see Appendix C, or visit the NCDPI website at: <http://stateboard.ncpublicschools.gov/strategic-plan>.

Calendar Alignment

School improvement does not begin and end during each school year. **School improvement is a continuous process.** Each objective that a SIT includes in their plan should have a goal that is written using the SMART (Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) methodology.

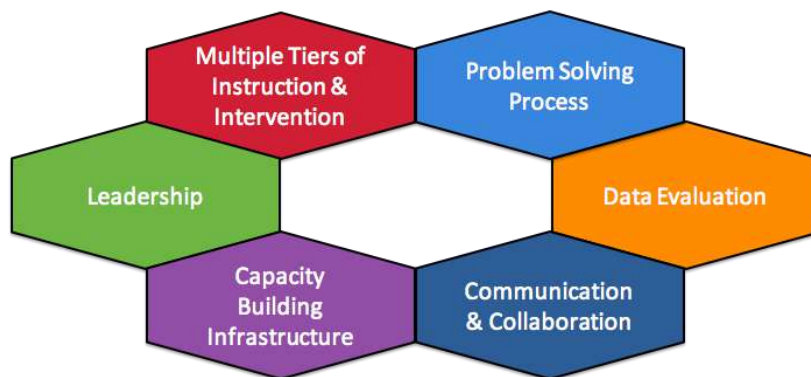
While legislation requires that school plans are developed at least every two years, the NCDPI recommends a continuous improvement cycle that contains interim goals so that multi-year plans can be monitored as the school progresses on its chosen objectives. A school improvement plan is not fixed – it is a true ‘living’ document that is constantly evolving and growing as the school improvement team continues to make adjustments to ensure all students succeed.

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

NC MTSS is a multi-tiered framework, which promotes school improvement through engaging, research-based academic and behavioral practices. NC MTSS employs a systems approach using data-driven problem solving to maximize growth for all.

MTSS is built on critical components. Critical components are installed through an intentional school improvement plan that addresses building the needed framework to address the needs of any school site. This section will provide an overview of the critical components to assist with not only developing, but implementing a school improvement plan.

Critical Components of MTSS



Leadership

Leadership is key to successful implementation of any large-scale innovation. The building principal, assistant principal(s), and school leadership team are critical to implementing MTSS at the school level. They engage staff in ongoing professional development for implementing MTSS, plan strategically for MTSS implementation, and model a problem-solving process for school improvement. The school principal also supports the implementation of MTSS by communicating a vision and mission to school staff, providing resources for planning and

implementing instruction and intervention, and ensuring that staff have the data needed for data-based problem solving.

Building the Capacity/Infrastructure for Implementation

School-wide capacity and infrastructure are required in order to implement and sustain MTSS. This capacity and infrastructure usually include ongoing professional development and coaching with an emphasis on data-based problem solving and multi-tiered instruction and intervention; scheduling that allows staff to plan and implement instruction and intervention; and processes and procedures for engaging in data-based problem solving.

Communication and Collaboration

Ongoing communication and collaboration are essential for successful implementation of MTSS. Many innovations fail due to a lack of consensus, lack of feedback to implementers to support continuous improvement, and not involving stakeholders in planning. In addition to including stakeholders in planning and providing continuous feedback, it is also important to build the infrastructure to communicate and work with families and other community partners. These practices increase the likelihood that innovative practices will be implemented and sustained.

Data-Based Problem Solving

The use of data-based problem solving to make education decisions is a critical element of MTSS implementation. This includes the use of data-based problem solving for student outcomes across content areas, grade levels, and tiers, as well as the use of problem-solving to address barriers to school-wide implementation of MTSS. While several models for data-based problem solving exist, the basic four-step problem solving approach includes: 1) defining the objectives/goals to be attained, 2) identifying possible reasons why the desired goals are not being attained, 3) developing a plan for implementing data-driven tasks to attain goals, and 4) evaluating the effectiveness of the plan. Whatever problem solving model is chosen by the school/district should be evaluated against these four steps outlined as crucial in research literature to date.

Three-Tiered Instructional/Intervention Model

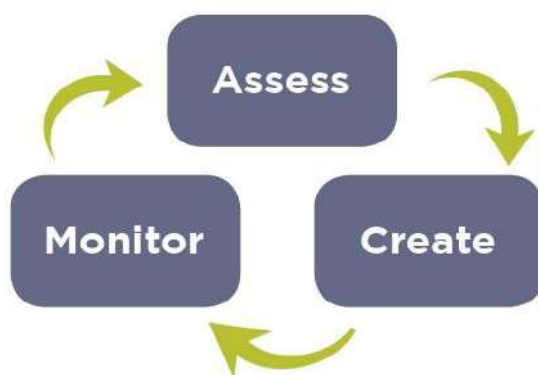
The three-tiered instructional/intervention model is another critical element of MTSS implementation. In a typical system, Tier 1 includes the instruction all students get; Tier 2 includes supplemental instruction or intervention provided to students not meeting benchmarks; and Tier 3 includes intensive, small group or individual interventions for students showing significant barriers to learning the skills required for school success. It is important to consider both academic and social-emotional/behavioral instruction and interventions when examining this domain.

	Tier I- Core	Tier II- Supplemental	Tier III Intensive
Who	All students	Students needing supplemental supports in addition to core instruction (approximately 20% of students)	Students needing intensive supports in addition to supplemental and core instruction (approximately 5% of students)
What	Evidence-based practices and programs demonstrated to produce good academic and behavior outcomes for the majority of students; Defined through the lens of <i>Instruction, Curriculum and Environment</i> .	Evidence-based practices and programs demonstrated to improve academic and behavior performance in core (Tier I); Defined through the lens of <i>Instruction, Curriculum and Environment</i> ahead of time to be responsive to the students served.	Evidence-based practices and programs demonstrated to improve academic and behavior performance in identified skill areas; Defined through the lens of <i>Instruction, Curriculum, Environment and Learner</i> ahead of time to be responsive to the students served although individualization may be necessary at this level
Effectiveness	If at least 80% of all students, in all subgroups, are meeting academic and behavior benchmarks with core supports alone	If at least 70-80% of students improve academic and behavior performance toward core (Tier I) benchmarks	If students improve academic and behavior progress in identified skill areas

Data Evaluation

Given the importance of data-based problem solving within an MTSS model, the need for a data and evaluation system is clear. In order to do data-based problem solving, school staff need to understand and have access to data sources that address the purposes of assessment. Procedures and protocols for administering assessments and data use, allow school staff to use data to drive decision making. In addition to student data, data on the fidelity of MTSS implementation (including fidelity of implementation of all instructional practices) allow school leadership to examine the current practices and make changes for improving MTSS implementation.

Section Four – Recommended School Improvement Planning Process



Introduction

The NCDPI-recommended school improvement planning process is a 3-stage cycle modeled after the four-phase Plan-Do-Check-Act model (alternatively known as a Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle, a Deming cycle, or a Shewhart cycle). This approach allows school improvement teams to have the crucial conversations that are needed in order to evaluate the current state of the school (Assess), create and implement plans based on data analysis (Create), and to make adjustments based upon the outcomes and the impact of each plan objective (Monitor). This model is inclusive of the four steps that are common in research literature on systematic problem solving: problem identification and problem analysis (Assess), plan implementation (Create), and plan evaluation (Monitor).

Assess

The basis of any strong school improvement plan is a thorough, unrelenting assessment of the current state of the school. Often, the true impact of a school's efforts on student learning is diffused over time. A need-driven approach to school improvement planning requires a review that considers both internal and external factors associated with the school. An objective,

effective needs assessment incorporates both student and implementation data, gathered quantitatively and qualitatively. Multiple data pieces are triangulated to ensure accuracy. While a single measure provides useful information, various data used together provides a more comprehensive picture of the needs of all students in the school. Multiple measures of data may be categorized as follows:

Student Level Data:

- Demographics – Provides an indication of the changes in the context of the school over time (e.g., enrollment, attendance, drop-out rate, ethnicity, gender, grade level)
- Student Learning – Provides information about student performance based on different measures (e.g., standardized tests, teacher observations, benchmark data, formative assessment data, percentage of students receiving intervention, student response to intervention data)
- Engagement Data- Provides information on student participation (e.g., Office Discipline Referral (ODR), In-School and Out-Of-School Suspension Data, classroom-managed behavior data, attendance data including tardies and absences)
- Implementation Data
 - School Practices– Provides information about how school practices change over time (e.g., program and practice implementation, schedules, procedures)
 - Perceptions/Beliefs– Provides information about environmental improvements (e.g., teacher surveys, student surveys, climate and culture surveys, focus groups)

The school improvement team should first assess internal factors and instructional practices to explicitly identify the school's strengths and weaknesses. Next, the team should analyze external factors to identify opportunities and challenges that may impact what the school should focus on or can accomplish. While this analysis might identify issues the team must address, the purpose of this process is to develop an understanding of the broader context in which the school operates and to identify issues that might affect the school in the future. Finally, the team should understand the school's weaknesses and identify possible solutions and growth opportunities. Identifying root causes of issues allows the improvement team to address these causes rather than just the symptoms so they can solve the real problem.

There are a variety of structured needs assessment systems available today. The NCDPI District and School Transformation Division uses a comprehensive assessment process to help improve low performing schools and districts that is based on Cambridge Education's assessment model and is customized for North Carolina schools. The current rubric used for assessing schools as part of a Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) may be found in Appendix D. The CNA is composed of 5 critical dimensions (Instructional Excellence & Alignment, Leadership Capacity, Professional Capacity, Planning & Operational Effectiveness, and Families & Community).

To assess the school's use of a Multi-Tiered System of Support as a total school improvement framework, the NCDPI recommends the NC Self-Assessment of MTSS (SAM). SAM measures school-level implementation of MTSS. The purpose of administration is to help school-level and district-level personnel identify and prioritize implementation steps. The SAM contains 39 items in 6 domains (Leadership, Building Capacity/Infrastructure for Implementation, Communication and Collaboration, Data-based Problem-solving, Three-tiered Instructional/Intervention Model, and Data-Evaluation). The rubric for the SAM may be found in Appendix E.

Quality implementation of MTSS is associated with increased likelihood of instruction and interventions leading to successful student outcomes. It is important for schools to monitor not only student outcomes, but also how assessments, instruction, interventions, and data-based problem-solving are put into place (i.e., the fidelity with which these elements are implemented). Successful implementation is influenced by many factors within and around the school system (e.g., professional development, administrative support, data systems, staff member perceptions, successful adaptation, etc.). As a measure of school-level implementation of an MTSS, the focus of this instrument is on the necessary actions and activities to successfully implement and sustain the critical elements of MTSS with fidelity.

Create

Effective school improvement planning creates shared direction and generates an attention on priorities that drives action. Plans that concentrate on a limited set of priorities are better than exhaustive lists of initiatives and programs. While schools always have on-going initiatives and objectives, their concentration should be limited to the school's ***top three to five priorities***. These priorities must guide the efforts of teachers and administrators as they carry out the business of educating children. Ongoing plan review and revisions allow schools to introduce new objectives when original objectives are at full implementation.

When priorities are identified, pursue an understanding of root causes by using techniques such as Ishakawa (cause-and-effect) diagrams, the "5 Whys," and others. Identifying root causes allows the team to address more than the easily-identifiable symptoms and achieve a long-term solution. Analyzing and understanding data allows school improvement teams to identify root causes for problems and take action to address them. All school improvement plans should be data-driven. (See GS 115C-105.27 (a).) School Improvement Teams could ask themselves the following questions to determine an appropriate course of action:

- What data must be analyzed to determine the level of implementation?
- What instruments must be created to gather the data?
- Who will make the data available?

Established priorities should have clear goals. The goal statement under each objective (essentially a SMART goal) provides clarity for the school community. Once the goal is defined in the plan, identify and document specific tasks for achieving the objective. Tasks should

address the root cause(s) identified by the school improvement team. A SIT must define ownership of each task. This means specifying an individual responsible for executing the task. Do not over burden an individual with too many responsibilities as that can negatively impact implementation.

The District Support & Improvement Team should review school plans periodically to see if the designated tasks need revising. These reviews also provide opportunity for the principal and superintendent to discuss additional resource needs or specific tasks for which district level assistance is needed. Districts using these frequent and structured review approaches confirm they are time-consuming, yet the discussions have a dramatic effect on focusing effort on student learning and achievement. Student learning is the business of our schools, and the NCDPI recommends this significant investment of time as a mechanism to help achieve it.

Monitor

The most critical and often overlooked stage of a continuous improvement cycle is this monitoring stage. Once the plan is designed with clarity, the execution of the plan is to take place. It is important to note that the execution of the plan has no guarantee of success. As the plan is implemented, the team is taking part in ongoing assessment and checking to see the impact of each objective and its corresponding tasks. The team should check the results of the plan's implementation against the goal that was outlined during the "create" stage.

Working the plan as intended with check points affords the team the opportunity to check progress, modify and adjust along the way. The team should check the results of the tasks used for impact toward goal attainment. If movement toward the goal is not being made at the identified check points, the team has the opportunity to adjust the goal, the fidelity of implementation, or identification of a new tasks. It is also important that if progress toward the goal is being made to celebrate those wins along the way. Identifying those points of progress serves to support the need to adjust or acknowledge goal attainment.

If during the "monitor" stage, the team finds that the plan was successful, then the team may determine that the effective practice addressed by the objective is in full implementation. If the "monitor" stage shows that the plan was not or is not being successful, then the team may need to go back through the cycle and examine whether another underlying problem that was not addressed originally needs to be addressed first. Evaluating progress is part of the process, hence lack of monitoring could adversely affect the ongoing cycle of improvement.

Appendix A – Chapter 143, Article 33, NC General Statutes

Article 33C. Meetings of Public Bodies.

Whereas the public bodies that administer the legislative, policy-making, quasi-judicial, administrative, and advisory functions of North Carolina and its political subdivisions exist solely to conduct the people's business, it is the public policy of North Carolina that the hearings, deliberations, and actions of these bodies be conducted openly. (1979, c. 655, s. 1.)

§ 143-318.10. All official meetings of public bodies open to the public.

(a) Except as provided in G.S. 143-318.11, 143-318.14A, and 143-318.18, each official meeting of a public body shall be open to the public, and any person is entitled to attend such a meeting.

(b) As used in this Article, "public body" means any elected or appointed authority, board, commission, committee, council, or other body of the State, or of one or more counties, cities, school administrative units, constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina, or other political subdivisions or public corporations in the State that (i) is composed of two or more members and (ii) exercises or is authorized to exercise a legislative, policy-making, quasi-judicial, administrative, or advisory function. In addition, "public body" means the governing board of a "public hospital" as defined in G.S. 159-39 and the governing board of any nonprofit corporation to which a hospital facility has been sold or conveyed pursuant to G.S. 131E-8, any subsidiary of such nonprofit corporation, and any nonprofit corporation owning the corporation to which the hospital facility has been sold or conveyed.

(c) "Public body" does not include (i) a meeting solely among the professional staff of a public body, or (ii) the medical staff of a public hospital or the medical staff of a hospital that has been sold or conveyed pursuant to G.S. 131E-8.

(d) "Official meeting" means a meeting, assembly, or gathering together at any time or place or the simultaneous communication by conference telephone or other electronic means of a majority of the members of a public body for the purpose of conducting hearings, participating in deliberations, or voting upon or otherwise transacting the public business within the jurisdiction, real or apparent, of the public body. However, a social meeting or other informal assembly or gathering together of the members of a public body does not constitute an official meeting unless called or held to evade the spirit and purposes of this Article.

(e) Every public body shall keep full and accurate minutes of all official meetings, including any closed sessions held pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11. Such minutes may be in written form or, at the option of the public body, may be in the form of sound or video and sound recordings. When a public body meets in closed session, it shall keep a general account of the closed session so that a person not in attendance would have a reasonable understanding of what transpired. Such accounts may be a written narrative, or video or audio recordings. Such minutes and accounts shall be public records within the meaning of the Public Records Law, G.S. 132-1 et seq.; provided, however, that minutes or an account of a closed session conducted in compliance with G.S. 143-318.11 may be withheld from public inspection so long as public inspection would frustrate the purpose of a closed session.

(1979, c. 655, s. 1; 1985 (Reg. Sess., 1986), c. 932, s. 4; 1991, c. 694, ss. 1, 2; 1993 (Reg. Sess.,

1994), c. 570, s. 1; 1995, c. 509, s. 135.2(p); 1997-290, s. 1; 1997-456, s. 27; 2011-326, s. 8.)

§ 143-318.11. Closed sessions.

(a) Permitted Purposes. – It is the policy of this State that closed sessions shall be held only when required to permit a public body to act in the public interest as permitted in this section. A public body may hold a closed session and exclude the public only when a closed session is required:

(1) To prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State or of the United States, or not considered a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes.

(2) To prevent the premature disclosure of an honorary degree, scholarship, prize, or similar award.

(3) To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged. General policy matters may not be discussed in a closed session and nothing herein shall be construed to permit a public body to close a meeting that otherwise would be open merely because an attorney employed or retained by the public body is a participant. The public body may consider and give instructions to an attorney concerning the handling or settlement of a claim, judicial action, mediation, arbitration, or administrative procedure. If the public body has approved or considered a settlement, other than a malpractice settlement by or on behalf of a hospital, in closed session, the terms of that settlement shall be reported to the public body and entered into its minutes as soon as possible within a reasonable time after the settlement is concluded.

(4) To discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body, including agreement on a tentative list of economic development incentives that may be offered by the public body in negotiations. The action approving the signing of an economic development contract or commitment, or the action authorizing the payment of economic development expenditures, shall be taken in an open session.

(5) To establish, or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating (i) the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease; or (ii) the amount of compensation and other material terms of an employment contract or proposed employment contract.

(6) To consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee. General personnel policy issues may not be considered in a closed session. A public body may not consider the qualifications, competence, performance, fitness, appointment, or removal of a member of the

public body and may not consider or fill a vacancy among its own membership except in an open meeting. Final action making an appointment or discharge or removal by a public body having final authority for the appointment or discharge or removal shall be taken in an open meeting.

(7) To plan, conduct, or hear reports concerning investigations of alleged criminal misconduct.

(8) To formulate plans by a local board of education relating to emergency response to incidents of school violence.

(9) To discuss and take action regarding plans to protect public safety as it relates to existing or potential terrorist activity and to receive briefings by staff members, legal counsel, or law enforcement or emergency service officials concerning actions taken or to be taken to respond to such activity.

(b) Repealed by Session Laws 1991, c. 694, s. 4.

(c) Calling a Closed Session. – A public body may hold a closed session only upon a motion duly made and adopted at an open meeting. Every motion to close a meeting shall cite one or more of the permissible purposes listed in subsection (a) of this section. A motion based on subdivision (a)(1) of this section shall also state the name or citation of the law that renders the information to be discussed privileged or confidential. A motion based on subdivision (a)(3) of this section shall identify the parties in each existing lawsuit concerning which the public body expects to receive advice during the closed session.

(d) Repealed by Session Laws 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 570, s. 2. (1979, c. 655, s. 1; 1981, c. 831; 1985 (Reg. Sess., 1986), c. 932, s. 5; 1991, c. 694, ss. 3, 4; 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 570, s. 2; 1995, c. 509, s. 84; 1997-222, s. 2; 1997-290, s. 2; 2001-500, s. 2; 2003-180, s. 2.)

§ 143-318.12. Public notice of official meetings.

(a) If a public body has established, by ordinance, resolution, or otherwise, a schedule of regular meetings, it shall cause a current copy of that schedule, showing the time and place of regular meetings, to be kept on file as follows:

(1) For public bodies that are part of State government, with the Secretary of State;

(2) For the governing board and each other public body that is part of a county government, with the clerk to the board of county commissioners;

(3) For the governing board and each other public body that is part of a city government, with the city clerk;

(4) For each other public body, with its clerk or secretary, or, if the public body does not have a clerk or secretary, with the clerk to the board of county commissioners in the county in which the public body normally holds its meetings. to be filed as provided in subdivisions (1)

through (4) of this subsection at least seven calendar days before the day of the first meeting held pursuant to the revised schedule.

(b) If a public body holds an official meeting at any time or place other than a time or place shown on the schedule filed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, it shall give public notice of the time and place of that meeting as provided in this subsection.

(1) If a public body recesses a regular, special, or emergency meeting held pursuant to public notice given in compliance with this subsection, and the time and place at which the meeting is to be continued is announced in open session, no further notice shall be required.

(2) For any other meeting, except an emergency meeting, the public body shall cause written notice of the meeting stating its purpose (i) to be posted on the principal bulletin board of the public body or, if the public body has no such bulletin board, at the door of its usual meeting room, and (ii) to be mailed, e-mailed, or delivered to each newspaper, wire service, radio station, and television station that has filed a written request for notice with the clerk or secretary of the public body or with some other person designated by the public body. The public body shall also cause notice to be mailed, e-mailed, or delivered to any person, in addition to the representatives of the media listed above, who has filed a written request with the clerk, secretary, or other person designated by the public body. This notice shall be posted and mailed, e-mailed, or delivered at least 48 hours before the time of the meeting. The notice required to be posted on the principal bulletin board or at the door of its usual meeting room shall be posted on the door of the

building or on the building in an area accessible to the public if the building containing the principal bulletin board or usual meeting room is closed to the public continuously for 48 hours before the time of the meeting. The public body may require each newspaper, wire service, radio station, and television station submitting a written request for notice to renew the request annually. The public body shall charge a fee to persons other than the media, who request notice, of ten dollars (\$10.00) per calendar year, and may require them to renew their requests quarterly. No fee shall be charged for notices sent by e-mail.

(3) For an emergency meeting, the public body shall cause notice of the meeting to be given to each local newspaper, local wire service, local radio station, and local television station that has filed a written request, which includes the newspaper's, wire services, or station's telephone number, for emergency notice with the clerk or secretary of the public body or with some other person designated by the public body. This notice shall be given either by e-mail, by telephone, or by the same method used to notify the members of the public body and shall be given immediately after notice has been given to those members. This notice shall be given at the expense of the party notified. Only business connected with the emergency may be considered at a meeting to which notice is given pursuant to this paragraph.

(c) Repealed by Session Laws 1991, c. 694, s. 6.

(d) If a public body has a Web site and has established a schedule of regular meetings, the public body shall post the schedule of regular meetings to the Web site.

(e) If a public body has a Web site that one or more of its employees maintains, the public body shall post notice of any meeting held under subdivisions (b)(1) and (b)(2) of this section prior to the scheduled time of that meeting.

(f) For purposes of this section, an "emergency meeting" is one called because of generally unexpected circumstances that require immediate consideration by the public body. (1979, c. 655, s. 1; 1991, c. 694, ss. 5, 6; 2009-350, s. 1.)

§ 143-318.13. Electronic meetings; written ballots; acting by reference.

(a) Electronic Meetings. – If a public body holds an official meeting by use of conference telephone or other electronic means, it shall provide a location and means whereby members of the public may listen to the meeting and the notice of the meeting required by this Article shall specify that location. A fee of up to twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) may be charged each such listener to defray in part the cost of providing the necessary location and equipment.

(b) Written Ballots. – Except as provided in this subsection or by joint resolution of the General Assembly, a public body may not vote by secret or written ballot. If a public body decides to vote by written ballot, each member of the body so voting shall sign his or her ballot; and the minutes of the public body shall show the vote of each member voting. The ballots shall be available for public inspection in the office of the clerk or secretary to the public body immediately following the meeting at which the vote took place and until the minutes of that meeting are approved, at which time the ballots may be destroyed.

(c) Acting by Reference. – The members of a public body shall not deliberate, vote, or otherwise take action upon any matter by reference to a letter, number or other designation, or other secret device or method, with the intention of making it impossible for persons attending a meeting of the public body to understand what is being deliberated, voted, or acted upon. However, this subsection does not prohibit a public body from deliberating, voting, or otherwise taking action by reference to an agenda, if copies of the agenda, sufficiently worded to enable the public to understand what is being deliberated, voted, or acted upon, are available for public inspection at the meeting. (1979, c. 655, s. 1.)

§ 143-318.14. Broadcasting or recording meetings.

(a) Except as herein below provided, any radio or television station is entitled to broadcast all or any part of a meeting required to be open. Any person may photograph, film, tape-record, or otherwise reproduce any part of a meeting required to be open.

(b) A public body may regulate the placement and use of equipment necessary for broadcasting, photographing, filming, or recording a meeting, so as to prevent undue interference with the meeting. However, the public body must allow such equipment to be placed within the meeting room in such a way as to permit its intended use, and the ordinary use of such equipment shall not be declared to constitute undue interference; provided, however, that if the public body, in good faith, should determine that the size of the meeting room is such that all the members of the public body, members of the public present, and the equipment and personnel necessary for broadcasting, photographing, filming, and tape- recording the meeting cannot be accommodated

in the meeting room without unduly interfering with the meeting and an adequate alternative meeting room is not readily available, then the public body, acting in good faith and consistent with the purposes of this Article, may require the pooling of such equipment and the personnel operating it; and provided further, if the news media, in order to facilitate news coverage, request an alternate site for the meeting, and the public body grants the request, then the news media making such request shall pay any costs incurred by the public body in securing an alternate meeting site. (1979, c. 655, s. 1.)

§ 143-318.14A. Legislative commissions, committees, and standing subcommittees.

(a) except as provided in subsection (e) below, all official meetings of commissions, committees, and standing subcommittees of the General Assembly (including, without limitation, joint committees and study committees), shall be held in open session. For the purpose of this section, the following also shall be considered to be "commissions, committees, and standing subcommittees of the General Assembly":

- (1) The Legislative Research Commission;
- (2) The Legislative Services Commission;
- (3) Repealed by Session Laws 2006-203, s. 93, effective July 1, 2007, and applicable to the budget for the 2007-2009 biennium and each subsequent biennium thereafter.
- (4) Repealed by Session Laws 2011-291, s. 2.50, effective June 24, 2011;
- (5) The Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations;
- (6) The Joint Legislative Commission [Committee] on Local Government;
- (7) Repealed by Session Laws 1997, c. 443, s. 12.30, effective August 28, 1997.
- (8) Repealed by Session Laws 2011-291, s. 2.50, effective June 24, 2011;
- (9) The Environmental Review Commission;
- (10) The Joint Legislative Transportation Oversight Committee;
- (11) The Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee;
- (12) Repealed by Session Laws 2011-266, s. 1.28(b), effective July 1, 2011 and Session Laws 2011-291, s. 2.50, effective June 24, 2011;
- (13) The Commission on Children with Special Needs;
- (14) Repealed by Session Laws 2011-291, s. 2.50, effective June 24, 2011;
- (15) The Agriculture and Forestry Awareness Study Commission; and

(16) Repealed by Session Laws 2011-291, s. 2.50, effective June 24, 2011;

(17) The standing Committees on Pensions and Retirement.

(b) Reasonable public notice of all meetings of commissions, committees, and standing subcommittees of the General Assembly shall be given. For purposes of this subsection, "reasonable public notice" includes, but is not limited to:

(1) Notice given openly at a session of the Senate or of the House; or

(2) Notice mailed or sent by electronic mail to those who have requested notice, and to the Legislative Services Office, which shall post the notice on the General Assembly web site.

G.S. 143-318.12 shall not apply to meetings of commissions, committees, and standing subcommittees of the General Assembly.

(c) A commission, committee, or standing subcommittee of the General Assembly may take final action only in an open meeting.

(d) A violation of this section by members of the General Assembly shall be punishable as prescribed by the rules of the House or the Senate.

(e) The following sections shall apply to meetings of commissions, committees, and standing subcommittees of the General Assembly: G.S. 143-318.10(e) and G.S. 143-318.11, G.S. 143-318.13 and G.S. 143-318.14, G.S. 143-318.16 through G.S. 143-318.17. (1991, c. 694, s. 7; 1991 (Reg. Sess., 1992), c. 785, s. 4; c. 1030, s. 42; 1993, c. 321, s. 169.2(f); 1997-443, s. 12.30; 2003-374, s. 1; 2006-203, s. 93; 2011-266, s. 1.28(b); 2011-291, s. 2.50.)

§ 143-318.15: Repealed by Session Laws 2006-203, s. 94, effective July 1, 2007, and applicable to the budget for the 2007-2009 biennium and each subsequent biennium thereafter.

§ 143-318.16. Injunctive relief against violations of Article.

(a) The General Court of Justice has jurisdiction to enter mandatory or prohibitory injunctions to enjoin (i) threatened violations of this Article, (ii) the recurrence of past violations of this Article, or (iii) continuing violations of this Article. Any person may bring an action in the appropriate division of the General Court of Justice seeking such an injunction; and the plaintiff need not allege or prove special damage different from that suffered by the public at large. It is not a defense to such an action that there is an adequate remedy at law.

(b) Any injunction entered pursuant to this section shall describe the acts enjoined with reference to the violations of this Article that have been proved in the action.

(c) Repealed by Session Laws 1985 (Reg. Sess., 1986), c. 932, s. 3, effective October 1, 1986. (1979, c. 655, s. 1; 1985 (Reg. Sess., 1986), c. 932, s. 3.)

§ 143-318.16A. Additional remedies for violations of Article.

(a) Any person may institute a suit in the superior court requesting the entry of a judgment declaring that any action of a public body was taken, considered, discussed, or deliberated in violation of this Article. Upon such a finding, the court may declare any such action null and void. Any person may seek such a declaratory judgment, and the plaintiff need not allege or prove special damage different from that suffered by the public at large. The public body whose action the suit seeks to set aside shall be made a party. The court may order other persons be made parties if they have or claim any right, title, or interest that would be directly affected by a declaratory judgment voiding the action that the suit seeks to set aside.

(b) A suit seeking declaratory relief under this section must be commenced within 45 days following the initial disclosure of the action that the suit seeks to have declared null and void; provided, however, that any suit for declaratory judgment brought pursuant to this section that seeks to set aside a bond order or bond referendum shall be commenced within the limitation periods prescribed by G.S. 159-59 and G.S. 159-62. If the challenged action is recorded in the minutes of the public body, its initial disclosure shall be deemed to have occurred on the date the minutes are first available for public inspection. If the challenged action is not recorded in the minutes of the public body, the date of its initial disclosure shall be determined by the court based on a finding as to when the plaintiff knew or should have known that the challenged action had been taken.

(c) In making the determination whether to declare the challenged action null and void,

the court shall consider the following and any other relevant factors:

The extent to which the violation affected the substance of the challenged action;

The extent to which the violation thwarted or impaired access to meetings or proceedings that the public had a right to attend;

The extent to which the violation prevented or impaired public knowledge or understanding of the people's business;

Whether the violation was an isolated occurrence, or was a part of a continuing pattern of violations of this Article by the public body;

The extent to which persons relied upon the validity of the challenged action, and the effect on such persons of declaring the challenged action void;

Whether the violation was committed in bad faith for the purpose of evading or subverting the public policy embodied in this Article.

(d) A declaratory judgment pursuant to this section may be entered as an alternative to, or in combination with, an injunction entered pursuant to G.S. 143-318.16.

(e) The validity of any enacted law or joint resolution or passed simple resolution of either house of the General Assembly is not affected by this Article. (1985 (Reg. Sess., 1986), c. 932, s. 1; 1991, c. 694, s. 8.)

§ 143-318.16B. Assessments and awards of attorneys' fees.

When an action is brought pursuant to G.S. 143-318.16 or G.S. 143-318.16A, the court may make written findings specifying the prevailing party or parties, and may award the prevailing

party or parties a reasonable attorney's fee, to be taxed against the losing party or parties as part of the costs. The court may order that all or any portion of any fee as assessed be paid personally by any individual member or members of the public body found by the court to have knowingly or intentionally committed the violation; provided, that no order against any individual member shall issue in any case where the public body or that individual member seeks the advice of an attorney, and such advice is followed. (1985 (Reg. Sess., 1986), c. 932, s. 2; 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 570, s. 3.)

§ 143-318.16C. Accelerated hearing; priority.

Actions brought pursuant to G.S. 143-318.16 or G.S. 143-318.16A shall be set down for immediate hearing, and subsequent proceedings in such actions shall be accorded priority by the trial and appellate courts. (1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 570, s. 4.)

§ 143-318.16D. Local acts.

Any reference in any city charter or local act to an "executive session" is amended to read "closed session". (1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 570, s. 4.)

§ 143-318.17. Disruptions of official meetings.

A person who willfully interrupts, disturbs, or disrupts an official meeting and who, upon being directed to leave the meeting by the presiding officer, willfully refuses to leave the meeting is guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor. (1979, c. 655, s. 1; 1993, c. 539, s. 1028; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c).)

§ 143-318.18. Exceptions.

This Article does not apply to:

- (1) Grand and petit juries.
- (2) Any public body that is specifically authorized or directed by law to meet in executive or confidential session, to the extent of the authorization or direction.
- (3) The Judicial Standards Commission.
- (3a) The North Carolina Innocence Inquiry Commission. (4) Repealed by Session Laws 1991, c. 694, s. 9.
- (4a) The Legislative Ethics Committee.
- (4b) A conference committee of the General Assembly.
- (4c) A caucus by members of the General Assembly; however, no member of the General Assembly shall participate in a caucus which is called for the purpose of evading or subverting this Article.
- (5) Law enforcement agencies.
- (6) A public body authorized to investigate, examine, or determine the character and other qualifications of applicants for professional or occupational licenses or certificates or to take disciplinary actions against persons holding such licenses or certificates, (i) while preparing, approving, administering, or grading examinations or (ii) while meeting with respect to an individual applicant for or holder of such a license or certificate. This exception does not amend, repeal, or supersede any other statute that requires a public hearing or other practice

and procedure in a proceeding before such a public body.

(7) Any public body subject to the State Budget Act, Chapter 143C of the General Statutes and exercising quasi-judicial functions, during a meeting or session held solely for the purpose of making a decision in an adjudicatory action or proceeding.

(8) The boards of trustees of endowment funds authorized by G.S. 116-36 or G.S. 116-238.

(9) Repealed by Session Laws 1991, c. 694, s. 9.

(10) The Board of Awards.

(11) The General Court of Justice. (1979, c. 655, s. 1; 1985, c. 757, s. 206(e); D1991, c. 694, s. 9; 2006-184, s. 6; 2006-203, s. 95; 2010-171, s. 5.)

Appendix B – State Requirements for Low-Performing Schools and Districts

§ 115C-105.37. Identification of low-performing schools.

Identification of Low-Performing Schools. – The State Board of Education shall identify low-performing schools on an annual basis. Low-performing schools are those that receive a school performance grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" as defined by G.S. 115C-83.15.

(a1) Plan for Improvement of Low-Performing Schools. – If a school has been identified as low-performing as provided in this section and the school is not located in a local school administrative unit identified as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.39A, the following actions shall be taken:

(1) The superintendent shall proceed under G.S. 115C-105.39.

(2) Within 30 days of the initial identification of a school as low-performing by the State Board, the superintendent shall submit to the local board of education a preliminary plan for improving both the school performance grade and school growth score, including how the superintendent and other central office administrators will work with the school and monitor the school's progress.

(3) Within 30 days of its receipt of the preliminary plan, the local board shall vote to approve, modify, or reject this plan. Before the local board votes on the preliminary plan, it shall make the plan available to the public, including the personnel assigned to that school and the parents and guardians of the students who are assigned to the school, and shall allow for written comments.

(4) The local board shall submit a final plan to the State Board within five days of the local board's approval of the plan. The State Board shall review the plan expeditiously and, if appropriate, may offer recommendations to modify the plan. The local board shall consider any recommendations made by the State Board and, if necessary, amend the plan and vote on approval of any changes to the final plan.

(5) The local board of education shall provide access to the final plan on the local school administrative unit's Web site. The State Board of Education shall also provide access to each low-performing school plan on the Department of Public Instruction's Web site.

(b) Parental Notice of Low-Performing School Status. – Each school that the State Board identifies as low-performing shall provide written notification to the parents and guardians of students attending that school within 30 days of the identification that includes the following information:

(1) A statement that the State Board of Education has found that the school has "received a school performance grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" and has been identified as a low-performing school as defined by G.S. 115C-105.37." The statement shall include an explanation of the school performance grades and growth scores.

(2) The school performance grade and growth score received.

(3) Information about the preliminary plan developed under subsection (a1) of this section and

the availability of the final plan on the local school administrative unit's Web site.

(4) The meeting date for when the preliminary plan will be considered by the local board of education. G.S. 115C-105.37 Page 2

(5) A description of any additional steps the school is taking to improve student performance. (1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 716, s. 3; 1997-221, s. 20(b); 1997-443, s. 8.45; 1998-59, s. 1; 2001-424, s. 29.4(a); 2015-241, s. 8A.4(b).)

§ 115C-105.39A. Identification of low-performing local school administrative units. (a)

Identification of Low-Performing Local School Administrative Units. – The State Board of Education shall identify low-performing local school administrative units on an annual basis. A low-performing local school administrative unit is a unit in which the majority of the schools in that unit that received a school performance grade and school growth score as provided in G.S. 115C-83.15 have been identified as low-performing schools, as provided in G.S. 115C-105.37.

(b) Plan for Improvement of Low-Performing Local School Administrative Units. – Once a local school administrative unit has been identified as low-performing under this section, the following actions shall be taken: (1) The superintendent shall proceed under G.S. 115C-105.39. (2) Within 30 days of the identification of a local school administrative unit as low-performing by the State Board, the superintendent shall submit to the local board of education a preliminary plan for improving both the school performance grade and school growth score of each low-performing school in the unit, including how the superintendent and other central office administrators will work with each low-performing school and monitor the low-performing school's progress and how current local school administrative unit policy should be changed to improve student achievement throughout the local school administrative unit. (3) Within 30 days of its receipt of the preliminary plan, the local board shall vote to approve, modify, or reject this plan. Before the local board votes on the plan, it shall make the plan available to the public, including the personnel assigned to each low-performing school and the parents and guardians of the students who are assigned to each low-performing school, and shall allow for written comments. (4) The local board shall submit a final plan to the State Board within five days of the local board's approval of the plan. The State Board shall review the plan expeditiously and, if appropriate, may offer recommendations to modify the plan. The local board shall consider any recommendations made by the State Board and, if necessary, amend the plan and vote on approval of any changes to the final plan. (5) The local board of education shall provide access to the final plan on the local school administrative unit's Web site. The State Board of Education shall also provide access to each low-performing local school administrative unit plan on the Department of Public Instruction's Web site. (c) Parental Notice of Low-Performing Local School Administrative Unit Status. – Each local school administrative unit that the State Board identifies as low-performing shall provide written notification to the parents and guardians of all students attending any school in the local school administrative unit within 30 days of the identification that includes the following information: (1) A statement that the State Board of Education has found that a majority of the schools in the local school administrative unit have

"received a school performance grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" and have been identified as low-performing schools as defined by G.S. 115C-105.37." The statement shall also include an explanation of the school performance grades and school growth scores. (2) The percentage of schools identified as low-performing. G.S. 115C-105.39A Page 2 (3) Information about the preliminary plan developed under subsection (b) of this section and the availability of the final plan on the local school administrative unit's Web site. (4) The meeting date for when the preliminary plan will be considered by the local board of education. (5) A description of any additional steps the local school administrative unit and schools are taking to improve student performance. (6) For notifications sent to parents and guardians of students attending a school that is identified as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.37, a statement that the State Board of Education has found that the school has "received a school performance grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" and has been identified as a low-performing school as defined by G.S. 115C-105.37." This notification also shall include the school performance grade and school growth score the school received and an explanation of the school performance grades and school growth scores. (2015-241, s. 8A.4(c).)

Appendix C – NC State Board of Education Strategic Plan*

Vision: Every public school student will graduate ready for post-secondary education and work, prepared to be a globally engaged and productive citizen.

Mission: The State Board of Education will use its constitutional authority to lead and uphold the system of public education in North Carolina.

Goals	Objectives
Every student in the NC Public School System graduates from high school prepared for work, further education and citizenship	Increase the cohort graduation rate Graduate students prepared for post-secondary education Graduate students pursuing a Career and Technical Education (CTE) concentration prepared for careers Reduce the percentage of students needing remediation in post-secondary education Increase student performance on the state's End of Grade (EOG) and End of Course (EOC) Assessments and on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
Every student has a personalized education	Increase the number of students who graduate from high school with post secondary credit Increase the number of teachers and students using digital learning tools Increase the number of schools designated as Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)- or Global Education-ready Increase the number of charter schools meeting academic, operational, and financial goals Decrease the percentage of Low-Performing Schools and Low-Performing School Districts in the State
Every student, every day has excellent educators	Develop and support highly effective teachers Develop and support highly effective principals Increase the number of teachers graduating from quality traditional and alternative educator preparation programs Increase the number of principals graduating from quality traditional and alternative educator preparation programs Increase the access to effective and highly-effective teachers for students in low-achieving and high-poverty schools relative to their higher-achieving and lower-poverty peers
Every school district has up-to- date financial, business, and technology systems to serve its students, parents and educators	Provide all schools with sufficient wireless coverage to support 1:1 computing initiatives Use Home Base as an essential resource for instructional delivery and communications with parents and students Use State and federal funding according to State and federal laws and State Board of Education policies
Every student is healthy, safe, and responsible	Create and maintain a safe and respectful school environment Promote healthy, active lifestyles for students Decrease the number of students who are chronically absent, dropout, or suspended out of school Decrease violence and crime in schools

* Updated and approved by the SBE December 2, 2015

Appendix D- NCDPI Comprehensive Needs Assessment School Rubric

NCDPI Comprehensive Needs Assessment SCHOOL RUBRIC



Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

DISTRICT AND SCHOOL TRANSFORMATION DIVISION North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
July 2013

OVERVIEW

A comprehensive needs assessment is critical to the development of a high-quality school program. A systematic review of practices, processes, and systems within a school assists school leadership in determining needs, examining their nature and causes, and setting priorities for future action. The needs assessment consequently guides the development of a meaningful school plan and suggests benchmarks for evaluation. Research supports that schools that undergo a careful analysis of data and information make better decisions about what to change and how to institutionalize systemic change.

SCHOOL DIMENSIONS

The NCDPI Comprehensive Needs Assessment has been designed to analyze school-level information framed by five overarching dimensions. Guiding questions address 14 supporting sub-dimensions and are designed to facilitate the identification of root causes in areas where a school program may have identified needs. The dimensions and sub-dimensions are as follows:

Dimension	Sub-dimension
A. Instructional Excellence and Alignment Part I: Teaching and Learning	1. High Expectations Communicated to All Teachers and Students 2. Curriculum and Instructional Alignment
A. Instructional Excellence and Alignment Part II: Support for Student Achievement	3. Data Analysis and Instructional Planning 4. Student Support Services
B. Leadership Capacity	5. Strategic Planning, Mission, and Vision 6. Distributed Leadership and Collaboration 7. Monitoring Instruction in School
C. Professional Capacity	8. Teacher Quality and Experience 9. Quality of Professional Development 10. Talent Recruitment and Retention
D. Planning and Operational Effectiveness	11. Resource Allocation 12. Facilities and Technology
E. Families and Community	13. Family Engagement 14. Community Engagement

PROCESS

Detailed processes and procedures for the NCDPI Comprehensive Needs Assessment can be found in the Notes of Guidance.

DIMENSION A: Instructional Excellence and Alignment Part I: Teaching and Learning			
A1. High Expectations Communicated to All Teachers and Students			
• How does the school administration model high expectations? • How does the school create a culture for both faculty and students in which high expectations can be met? • How does the school consistently maintain and communicate high expectations for students? • How do teachers help students understand the quality of work necessary to meet these high expectations? • How does the school ensure consistency within the school and subject area/departments on what constitutes “high-quality” work? • How does the use of instructional time in the classroom reflect high expectations and curriculum alignment?			
Rubric			
Leading	Embedded	Emerging	Lacking
The school: • Exemplifies and models a culture of high expectations at all times.	The school: • Frequently exemplifies and models a culture of high expectations.	The school: • Sometimes exemplifies and models a culture of high expectations.	The school: • Rarely exemplifies and models a culture of high expectations.
• <i>Has developed, implemented, and frequently utilizes a plan that communicates clear goals with instructional strategies aligned to the NC Standard Course of Study</i>	• <i>Has developed, implemented, and regularly utilizes a plan that communicates clear goals with instructional strategies aligned to the NC Standard Course of Study.</i>	• <i>Has developed, implemented, and inconsistently utilizes a plan that communicates clear goals with instructional strategies aligned to the NC Standard Course of Study.</i>	• <i>Has not developed, implemented, or utilized a plan that communicates clear goals with instructional strategies aligned to the NC Standard Course of Study.</i>
• Benchmarks expectations for student work that frequently incorporate national and state standards for all students.	• Benchmarks expectations for student work that regularly incorporate national and state standards for all students.	• Benchmarks expectations for student work that sometimes incorporate national and state standards for all students.	• Benchmarks expectations for student work that rarely incorporate national and state standards for some students.
• <i>Frequently develops and utilizes rubrics and exemplars of high quality student work to ensure teachers, students, and families understand the expectations for assignments.</i>	• <i>Regularly utilizes rubrics and exemplars of high quality student work to ensure teachers and students understand the expectations for assignments.</i>	• <i>Inconsistently utilizes rubrics and exemplars for assessing student work to ensure teachers and students understand the expectations for assignments.</i>	• <i>Rarely or never utilizes rubrics or exemplars for assessing student work to ensure teachers and students understand the expectations for assignments.</i>
• Fully utilizes instructional time for optimal learning opportunities.	• Regularly utilizes instructional time for optimal learning opportunities.	• Inconsistently utilizes instructional time for optimal learning opportunities.	• Rarely utilizes instructional time for optimal learning opportunities.

DIMENSION A: Instructional Excellence and Alignment Part I: Teaching and Learning**A2. Curriculum and Instructional Alignment**

- What practices ensure all students are taught a rigorous, relevant core curriculum, enabling them to compete in the global community?
- What practices are utilized to ensure the curriculum is appropriately implemented in the classroom?
- What practices and training ensure the alignment of the written (*NC Standard Course of Study*), taught, and tested curriculum?
- How is technology integrated into the delivery of instruction?
- What programs are available to support continuous learning and career readiness of all students?

Rubric

Leading	Embedded	Emerging	Lacking
• The school consistently provides opportunities and support for all students to engage in rigorous coursework to be prepared for the global community.	• The school provides opportunities and support for most students to engage in rigorous coursework to be prepared for the global community.	• The school provides limited opportunities and support for some students to engage in rigorous coursework to be prepared for the global community.	• The school provides no to limited opportunities for few students to engage in rigorous coursework to be prepared for the global community.
• <i>School leadership engages in frequent, ongoing professional dialogue with teachers to ensure the curriculum is appropriately implemented.</i>	• <i>School leadership regularly engages in professional dialogue with teachers to ensure the curriculum is appropriately implemented.</i>	• <i>School leadership occasionally engages in professional dialogue with teachers to ensure the curriculum is appropriately implemented.</i>	• <i>School leadership rarely engages in professional dialogue with teachers to ensure the curriculum is appropriately implemented.</i>
• School administration frequently provides opportunities for collaboration among teachers and other professional colleagues to align instruction and assessment to the <i>North Carolina Standard Course of Study</i> and district, state, and national standards.	• School administration regularly assists teachers in alignment of instruction and assessment to the <i>North Carolina Standard Course of Study</i> and district, state, and national standards.	• School administration occasionally assists teachers in alignment of instruction and assessment to the <i>North Carolina Standard Course of Study</i>.	• School administration rarely or never assists teachers in alignment of instruction and assessment to the <i>North Carolina Standard Course of Study</i>.
• <i>Teachers frequently administer and use both summative and ongoing formative assessment to align and inform instruction.</i>	• <i>Teachers regularly administer both summative and ongoing formative assessment aligned with instruction.</i>	• <i>Teachers administer summative assessments and occasionally formative assessment aligned with instruction.</i>	• <i>Teachers administer summative assessments inconsistently aligned with instruction.</i>
• Teachers frequently integrate student use of technology resources into classroom instruction across the curriculum.	• Teachers regularly integrate student use of technology resources into classroom instruction across the curriculum.	• Teachers occasionally integrate technology resources into classroom instruction only for selected students or in limited curriculum areas.	• Teachers and students rarely use technology resources in the classroom that link to curriculum.

DIMENSION A: Instructional Excellence and Alignment Part II: Support for Student Achievement

A3. Data Analysis and Instructional Planning:

Collection and Dissemination of Data

f What practices ensure that teachers receive data in a timely manner?

f What systems are in place for collecting and using student test data and formative assessment data for the modification of instruction to improve student achievement?

Subgroups

f What are the most effective practices/programs the school implements to increase student achievement across subgroups?

f Which subgroups are particular foci for improvement at this time?

f What practices are being used to identify students who are experiencing difficulty, and what is being done to assist them?

f What processes are in place to identify underrepresented student groups in advanced classes (e.g., AIG, Honors, AP)?

f What opportunities are available to meet the needs of high-achieving students (e.g., skipping grades, earning college transfer credits)?

Attendance

f How is student attendance monitored?

f How are attendance patterns identified, and how are problems addressed?

Retention/Promotion/Graduation Rates

f How are issues that keep students from advancing to the next grade level or graduating identified and addressed?

f How does the promotion/graduation/retention rate vary across different student subgroups?

f How is the responsibility for promotion and graduation shared among all core and non-core subject area teachers?

Rubric

Collection and Dissemination of Data

Leading	Embedded	Emerging	Lacking
School leadership: • Shares and discusses data in an understandable format in a timely and effective manner.	School leadership: • Disseminates data in a user-friendly format in a timely manner.	School leadership: • Disseminates data in a format that may not be easily understood.	School leadership: • Disseminates minimal data.
• <i>Effectively manages a shared process for data collection and analysis that informs instructional planning.</i>	• <i>Manages a process for data collection and analysis that informs most instructional planning.</i>	• <i>Manages a process for data collection and analysis that informs some instructional planning.</i>	• <i>Provides several types of data without a clear for analysis that informs instructional planning.</i>
• Effectively facilitates a systematic process for including all staff members in data analysis in a timely and effective manner.	• Facilitates a systematic process for including the school improvement team in data analysis in a timely manner.	• Facilitates a process for including the school improvement team in data analysis in a timely manner.	• Includes no to few staff in data analysis to inform school improvement decisions.

Subgroups			
The school: <i>Frequently evaluates the effectiveness of implemented practices/programs to improve student achievement across all subgroups.</i>	The school: <i>Regularly evaluates the effectiveness of implemented practices/programs effectiveness to improve student achievement across all subgroups.</i>	The school: <i>Inconsistently evaluates the effectiveness of practices/programs effectiveness in improving student achievement across targeted subgroups.</i>	The school: <i>Seldom/never evaluates the effectiveness of implemented practices/programs to improve student achievement.</i>
Frequently provides focused support to all subgroups and accelerates the progress of all subgroups with responsive support plans.	Regularly provides focused support most subgroups and accelerates the progress of targeted subgroups with responsive support plans.	Provides some focused support for remediation of some subgroups.	Provides little support for the performance of subgroups.
<i>Has an effective process in place to identify and provide extensive support to students experiencing difficulty meeting standards.</i>	<i>Has an established process to identify and provide support to students experiencing difficulty meeting standards.</i>	<i>Inconsistently identifies and provides limited targeted support to students experiencing difficulty meeting standards.</i>	<i>Has no formal process in place to identify and does not provide support to students experiencing difficulty meeting standards.</i>
Frequently monitors the participation of underrepresented groups in advanced classes and aggressively recruits students.	Regularly monitors the participation of underrepresented groups in advanced classes and deliberately recruits students.	Inconsistently monitors participation of underrepresented groups in advanced classes with limited student recruitment.	Rarely monitors the participation of underrepresented groups in advanced classes.
<i>Offers consistent, high-quality opportunities that extend learning for high-performing students.</i>	<i>Offers a variety of opportunities that extend learning for high-performing students.</i>	<i>Offers limited opportunities that extend learning for high-performing students.</i>	<i>Offers no opportunities that extend learning for high-performing students.</i>
Attendance			
The school: Systematically monitors attendance, dropout rates, and promotion/graduation rates to identify trends.	The school: Frequently monitors attendance, dropout rates, and promotion/graduation rates.	The school: Occasionally monitors attendance, dropout rates, and promotion/graduation rates.	The school: Rarely or never monitors attendance, dropout rates, and promotion/graduation rates.
<i>Frequently and systematically facilitates the early identification of students with attendance problems and provides support for both families and students.</i>	<i>Regularly facilitates the early identification of students with attendance problems and provides some support for both families and students.</i>	<i>Occasionally facilitates the early identification of students with attendance problems and rarely provides support for families and students.</i>	<i>Rarely or never facilitates the early identification of students with attendance problems and provides no support for families and students.</i>

Promotion/Graduation Rates			
The school: Provides consistent and intensive intervention strategies before, during, and after school for students who are at-risk for not meeting grade-level benchmarks or graduation requirements.	The school: Provides intervention strategies before, during, and after school for students who are at-risk for not meeting grade-level benchmarks or graduation requirements.	The school: Provides some intervention strategies during and/or after school for students who are at-risk for not meeting grade level benchmarks or graduation requirements.	The school: Provides few interventions for students who are at-risk for not meeting grade-level benchmarks or graduation requirements.
<i>Consistently implements a comprehensive plan to assure that the needs of students of differing cultures, abilities, and primary languages are taken into account in class placement.</i>	<i>Engages in strategies to assure that the needs of students of differing cultures, abilities, and primary languages are taken into account in class placement.</i>	<i>Has tracking practices that exist in the school, yet some efforts are in place to ensure equity in class placement.</i>	<i>Has tracking practices that exist in the school, and there are no efforts to ensure equity in class placement.</i>
Systematically monitors promotion and graduation rates and identifies trends.	Regularly monitors promotion and graduation rates.	Occasionally monitors promotion and graduation rates.	Rarely or never monitors promotion and graduation rates.
<i>Implements a plan that includes all core and non-core teachers in supporting students at-risk of retention or not meeting graduation requirements.</i>	<i>Has a plan that includes most teachers in supporting students at-risk of retention or not meeting graduation requirements.</i>	<i>Has a plan that includes a few teachers in supporting students at-risk of retention or not meeting graduation requirements.</i>	<i>Has no defined plan for involving teachers in supporting students at-risk of retention or not meeting graduation requirements.</i>

DIMENSION A: Instructional Excellence and Alignment Part II: Support for Student Achievement

A4. Student Support Services

Student Support Services

- How does the school meet the social and emotional needs of students?
- How is the time of school counselor(s) utilized to support students?
- What process does the school have for academic advisement?
- How does the school ensure student nutrition and health?
- How is character education taught and reinforced?
- What strategies exist for helping students make the transition from the preschool setting to the elementary setting, from grade to grade, and/or from grade span to grade span?
- What strategies support student transitions year to year?
- What strategies support families as students transition?
- What strategies support student transitions to higher education or careers?

RUBRIC

Leading	Embedded	Emerging	Lacking
The school: • Implements a systematic, effective, and developmentally appropriate program supporting the social and emotional needs of all students.	The school: • Implements an effective and developmentally appropriate program supporting the social and emotional needs of most students.	The school: • Provides inconsistent support for the social and emotional needs of some students.	The school: • Provides minimal support for the social and emotional needs of students.
• <i>Consistently utilizes the time of counselors for appropriate direct work with all students.</i>	• <i>Often utilizes the time of counselors for appropriate direct work with all students.</i>	• <i>Uses counselors in some roles that limits time for appropriate direct work with students.</i>	• <i>Uses counselors in roles that minimize time for appropriate direct work with students.</i>
• Implements an effective, systematic process for academic advisement.	• Implements a regular process for academic advisement.	• Provides some academic advisement for students.	• Provides little or no academic advisement for students.
• <i>Supports student nutrition and health through effectively operating processes and programs.</i>	• <i>Supports student nutrition and health through processes and programs.</i>	• <i>Offers some programs to support student nutrition and health.</i>	• <i>Offers limited support for student nutrition and health.</i>
• Frequently utilizes an integrated process for teaching and reinforcing character education through curricular and extracurricular activities.	• Regularly teaches and reinforces character education through curricular and extracurricular activities.	• Provides minimal teaching of character education.	• Does not directly teach character education.
• <i>Develops and implements consistent, intentional, ongoing plans to support student transitions from grade to grade and level to level.</i>	• <i>Develops and implements adequate plans to support student transitions from grade to grade and level to level.</i>	• <i>Implements minimal plans to support student transitions from grade to grade and level to level.</i>	• <i>Has no intentional plan to support student transitions from grade to grade and level to level.</i>
• Develops and frequently implements effective plans that facilitate vertical	• Regularly implements plans that facilitate regular vertical articulation	• Inconsistently implements some plans that facilitate vertical	• Provides no clear plans to facilitate vertical articulation and transitions.

articulation and transitions.	and transitions.	articulation and transitions.	
• <i>Utilizes a consistent, ongoing process to support family understanding and involvement as students transition from grade to grade and level to level.</i>	• <i>Maintains an ongoing process to support family understanding and involvement as students transition from grade to grade and level to level.</i>	• <i>Inconsistently provides some activities for family understanding and involvement as students transition from grade to grade and level to level.</i>	• <i>Provides no activities to support family understanding and involvement as students transition from grade to grade and level to level.</i>
• Utilizes an effective, systematic process that supports students' transition to higher education or careers.	• Uses an established process that supports students' transition to higher education or careers.	• Inconsistently provides some support for students' transition to higher education or careers.	• Provides little to no support for students' transition to higher education or careers.
• <i>The school collaborates with the community to provide opportunities for all students to know and experience potential career choices.</i>	• <i>The school collaborates with the community to provide opportunities for most students to know and experience potential career choices.</i>	• <i>The school collaborates with the community to provide some opportunities for some students to learn about potential career choices.</i>	• <i>The school collaborates with the community to provide minimal opportunities for few students to learn about potential career choices.</i>

DIMENSION B: Leadership Capacity**B5. Strategic Planning, Mission, and Vision**

- Who participates in the development of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)?
- What structures are in place to meet the diverse needs of students?
- How does administrative and departmental/grade-level leadership facilitate the collaborative development of annual school improvement plans to realize strategic goals and objectives?
- What processes provide for periodic review and revision of the school's vision, mission, and strategic goals by all school stakeholders?
- How does the school communicate its vision, goals, and priorities to appropriate stakeholders?
- What processes are in place to evaluate the progress toward achieving these goals?
- What strategies are in place to create a culture and climate conducive to learning?
- What plans support the safety of all students and staff?
- How does school leadership specifically address the issues raised by the NC Teacher Working Conditions (NC TWC) survey?

RUBRIC

Leading	Embedded	Emerging	Lacking
Leadership: • Effectively involves all stakeholder groups and uses all available data in developing the School Improvement Plan.	Leadership: • Involves many stakeholders in using data from several sources in developing the School Improvement Plan.	Leadership: • Involves select stakeholders in using data in developing the School Improvement Plan.	Leadership: • Does not involve stakeholders in developing the School Improvement Plan.
• Customizes structures and strategies to meet the needs of all student populations.	• Facilitates structures and strategies to meet the needs of most student populations.	• Provides some oversight for structures and strategies to meet the needs of some student populations.	• Provides little to no oversight for strategies implemented to address the needs of its student populations.
• <i>Consistently facilitates a successful process for monitoring, revising, and implementing the School Improvement Plan with shared responsibilities for all stakeholder groups.</i>	• <i>Facilitates a process for monitoring, revising, and implementing the School Improvement Plan with primary responsibility shared with the school improvement team.</i>	• <i>Informs staff of necessary changes in the School Improvement Plan with little collaboration to ensure support.</i>	• <i>Provides no clear system for ensuring support for school changes as outlined in the School Improvement Plan.</i>
• Maintains a consistent process for ensuring that the school's vision and mission drive decisions and inform the culture of the school.	• Maintains a process for periodically reviewing the school's vision and mission to drive decisions.	• Maintains a process for periodically reviewing the school's vision and mission.	• Has no process for reviewing the school's vision and mission.
• <i>Effectively utilizes the School Improvement Plan to drive the change process and ensure continual support with shared responsibility for all stakeholder groups.</i>	• <i>Utilizes the School Improvement Plan to drive the change process and ensure continual support with shared responsibility for most staff.</i>	• <i>Provides periodic review and revision of the School Improvement Plan with shared responsibility for limited staff.</i>	• <i>Has no process for annual review of the School Improvement Plan.</i>
• Effectively utilizes appropriate data to evaluate program	• Utilizes appropriate data to evaluate program effectiveness and to inform	• Utilizes some data other than summative state assessments to	• Limits data sources and bases decisions primarily on state

effectiveness and to inform and prioritized action plans.	and prioritize action plans.	inform school action plans.	assessment outcomes.
• <i>Facilitates a comprehensive plan for building a school culture and climate conducive to learning based on collaboration, egalitarianism, and collegiality.</i>	• <i>Has developed a comprehensive plan for building a school culture and climate conducive to learning.</i>	• <i>Has developed some plans for building a school culture and climate conducive to learning.</i>	• <i>Has no clear plan for building a school culture and climate conducive to learning.</i>
• Consistently implements a thorough safety plan approved by the school board and local safety units.	• Implements an appropriate safety plan approved by the school board.	• Implements a safety plan that addresses most school needs.	• Implements an inadequate safety plan.
• <i>Has a clearly developed plan to address issues raised by the NC TWC survey and collaborates with all staff and other appropriate stakeholders to address them.</i>	• <i>Has a plan to address issues raised by the NC TWC survey and shares responsibility of implementing plans with all staff.</i>	• <i>Develops a plan to address issues raised by the NC TWC survey and informs all staff and/or appropriate stakeholders.</i>	• <i>Addresses issues raised by the NC TWC survey in an inconsistent or informal way.</i>

DIMENSION B: Leadership Capacity**B6. Distributed Leadership and Collaboration**

- How are the different roles and responsibilities of the school staff delineated and maintained?
- What processes are implemented that encourage collaboration between the administration and faculty?
- In what ways is leadership developed and distributed in the school?
- How does school leadership foster an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within the school?
- What strategies are in place to build a sense of efficacy, empowerment, and collaboration among all staff to develop the ability to meet educational challenges?

RUBRIC

Leading	Embedded	Emerging	Lacking
• School administration provides a well-defined process for shared leadership among all staff for monitoring student achievement and aligning strategies and activities to meet student needs.	• School administration monitors student achievement data along with selected school leadership and uses results to revise school strategies and initiatives.	• School administration monitors student achievement results with limited shared responsibility for staff.	• School administration has no clearly defined process for monitoring student achievement data.
• <i>School administration has well-established, effective, ongoing processes for collaboration with the faculty.</i>	• <i>School administration has regular processes for collaboration with the faculty.</i>	• <i>School administration has some processes for collaboration with the faculty.</i>	• <i>School administration has few processes for collaboration.</i>
• The development and distribution of leadership is clearly understood, equitable, and transparent.	• The development and distribution of leadership is mostly understood, equitable, and transparent.	• The development and distribution of leadership is somewhat understood, equitable, and transparent.	• The development and distribution of leadership at the school is unclear.
• <i>School administration frequently models expectations set for staff and students.</i>	• <i>School administration regularly models expectations set for staff and students.</i>	• <i>School administration occasionally models expectations set for staff and students.</i>	• <i>School administration does not model expectations set for staff and students.</i>
• There is a well-developed and implemented plan to build a sense of efficacy, empowerment, and collaboration among staff.	• There is a plan to build a sense of efficacy, empowerment, and collaboration for most staff.	• There is a plan to build a sense of efficacy, empowerment, and collaboration for a limited number of staff.	• There is no defined plan to encourage collaboration or to empower staff.

DIMENSION B: Leadership Capacity**B7. Monitoring Instruction in School**

- What strategies ensure that leadership is visible in all classrooms, and how is that informal observation used to foster student and teacher growth?
- What practices are in place to ensure classroom observations are used to support improved instruction?
- What practices do administrative and departmental leadership use to support change?
- How does administrative and departmental leadership model the importance of continued adult learning?

RUBRIC

Leading	Embedded	Emerging	Lacking
Leadership: • Frequently maintains high visibility within the school and among school staff with a systematic process for providing feedback to improve teaching and learning.	Leadership: • Conducts both formal and informal classroom visits with a process for providing developmental feedback to teachers.	Leadership: • Occasionally visits classrooms for purposes beyond staff evaluation with inconsistent or limited feedback to teachers.	Leadership: • Visits classrooms for evaluation of staff only.
• <i>Consistently implements an ongoing system of teacher observation that fosters dialogue about effective instructional practice.</i>	• <i>Regularly implements an ongoing system of teacher observation that fosters dialogue about effective instructional practice.</i>	• <i>Occasionally uses a system of teacher observation that fosters dialogue about effective instructional practice.</i>	• <i>Utilizes state or district mandated teacher observation practices, with little/no dialogue about instructional practices.</i>
• Effectively communicates the need for change in an understandable and transparent way.	• Communicates the need for change so that it is mostly understandable and transparent.	• Communicates the need for change that is somewhat understandable.	• Is unclear in communicating the need for change.
• <i>Frequently models continued learning on educational issues to improve job-related skills.</i>	• <i>Regularly models continued learning on educational issues to improve job-related skills.</i>	• <i>Occasionally models continued learning by attending mandatory and some self-selected workshops and conferences on educational topics.</i>	• <i>Rarely or never models continued learning by attending only mandatory professional development offerings.</i>

DIMENSION C: Professional Capacity**C8. Teacher Quality and Experience**

- How are appropriately certified teachers selected and placed in every curricular area?
- How are teachers selected?
- In what areas (grade levels/subject areas) does the school lack effective teachers?
- How are teacher weaknesses identified and addressed?
- How do teachers demonstrate leadership by:
 - f* Establishing a respectful environment for a diverse population of students?
 - f* Knowing the content they teach?
 - f* Facilitating learning for their students?
 - f* Reflecting on their practice?

RUBRIC

Leading	Embedded	Emerging	Lacking
Teachers: • Are certified at a rate of 100% and teaching in their curricular/grade area.	Teachers: • Are certified at a rate of 70-99% and certified staff are teaching in their curricular/grade area.	Teachers: • Are certified at a rate of 51-69% and those certified are teaching in their curricular/grade area.	Teachers: • Are certified at a rate of less than 50% with those that are certified teaching in their curricular area/grade level.
• <i>Are collaboratively involved in a systemic process for identifying ineffectiveness and developing plans for improvement.</i>	• <i>Engage in a systemic process for identifying ineffectiveness and plan for improvement is collaboratively decided.</i>	• <i>Engage in a process for identifying ineffectiveness and plan for improvement is administratively decided.</i>	• <i>Engage in no clearly established process for identifying ineffectiveness or have no plan for improvement.</i>
• Consistently demonstrate respect for the diverse populations through modifying content and instruction for their students, according to student needs.	• Regularly demonstrate respect for the diverse populations through modifying content and instruction for their students, according to student needs.	• Occasionally demonstrate respect for the diverse populations through modifying content and instruction for their students, according to student needs.	• Seldom demonstrate respect for the diverse populations through modifying content and instruction for their students, according to student needs.
• <i>Consistently facilitate student learning of accurate and appropriate content.</i>	• <i>Often facilitate student learning of accurate and appropriate content.</i>	• <i>Occasionally facilitate student learning of accurate and appropriate content.</i>	• <i>Rarely facilitate student learning of accurate and appropriate content.</i>
• Are engaged in a consistent process for reflecting on classroom practices and student achievement in an effort to improve their effectiveness.	• Regularly reflect on their classroom practices and student achievement in an effort to improve their effectiveness.	• Occasionally reflect on their classroom practices and student achievement in an effort to improve their effectiveness.	• Seldom reflect on their classroom practices and student achievement in an effort to improve their effectiveness.

DIMENSION C: Professional Capacity			
C9. Quality of Professional Development			
• How are professional development programs and offerings differentiated based on student achievement data and school needs? • How is professional development for staff aligned with the school improvement plan? • How are professional development offerings aligned, selected, and sustained? • How are teachers supported in taking and implementing high-quality professional development? • What professional development offerings prepare staff to support global education? • To what extent does professional development exemplify the NC Professional Learning Standards? • How does the school ensure that teachers are attending the appropriate professional development to improve their instruction? • What professional development has the principal participated in during the last two years? How was it selected?			
RUBRIC			
Leading	Embedded	Emerging	Lacking
Professional development offerings: • Frequently model scientifically research-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment strategies to support student learning and to respond to the identified needs in the school.	Professional development offerings: • Regularly model scientifically research-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment strategies to support student learning and to respond to the identified needs in the school.	Professional development offerings: • Inconsistently model scientifically research-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment strategies to support student learning and to respond to the identified needs in the school.	Professional development offerings: • Do not reflect scientifically research-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment strategies to support student learning and to respond to the identified needs in the school.
<i>• Are strategically and collaboratively selected, sustained, and consistently monitored for fidelity of implementation aligned with the School Improvement Plan and Personal Growth Plans.</i>	<i>• Are selected based on identified needs aligned with the School Improvement Plan and Growth Plan and plans are sometimes sustained and monitored for fidelity of implementation.</i>	<i>• Are selected based on identified needs aligned with the School Improvement Plan and Personal Growth Plan but are not monitored for fidelity of implementation.</i>	<i>• Are generally selected by individuals with no clear alignment with the School Improvement Plan or Personal Growth Plans.</i>
• Are frequently, strategically implemented and collaboratively designed, shared, and evaluated.	• Are regularly developed utilizing processes and schedules that facilitate the collaborative design, sharing, and evaluation of professional growth opportunities.	• Are inconsistently developed utilizing some processes or schedules that facilitate some collaboration or sharing of professional growth opportunities with little or no evaluation.	• Are rarely developed utilizing processes and schedules that facilitate the collaboration, design, sharing, and evaluation of professional growth opportunities.
<i>• Consistently exemplify the NC Professional Learning Standards.</i>	<i>• Frequently exemplify the NC Professional Learning Standards.</i>	<i>• Minimally exemplify the NC Professional Learning Standards.</i>	<i>• Are not aligned with the NC Professional Learning Standards.</i>

DIMENSION C: Professional Capacity**C10. Talent Recruitment and Retention**

- What school recruitment strategies are in place to attract highly-qualified staff to the school?
- How are high-performing teachers recognized and rewarded?
- What patterns emerge from teacher exit interviews?
- What support is in place for newly hired, Initially Licensed (ILT), and lateral entry teachers?
- How are teachers on action plans supported and coached?
- What processes and support structures are in place for all teachers to improve performance (e.g. curricular coaching, study groups)?
- What training and supports are in place to ensure effective professional learning communities at the school?
- What is the teacher supplement? What other extra-pay structures are in place?
- How does teacher turnover impact the school's instructional program?

RUBRIC

Leading	Embedded	Emerging	Lacking
The school: • Effectively utilizes district and school resources and seeks other resources to recruit, retain, and reward highly-qualified and effective staff.	The school: • Effectively utilizes both district and school resources to recruit, retain, and reward highly-qualified and effective staff.	The school: • Utilizes district resources and existing programs to recruit, retain, and reward highly-qualified and effective staff.	The school: • Utilizes only existing district resources to recruit, retain, and reward highly-qualified and effective staff.
<i>• Frequently guides and supports continuous improvement in curriculum and instruction for newly hired, Initially Licensed, and lateral entry teachers.</i>	<i>• Regularly guides and supports continuous improvement in curriculum and instruction for newly hired, Initially Licensed, and lateral entry teachers.</i>	<i>• Inconsistently guides and supports continuous improvement in curriculum and instruction for newly hired, Initially Licensed, and lateral entry teachers.</i>	<i>• Lacks a process for guiding and supporting continuous improvement in curriculum and instruction for newly hired, Initially Licensed, and lateral entry teachers.</i>
• Utilizes effective processes to help all teachers improve effectiveness of teaching and learning.	• Utilizes regular or defined processes to help teachers improve effectiveness of teaching and learning.	• Has limited processes in place to help teachers improve effectiveness of teaching and learning.	• Lacks necessary processes to help teachers improve effectiveness of teaching and learning.
<i>• Professional learning communities promote professional dialogue and inform instruction.</i>	<i>• Professional learning communities occur, promote professional dialogue, and inform instruction in some classrooms.</i>	<i>• Professional learning communities occur and promote professional dialogue, but do not inform instruction.</i>	<i>• Professional learning communities occur but do not promote professional dialogue or inform instruction.</i>

DIMENSION D: Planning and Operational Effectiveness**D11. Resource Allocation**

- How are budgeting decisions made, and who is involved in making those decisions?
- What processes have been created to provide for an aligned operational budget for school programs and activities?
- In what areas is the school experiencing shortages, and what actions have been taken to address the shortages?
- What external sources of funding are available to the school (e.g., through booster clubs, grants, community/corporate partnerships)?
- What processes are in place to determine how teachers are assigned to specific courses/classes?
- How does the school ensure maximum instructional time for students?
- What systems are in place for developing master schedules based on specific school needs?

RUBRIC

Leading	Embedded	Emerging	Lacking
School leadership: • Consistently collaborates with appropriate stakeholders in making budgetary decisions.	School leadership: • Frequently collaborates with appropriate stakeholders in making budgetary decisions.	School leadership: • Occasionally collaborates with appropriate stakeholders in making budgetary decisions.	School leadership: • Does not collaborate with stakeholders in making budgetary decisions.
• <i>Establishes a systematic and transparent process for reviewing and allocating resources to most effectively support school needs.</i>	• <i>Establishes a systematic process for reviewing and allocating resources to support school needs.</i>	• <i>Has a plan for reviewing and/or allocating resources but does not systematically utilize the plan to support school needs.</i>	• <i>Has no clearly-developed system for reviewing and allocating resources from year to year.</i>
• Strategically coordinates and monitors spending of required and discretionary funds to align with identified student needs.	• Coordinates spending of required and discretionary funds to align with identified student needs.	• Coordinates spending of required funds to align with student needs.	• Lacks coordination of required and discretionary funds to best meet student needs.
• <i>Aggressively seeks funding in addition to base local and state allocations.</i>	• <i>Seeks funding in addition to base local and state allocations.</i>	• <i>Occasionally seeks funding in addition to base and state allocations.</i>	• <i>Does not actively seek funding beyond base local and state allocations.</i>
• Consistently allocates teachers based on changing student needs.	• Allocates teachers based on current student needs.	• Allocates teachers considering some but not all student needs.	• Allocates teachers based on teacher preference as opposed to student needs.
• <i>Maximizes instructional time and quality instruction to support the mission of the school.</i>	• <i>Effectively aligns instructional time with student needs across grades and departments.</i>	• <i>Aligns instructional time with student needs in some but not all grade levels or departments.</i>	• <i>Lacks alignment of instructional time with student needs.</i>
• Regularly utilizes comprehensive data analysis that is clearly reflected in all schedules and plans.	• Regularly utilizes data analysis that is reflected in all schedules and plans.	• Inconsistently utilizes data analysis in schedules and plans.	• Lacks collection and analysis of data as basis of planning and scheduling.

DIMENSION D: Planning and Operational Effectiveness**D12. Facilities and Technology**

- How is the physical condition of the school maintained?
- How does the school ensure that teachers and students have sufficient access to instructional technology, including computers, printers, software, and internet access?
- To what extent are the reliability and speed of internet connections in this school sufficient to support the integration of 21st century instructional practices?
- What activities and training support teachers in fully utilizing and integrating instructional technology?

RUBRIC

Leading	Embedded	Emerging	Lacking
School leadership: • Ensures that the school and grounds are exceptionally clean, well maintained, and safe.	School leadership: • Ensures that the school and grounds are clean, well maintained, and safe.	School leadership: • Ensures that some areas of the school and grounds are clean, well maintained, and safe.	School leadership: • Does not ensure that the school and grounds are clean, well maintained, and safe.
• <i>Consistently implements a process to determine and acquire necessary instructional technology to support 21st century instructional practices.</i>	• <i>Determines and acquires adequate instructional technology to support 21st century instructional practices.</i>	• <i>Acquires some instructional technology to support 21st century instructional practices.</i>	• <i>Has no plan to acquire instructional technology to support 21st century instructional practices.</i>
• Provides a system of sustained professional development for staff in the innovative application of technology for planning, instructional delivery, record keeping, and communications.	• Provides ongoing professional development for staff in the application of technology for planning, instructional delivery, record keeping, and communications.	• Provides some professional development for staff in the basic applications of technology.	• Provides little to no professional development for staff in the innovative application of technology.

DIMENSION E: Families and Communities**E13. Family Engagement**

- How does the school create an inviting and welcoming environment when families visit the campus?
- In what ways does the school establish and maintain positive, collaborative relationships with families and involve them in shared decision making?
- How are clear expectations for school and student achievement communicated to families? How does the school ensure that these are received and understood?
- What specific strategies have been implemented to increase familial involvement based on the identified areas of need?
- How does the school measure the effectiveness of family involvement efforts?

RUBRIC

Leading	Embedded	Emerging	Lacking
The school: • Creates a welcoming environment where all families and visitors are greeted and assisted.	The school: • Creates an environment where most families and visitors feel welcome.	The school: • Has a designated welcoming area for families and visitors and creates an environment where some families feel welcome.	The school: • Has no welcoming area nor makes any effort to welcome families or visitors.
• <i>Proactively requests familial feedback and incorporates feedback into school decisions.</i>	• <i>Provides opportunities to collect familial feedback/input on school instruction and operations with some consideration for school decisions.</i>	• <i>Provides family engagement activities mostly limited to large school events, family/teacher conferences, and teacher phone calls home.</i>	• <i>Provides little to no family engagement.</i>
• Provides a broad spectrum of forums for two-way communication with families through school report cards, meetings, announcements, newsletters, and a consistently updated website.	• Provides opportunities for timely, two-way communication with families through school report cards, newsletters, and a frequently updated website.	• Communicates with families by newsletters, school report card, and an occasionally updated website.	• Has no clear system to provide families with required school report card information or other timely communication such as newsletters.
• <i>Maintains clear policies and processes for researching and applying best practice, familial engagement strategies and activities.</i>	• <i>Has developed policies and procedures for engaging families in student academic performance and school operations.</i>	• <i>Infrequently engages in discussions with families regarding student academic performance and/or school operations.</i>	• <i>Practices ad hoc planning of familial engagement programs/workshops.</i>

DIMENSION E: Families and Communities**E14. Community Engagement**

- In what ways does the school establish and maintain positive relationships with businesses and nonprofit organizations?
- How are clear expectations for school and student achievement communicated to the community at large?
- How does the school work with community partners to establish supplemental programming such as after-school programs or tutoring?
- How does the school receive and use feedback from the community?

RUBRIC

Leading	Embedded	Emerging	Lacking
The school: • Consistently engages in strategies, policies, and procedures for partnering with local businesses, community organizations, and other agencies to meet the needs of the school.	The school: • Regularly implements strategies for partnering with local businesses, community organizations, and other agencies to meet the needs of the school.	The school: • Develops plan for increasing partnerships with local businesses, community organizations, and other agencies but inconsistently follows plan or plan is not clearly aligned to the needs of the school.	The school: • Lacks established strategies, policies, and procedures for partnering with local businesses, community organizations, and other agencies to meet the needs of the school.
<i>• Provides a broad spectrum of forums for two-way communication opportunities with the community through newspapers, school report cards, meetings, announcements, and a consistently updated website.</i>	<i>• Provides opportunities for timely, two-way communication with the community through announcements, school status reports, and a frequently updated website.</i>	<i>• Infrequently communicates with the community through a website and other media.</i>	<i>• Has no clear system for ongoing communication with the community.</i>
• Effectively devotes appropriate financial resources and personnel to community partnership efforts.	• Devotes financial resources and part-time personnel resources to community engagement efforts.	• Devotes limited financial and no personnel resources to community engagement efforts.	• Lacks devoted financial and/or human resources for community engagement efforts.
<i>• Frequently monitors effectiveness of community engagement efforts and uses results to improve future school improvement efforts.</i>	<i>• Regularly monitors effectiveness of community engagement efforts with some results incorporated into school improvement efforts.</i>	<i>• Informally collects community feedback and monitors effectiveness of community engagement efforts.</i>	<i>• Has no process in place for collecting community feedback or monitoring community engagement effort.</i>

PART 4: Evaluation Judgment Summary				
	Leading	Embedded	Emerging	Lacking
Dimension A: Instructional Excellence and Alignment Part I: Teaching and Learning				
A1 High Expectations Communicated to All Teachers and Students				
A2 Curriculum and Instructional Alignment				
Dimension A: Instructional Excellence and Alignment Part II: Support for Student Achievement				
A3 Data Analysis and Instructional Planning				
A4 Student Support Services				
Dimension B: Leadership Capacity				
B5 Strategic Planning, Mission, and Vision				
B6 Distributed Leadership and Collaboration				
B7 Monitoring Instruction in School				
Dimension C: Professional Capacity				
C8 Teacher Quality and Experience				
C9 Quality of Professional Development				
C10 Talent Recruitment and Retention				
Dimension D: Planning and Operational Effectiveness				
D11 Resource Allocation				
D12 Facilities and Technology				
Dimension E: Families and Community				
E13 Family Engagement				
E14 Community Engagement				

Appendix E- SAM ‘Self-Assessment of MTSS Implementation” Rubric

North Carolina Self-Assessment of MTSS Implementation (SAM) Item Descriptors

The Self-Assessment of MTSS Implementation (SAM), now in its second edition, measures school-level implementation of MTSS. The purpose of administration is to help school-level and district-level personnel identify and prioritize implementation steps. The SAM contains 39 items in 6 domains (Leadership, Building Capacity/Infrastructure for Implementation, Communication and Collaboration, Data-based Problem-solving, Three-tiered Instructional/Intervention Model, and Data-Evaluation). The SAM was originally developed in Florida, and has undergone a national pilot for use in other locations.

For use in North Carolina, a standard setting project for the SAM was also conducted. A diverse group of educational professionals experienced and skilled in the implementation of multi-tiered, data-based support systems (e.g., Responsiveness to Instruction, Positive Behavior Intervention and Support, MTSS) were utilized to set this criterion. In addition, this expert panel also reviewed each item on the SAM to determine its accuracy and validity for use in North Carolina. In order to add additional robustness to the assessment of MTSS implementation, the expert panel also identified existing school-level and district-level work products that would be used as evidence in the administration of the SAM.

When will it be used? As a self-report and guide for school teams in implementation, the SAM can be used at any time. However, one time per year (April-June is the recommended time frame), the district MTSS coordinator and/or another member of the MTSS District Team would facilitate administration at the school. This facilitated administration would allow the district personnel to review evidence to support the school team's proposed score.

Directions for annual administration as a fidelity measure:

1. Each team member should review the SAM item descriptors and think how s/he, personally, would respond to each item.
2. After reviewing the SAM item descriptors independently, the team members should come together with the district MTSS coordinator and/or member of the MTSS district team to discuss their responses and reach agreement on which answer best represents the current status of implementation at their school.
3. The district personnel facilitating the administration will use the suggested evidence below each item at their discretion to verify the school team's responses on the SAM.
4. The school team, with the help of the district personnel can use the data to plan best next steps for MTSS implementation.
5. Total scores for the facilitated SAM administration will produce one of three levels of implementation within each domain: *not implementing*, *initially implementing*, or *fully implementing*.

In order to receive a score with level of implementation for each domain, the facilitator is responsible for entering score levels within the NCSAM Excel Scoring Protocol

SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
Leadership				
1: The principal is actively involved in and facilitates MTSS implementation ☐ ! School Improvement Plan shows evidence of MTSS systems and practices ☐ ! Agendas and meeting rosters showing evidences of data-based problem-solving ☐ ! PD Plan(s) with MTSS systems and practices showing principal involvement ☐ ! Staff/student handbook with evidence of MTSS practices	The principal does not actively support MTSS.	The principal communicates an urgent desire to implement MTSS, participates in professional development on MTSS, and is establishing an MTSS vision	AND the principal actively supports the leadership team and staff to build capacity for implementation	AND the principal actively supports data-based problem-solving use at the school
2: A leadership team is established that includes 517 members cross-disciplinary representation (e.g., principal, general and special education teachers, content area experts, student support personnel¹) and is responsible for facilitating MTSS implementation² ☐ ! Leadership team roster ☐ ! Leadership team meeting agendas/minutes	No leadership team with explicit responsibility for leading MTSS implementation exists	A leadership team exists that includes cross-disciplinary representation,	AND the leadership team has explicit expectations for facilitating MTSS implementation,	AND the leadership team members have the beliefs, knowledge, and skills to lead implementation efforts
3: The leadership team actively engages staff in ongoing professional development and coaching³ necessary to support MTSS implementation ☐ ! Professional development and coaching plan ☐ ! Professional Development roster(s)	The leadership team does not have a needs-based plan to provide staff with professional development or coaching to support MTSS implementation	A needs assessment is conducted to gather information on beliefs, knowledge, and skills to develop a professional development plan to support MTSS implementation	AND a professional development plan is created based on the needs assessment and used to engage staff in ongoing professional development and coaching	AND ongoing professional development activities are informed by data collected on the outcomes of professional development and coaching for continuous improvement
4: A strategic plan for MTSS implementation is developed and aligned with the school improvement plan⁴ ☐ ! MTSS implementation/strategic plan with alignment to or as a part of the School Improvement Plan	No strategic plan for MTSS implementation exists	Leadership team is engaging district, family, and community partners to identify stakeholder needs, resources for and barriers to MTSS implementation	AND as part of the school improvement planning process a strategic plan is developed that specifies MTSS implementation ⁵	AND a strategic plan for MTSS implementation is updated as needed based on student outcome and implementation fidelity data as part of the school improvement planning process
5: The leadership team is actively facilitating implementation of MTSS⁶ as part of their school improvement planning process ☐ ! School improvement plan with evidence (direct language or components explicitly mentioned) of MTSS	The leadership team is not actively engaging in efforts to facilitate MTSS implementation	The leadership team engages in action planning and has created a strategic plan to facilitate implementation of the critical elements ⁷ of MTSS	AND the leadership team provides support to educators implementing the critical elements of MTSS identified in the strategic plan	AND the leadership team uses data on implementation fidelity of the critical elements of MTSS to engage in data-based problem-solving for the purpose of continuous school improvement

Adapted from *The Self-Assessment of MTSS*. (2013). Florida's MTSS, Florida Department of Education. Adapted with permission

SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
Building the Capacity/Infrastructure for Implementation				
6: The critical elements of MTSS are defined and understood by school staff ☐! Common instructional framework for academics and behavior ☐! At least two staff members can define critical aspect of a tier and a content area (ex, "Tell me one critical aspect of Core, Supplemental, or Intensive instruction for literacy, math or behavior at your school)	No information on the critical elements of the school's MTSS is available	The critical elements of MTSS are in the process of being defined	AND the critical elements of MTSS are defined and communicated to school staff	AND the curriculum, assessment, and instructional practices that define the school's critical elements of MTSS can be communicated by all school staff
7: The leadership team facilitates professional development and coaching⁸ for all staff members on assessments and data sources used to inform decisions ☐! Professional development plan/calendar that includes training content on assessments and data sources ☐! PLC/Grade level/Department team agendas that include professional learning on assessments and data sources ☐! Other evidence of coaching or PD specific to job roles/responsibilities on assessments and data sources	Initial professional development is not provided to all staff members	The staff engages in initial, job-embedded professional development focusing on: 1) purpose and administration of assessment tools, 2) role of assessment/data sources in making instructional decisions, 3) review of current assessments/data sources being utilized & those being considered, 4) analyzing and using assessment results to improve instruction, 5) using various types of data to inform instructional practices to meet the needs of diverse learners, 6) communicating and partnering with families about data and assessment practices	AND the staff engages in ongoing professional development and coaching related to the administration of assessments and interpretation of the data/data sources. Professional development includes: 1) changes or updates to assessments/data sources, 2) changes to data collection, tracking and analysis, 3) ongoing coaching on instructional practices and interpreting assessment results	AND the leadership team analyzes feedback from staff as well as outcomes in order to identify professional development and coaching needs in the area of assessment/ data sources in support of a continuous improvement

SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
8: The leadership team facilitates professional development and coaching for staff members on data-based problem-solving relative to their job roles/responsibilities ☐! Professional development plan/calendar that includes training content on assessments and data sources ☐! PLC/Grade level/Department team agendas that include professional learning on assessments and data sources ☐! Other evidence of coaching or PD specific to job roles/responsibilities on assessments and data sources	Professional development does not focus on data-based problem-solving	Initial professional development on data-based problem-solving is provided that includes the following elements: 1) rationale for use of data-based problem-solving, 2) problem-solving steps to address schoolwide, classroom, small-group and individual student needs, 3) roles and responsibilities for team members engaging in data-based problem-solving	AND ongoing professional development and coaching on data-based problem-solving is delivered and includes the following elements: 1) differentiation of professional development based on staff roles/responsibilities, 2) coaching, 3) modeling, practice, and collaborative feedback on problem-solving steps, 4) support for collaboration and teaming skills	AND data on use of problem-solving skills and application are used to inform continuous improvement of professional development and coaching efforts
9: The leadership team facilitates professional development and coaching for all staff on multi-tiered instruction and intervention relative to their job roles/responsibilities ☐! Professional development plan/calendar that includes training content on multi-tiered instruction and intervention content ☐! PLC/Grade level/Department team agendas that include professional learning on multi-tiered instruction and intervention ☐! Other evidence of coaching or PD specific to job roles/responsibilities on multi-tiered instruction and intervention	No explicit connection to multi-tiered instruction and intervention is evident in professional development provided	Initial professional development on multi-tiered instruction and intervention is provided that includes the following elements: 1) rationale for and modeling of instructional and intervention design and delivery (e.g., standards, instructional routines, universal behavior supports, lesson planning for active student engagement), 2) connections are made regarding how the practices are aligned with and integrated into MTSS, 3) how data informs instruction and intervention design and delivery that reflects student diversity and results in learning opportunities for all students	AND ongoing professional development and coaching on multi-tiered instruction and intervention is provided that includes the following elements: 1) differentiation of professional development and coaching based on staff roles/responsibilities, 2) coaching, 3) modeling of, practice of, and collaborative feedback on, evidence-based practices	AND the leadership team regularly uses data on student needs and fidelity of how evidence-based practices are implemented to continuously improve professional development and coaching efforts

SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
10: Coaching is used to support MTSS implementation ☐ ! Coaching logs/documentation of coaching activities/opportunities ☐ ! School improvement plan includes information about coaching supports and structures around MTSS ☐ ! PLC/Grade Level/Department Team meetings logs	No coaching is provided to build staff capacity to implement the critical elements of MTSS	Initial coaching is occurring that is focused primarily on facilitating or modeling the components of MTSS	AND coaching activities are expanded to include: 1) opportunities to practice, 2) collaborative and performance feedback	AND data on professional development, implementation fidelity, and student outcomes are used to refine coaching activities
11: Schedules provide adequate time for trainings and coaching support!!!! ☐ ! Master schedule has time provided for PD and coaching ☐ ! PLC/Grade level/Department agendas evidence coaching support/coaching opportunities ☐ ! PD calendar	Schedules do NOT include time allocated to professional development and coaching for MTSS	Schedules include time allocated for trainings	AND schedules include time for ongoing coaching support	AND schedules permit personnel to access additional training and coaching support that is differentiated based on their needs
12: Schedules provide adequate time to administer academic, behavior and social-emotional assessments⁹ needed to make data-based decisions ☐ ! Master schedule or master calendar with time for data collection included ☐ ! Assessment calendar	Schedules do NOT include time allocated to administering assessments needed to make decisions across tiers	Schedules include time for academic, behavior and social-emotional assessments administered to all students (e.g., universal screening)	AND schedules include time to administer more frequent progress monitoring assessments to students receiving Tier 2 and 3 services as specified (e.g., weekly or monthly assessments)	AND schedules permit personnel to administer additional assessment (e.g., diagnostic assessments) across content areas and tiers needed to engage in data-based problem-solving
13: Schedules provide adequate time for multiple tiers of evidence-based instruction and intervention to occur ☐ ! Master schedule with evidence of intervention/instruction time based on needs of school population (adequate time for Core, Supplemental and Intensive)	The master schedule is developed without student data and does not include time for multi-tiered interventions	The master schedule is developed utilizing student data and includes time for multi-tiered interventions	AND the master schedule facilitates effective implementation of multi tiered interventions matched to student needs by content area and intensity (Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3)	AND the master schedule allows for flexible student groupings
14: Schedules provide adequate time for staff to engage in collaborative, data-based problem-solving and decision-making ☐ ! Master schedule with evidence of data-based problem-solving time reserved	The master schedule does not provide opportunities for collaborative, data-based problem-solving and decision-making to occur	The master schedule provides opportunities to engage in collaborative, data-based problem-solving and decision-making to occur	AND the master schedule provides sufficient time for the process to occur with fidelity	AND the master schedule provides opportunities for collaborative, data-based problem-solving and decision-making to occur in settings such as: leadership team meetings, grade-level meetings, cross grade-level meetings, professional learning community meetings

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SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
15: Processes, procedures, and decision rules¹⁰ are established for data-based problem-solving ❑! Evidence of processes, procedures and decision rules for tiers of instruction found in implementation plans, guidance or school improvement plans ❑! Data-decision rules outlined on some type of planning document that is evident to teams across the school building	No systematic processes, procedures, or decision rules are established	Processes, procedures, and decision rules needed to engage in data-based problem-solving are developed and existing structures and resources are incorporated	AND the steps of problem-solving; procedures for accessing, submitting, and using data; and decision rules needed to make reliable decisions are	AND Data-based problem-solving processes, procedures, and decision rules are refined based on data and feedback from staff, schedule changes, and resource availability
16: Resources¹² available to support MTSS implementation are identified and allocated ❑! Resource allocation documentation (i.e., maps, inventories, etc.) ❑! MTSS implementation plan ❑! School Improvement plan	No process exists for mapping and allocating resources available to support MTSS implementation	Leadership team members are gathering information on the personnel, funding, materials, and other resources available to support MTSS implementation	AND resource inventories are established using the gathered information on the personnel, funding, materials, and other resources available to support MTSS implementation and plans for allocating the resources are established	AND Existing resource maps and resource allocations are updated at least annually based on student need, available personnel, funding, materials, and other resources

SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
Communication and Collaboration				
17: Staff¹³ have consensus and engage in MTSS implementation¹⁴ ☐ ! NC Beliefs Survey results indicating consensus ☐ ! Agenda and minutes from meetings where data is discussed that indicates good staff representation in	Staff are not provided opportunities to gain understanding of the need for MTSS	Staff are provided opportunities to gain understanding of the need for MTSS	AND staff has opportunities to gain understanding of its relevance to their roles and responsibilities	AND staff has opportunities to provide input on how to implement MTSS
18: Staff are provided data on MTSS implementation fidelity and student outcomes¹⁵ ☐ ! Meeting minutes/agendas/notes from various platforms that show presentation of both outcome and implementation data to staff representative of the number of times per year they are reporting sharing of data	Staff are not provided any data regarding MTSS implementation fidelity nor student outcomes	Staff are rarely (1/per year) provided data regarding MTSS implementation fidelity and student outcomes	Staff are regularly (2/per year) provided data regarding MTSS implementation fidelity and student outcomes	Staff are regularly (3+/year) provided data regarding MTSS implementation fidelity and student outcomes
19: The infrastructure exists to support the school's goals for family and community engagement¹⁶ in MTSS ☐ ! Oral and written protocols exist for communicating with families ☐ ! Intentional connection and involvement of families in School Improvement Planning ☐ ! Family engagement plan/protocol for all populations	Family and community engagement is: not defined and monitored with data; not linked to school goals in SIP/MTSS plan; and procedures for facilitating 2lway communication do not exist	Family and community engagement are 1 of the following 3: 1) defined and monitored with data, 2) linked to school goals in SIP/MTSS plan, 3) procedures for facilitating 2lway communication exist	Family and community engagement are 2 of the following 3:	Family and community engagement are all of the following 3
20: Educators actively engage families in MTSS ☐ ! Family attendance and active participation at problem-solving meetings evidenced through meeting minutes ☐ ! Family attendance and active involvement during leadership or school improvement meetings evidenced through meeting minutes ☐ ! Protocols for family engagement clearly communicated through handbooks, guides, expectations, etc. ☐ ! Evidence of outreach using a variety of venues (i.e., websites, videos, mass phone messages, emails, handouts, parent nights, etc.) ☐ ! Documentation of information provided to families regarding interventions, student response and progress on repeated assessments	Staff do none of the following:	Staff do 1 of the following 4:	Staff do 2 of the following 4:	Staff do ALL of the following 4:
	1) actively engage families that represent the diverse population of the school, 2) engage families in problem solving when their children need additional supports, 3) provide intensive outreach to unresponsive families ¹⁷ , 4) increase the skills of families to support their children's educations			

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SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
Data-based Problem Solving				
21: Integrated data-based problem solving¹⁸ for student academic, behavior and social-emotional outcomes occurs across content areas, grade levels and tiers¹⁹ ❑! Meeting minutes from data-based problem-solving meetings (i.e., SIT, MTSS leadership team, PLC/Grade level/Department meetings, Individual Student Problem-solving Team meeting, etc.) indicate problem-solving is occurring ❑! MTSS Implementation Plans document procedures aligned with model ❑! Observation of data-based problem-solving occurring with fidelity	Data on academic, behavior and social-emotional outcomes may be collected, BUT data-based problem-solving does NOT OCCUR ACROSS: 1) academic, behavior and social-emotional areas, 2) any grade levels, 3) any tier	Databased problem solving occurs across 1 of the following 4: 1) at least 2 content areas,(e.g., reading, behavior, social-emotional) 2) at least 50 % of grade levels, 3) a single tier 4) only academic outcomes, or only behavior and social-emotional outcomes	Databased problem solving occurs across 2 of the following 3: 1) at least 3 content areas, 2) at least 75 % of grade levels, 3) at least two tiers	Data-based problem solving occurs across all of the following: 1) across all content areas, 2) all grade levels, 3) all tiers
22: ACROSS ALL TIERS, data are used to identify the difference or "gap" between expected and current student outcomes relative to academic, behavior and social-emotional goals ❑! Meeting minutes from data-based problem-solving meetings (i.e., SIT, MTSS leadership team, PLC/Grade level/Department meetings, Individual Student Problem-solving Team meeting, etc.) indicate problem-solving is occurring ❑! MTSS Implementation Plans document procedures aligned with model ❑! Observation of data-based problem-solving occurring with fidelity	The gap between expected and current student outcomes is NOT identified	The gap between expected and current student outcomes is identified	AND the gap between expected and current outcomes is identified, and is associated with academic, behavior and social-emotional goals	AND the gap between expected and current outcomes is identified relative to academic, behavior and social emotional goals and is used to identify the appropriate level (tier) of instruction/ intervention
23: Academic, behavior and social-emotional data are used to identify and verify reasons why²⁰ students are not meeting expectations ❑! Meeting minutes from data-based problem-solving meetings (i.e., SIT, MTSS leadership team, PLC/Grade level/Department meetings, Individual Student Problem-solving Team meeting, etc.) indicate problem-solving is occurring ❑! MTSS Implementation Plans document procedures aligned with model ❑! Observation of data-based problem-solving occurring with fidelity ❑! Instruction and intervention plans show use of measures that inform "root cause" or answer the reason why students are not meeting expectations (i.e., diagnostic assessments/processes)	Reasons why students are NOT meeting expectations are NOT identified	Reasons why students are not meeting expectations are identified	AND Data are used to verify the reasons why students are not meeting expectations	AND reasons why students are not meeting expectations span multiple reasons related to instruction and the learning environment of why students struggle and are verified using a range of assessment methods

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SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
24: Specific instructional/ intervention plans are developed and implemented based on verified reasons why students are not meeting academic, behavior and social-emotional expectations ❑! Meeting minutes from data-based problem-solving meetings (i.e., SIT, MTSS leadership team, PLC/Grade level/Department meetings, Individual Student Problem-solving Team meeting, etc.) indicate problem-solving is occurring ❑! MTSS Implementation Plans document procedures aligned with model ❑! Observation of data-based problem-solving occurring with fidelity	Instructional/intervention plans are NOT developed	Instructional/Interventions plans are developed	AND instructional/ intervention plans consistently specify what will be done, by who, when it will occur, and where with enough detail to be implemented ²¹	AND instructional/intervention plans are developed based on verified reasons students are not meeting expectations
25: Student progress specific to academic, behavior and social-emotional goals specified in intervention plans are monitored ❑! Meeting minutes from data-based problem-solving meetings (i.e., SIT, MTSS leadership team, PLC/Grade level/Department meetings, Individual Student Problem-solving Team meeting, etc.) indicate problem-solving is occurring ❑! MTSS Implementation Plans document procedures aligned with model ❑! Observation of data-based problem-solving occurring with fidelity ❑! Progress-monitoring graphs utilizing valid and reliable	Progress monitoring does NOT occur and student progress is NOT evaluated	Plans for monitoring progress toward expected student outcomes are developed	AND in most cases data collected to monitor student progress and intervention fidelity	AND Changes are made to instruction/ intervention based on student responses
26: Data-based problem-solving informs how patterns of student performance across diverse groups (e.g., racial/ethnic, cultural, social-economic, language proficiency, disability status) are addressed ❑! Meeting minutes from data-based problem-solving meetings (i.e., SIT, MTSS leadership team, PLC/Grade level/Department meetings, Individual Student Problem-solving Team meeting, etc.) indicate problem-solving is occurring ❑! MTSS Implementation Plans document procedures aligned with model ❑! Observation of data-based problem-solving occurring with fidelity	Patterns of student performance across diverse groups are NOT identified	Data on student outcomes are collected	AND patterns of student performance across diverse groups are identified	AND Data on student outcomes informs how MTSS Implementation efforts are impacting different groups of students
27: Resources for and barriers²² to the implementation of MTSS are addressed through a data based problem solving process ❑! Resource allocation maps with evidence of data-based problem-solving use ❑! School Improvement Plan with evidence of resources allocated to sustaining a MTSS ❑! MTSS implementation plan with evidence of data-based problem solving use	Data-based problem solving of resources for and barriers to implementation of MTSS does not occur	School leadership discusses resources for and barriers to implementation of MTSS, but does not collect data to assess implementation levels or develop action plans to increase implementation	School leadership discusses resources for and barriers to implementation of MTSS and does one of the following: 1) collects data to assess implementation levels, 2) develops action plans to increase implementation	School leadership discusses resources for and barriers to implementation of MTSS and does both of the following: 1) collects data to assess implementation levels, 2) develops action plans to increase implementation

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SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
Three Tiered Instruction/Intervention Model				
28: Tier 1 (Core) academic practices exist that clearly identify learning standards²³, school-wide expectations²⁴ for instruction that engages students, and school-wide assessments²⁵ ☐! Instructional Framework ☐! Classroom walkthrough documents ☐! Instructional Plans ☐! School Improvement Plans/MTSS implementation plans	Tier 1 elements are NOT developed and/or clearly defined	Tier 1 elements incorporate 1 of the following 4: 1) clearly defined learning standards, 2) school-wide expectations for instruction and engagement, 3) link to behavior and social-emotional content/instruction, 4) assessments/ data sources	Tier 1 elements incorporate 2 or 3 of the following 4:	Tier 1 elements incorporate all of the following:
29: Tier 1 (Core) behavior practices exists that clearly identify school-wide expectations, social-emotional skills instruction, classroom management practices²⁶, and school-wide behavior data and social-emotional data²⁷ ☐! Behavior matrix ☐! Classroom walkthroughs ☐! School Improvement Plan ☐! School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) data ☐! Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) data ☐! Plans for classroom management ☐! Behavior lesson plans	Tier 1 strategies are NOT developed and or clearly defined	Tier 1 strategies incorporate 1 of the following 4: 1) clearly defined school-wide expectations, 2) classroom management practices, 3) link to Tier 1 academic content/instruction, 4) school-wide behavior and social-emotional data sources	Tier 1 strategies incorporate 2 or 3 of the following 4:	Tier 1 strategies incorporate all of the following:
30: Tier 2 (Supplemental) academic practices exist that include strategies addressing integrated common student needs, are linked to Tier 1 instruction²⁸, and are monitored using assessments/data sources tied directly to the academic, behavior and social-emotional skills taught ☐! Supplemental intervention fidelity checks ☐! Supplemental problem-solving documentation ☐! Progress-monitoring data on groups of students ☐! Tier Two Intervention matrix	Tier 2 strategies are NOT developed and/or clearly defined	Tier 2 strategies incorporate 1 of the following 4: 1) common student needs, 2) link to Tier 1 instruction, 3) link to behavior and social emotional content/instruction, 4) assessments/data sources link directly to the skills taught	Tier 2 strategies incorporate 2 or 3 of the following 4:	Tier 2 strategies incorporate all of the following:

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SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
31: Tier 2 (Supplemental) behavior and social-emotional practices exist that include strategies addressing student needs, are linked to Tier 1 instruction²⁹, and are monitored using assessments/data sources tied directly to the skills academic, behavior and social-emotional taught ☐! Supplemental intervention fidelity checks ☐! Supplemental problem-solving documentation ☐! Progress-monitoring data on groups of students ☐! Tier Two Intervention matrix ☐! Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) data	Tier 2 strategies are NOT developed and/or clearly defined	Tier 2 strategies incorporate 1 of the following 4: 1) common student needs; 2) link to Tier1 instruction; 3) link to academic content; 4) assessments/ data sources link directly to the skills taught	Tier 2 strategies incorporate 2 or 3 of the following 4:	Tier 2 strategies incorporate all of the following:
32: Tier 3 (Intensive) academic practices³⁰ exist that include strategies that are developed based on students needs, are aligned with Tier 1 and Tier 2 instructional goals and strategies, and are monitored using assessments/data sources that link directly to skills taught ☐! Intensive intervention fidelity checks ☐! Intensive problem-solving documentation ☐! Progress-monitoring data on individual students	Tier 3 strategies are NOT developed and or clearly defined	Tier 3 strategies incorporate 1 of the following 4: 1) developed based on students needs, 2) developed to support Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction, 3) link to behavior and social-emotional content/instruction, 4) assessments/data sources that link directly to the skills taught	Tier 3 strategies incorporate 2 or 3 of the following 4:	Tier 3 strategies incorporate all of the following:
33: Tier 3 (Intensive) behavior and social-emotional practices³¹ exist that include strategies that are developed based on students needs, are aligned Tier 1 and Tier 2 instructional goals and strategies, and are monitored using assessments/data sources that link directly to skills taught ☐! Intensive intervention fidelity checks ☐! Intensive problem-solving documentation ☐! Progress-monitoring data on individual students ☐! Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Intervention ☐! Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) data	Tier 3 strategies are NOT developed and or clearly defined	Tier 3 strategies incorporate 1 of the following 4: 1) based on students needs, 2) aligned with Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction, 3) link to academic content/instruction, 4) assessments/data sources that link directly to the skills taught	Tier 3 strategies incorporate 2 or 3 of the following 4:	Tier 3 strategies incorporate all of the following:

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SAM Item and examples of supporting	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
Data/Evaluation				
34: Staff understand and have access to academic, behavior and social-emotional data sources that address the following purposes of assessment: 1) identify students at-risk academically, socially, and/or emotionally, 2) determine why student is at-risk, 3) monitor student academic and social-emotional growth/progress, 4) Inform academic and social-emotional instructional planning, 5) determine student attainment of academic/behavioral outcomes ☐! Assessment Plan (within or separate from MTSS implementation plan) ☐! Assessment inventory	Staff do not understand and have access to academic, behavior, and social-emotional data sources that address the purposes of assessment	Staff learn the purposes of assessment within MTSS and the leadership team selects measures for the purposes of assessment across academic, behavior and social-emotional areas that are reliable, valid and accessible, as well as culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate	AND staff engage in assessment with fidelity to: 1) answer predetermined guiding/critical questions regarding student functioning/outcomes, 2) identify students who are at-risk at least 314 times/year, 2) determine why a student is at risk, 3) monitor student growth/progress, 4) inform instructional/intervention planning, 5) determine student attainment of academic, behavior, and social-emotional outcomes	AND the leadership team and/or staff collaboratively and systematically evaluate and adjust assessment practices to ensure availability of accurate and useful data to inform instruction, and assessment tools are evaluated for continued value, usefulness, and cultural, linguistic, and developmental appropriateness
35: Policies and procedures for decision-making are established for the administration of assessments, access to existing data sources, and use of data ☐! Assessment inventory ☐! School Improvement plan ☐! Progress-monitoring data	No policies and procedures are in place	The leadership team outlines policies and procedures for decision-making that include schedules for screening, use of diagnostic assessments, progress monitoring frequency, and criteria for determining tier(s) of support needed	AND staff consistently administer assessments, access data sources and make data-based decisions using policies and procedures for decision-making with fidelity	AND adherence to and effectiveness of policies and procedures for decision making are evaluated regularly for efficiency, usefulness, and relevance for students and staff, and data are used to make adjustments to the policies
36: Effective data tools are used appropriately and independently by staff ☐! Assessment Plan (within or separate from implementation plan) ☐! Graphing results ☐! Professional Development/Coaching plans on data tools use	Staff do not have access to tools that efficiently provide data needed to answer problem solving questions for academic, behavior and social-emotional issues	The leadership team ensures availability of tools that can track and graphically display academic, behavior and social-emotional data, and staff are trained on the use of the tools and on their responsibilities for data collection, entry and management	AND staff use the data tools and are provided assistance as needed	AND data tools are periodically assessed and the necessary changes are made in order to improve functionality, efficiency, and usefulness, and staff is proficient and independent with data tools and easily support new staff members

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SAM Item and examples of supporting evidence	Not Implementing	Emerging/Developing	Operationalizing	Optimizing
37: Data sources are used to evaluate the implementation and impact of MTSS implementation ☐ Meeting minutes/agendas ☐ School improvement planning ☐ Walkthrough data	No data sources to evaluate implementation of the critical elements of MTSS have been identified	The leadership team has identified data sources that will be used to evaluate implementation of the critical elements of MTSS	AND the leadership team uses data sources to evaluate implementation and to make systemic improvements to the critical elements of MTSS	AND the leadership team periodically conducts analyses to determine how implementation of critical elements of MTSS relate to positive student outcomes
38: Available resources are allocated effectively ☐ School improvement plan or MTSS implementation plan with evidence of resources allocated to sustaining a MTSS	Resources are NOT allocated based on student need and the availability of time, available personnel, funding, and materials	Resources are allocated based on student need	AND the relationship between the resources allocated and the outcomes of students is evaluated	AND Processes and criteria for resource allocation are refined based on strategies that result in improved student outcomes.
39: Data sources are monitored for consistency and accuracy in collection and entry procedures ☐ Assessment plan (within or separate from implementation plan) ☐ Professional development/coaching plans on data tools use ☐ Meeting minutes from leadership team discussion of fidelity with data use	Data sources are NOT monitored for accuracy or consistency	The leadership team ensures that staff understand the importance of accurate and consistent data collection practices and have provided professional development on policies and procedures for methods, types and frequency of data collection	AND the leadership team uses a protocol (e.g., email notifications for failure to take attendance, etc.) To monitor data consistency and accuracy	AND The Leadership team periodically conducts analyses to determine consistency and accuracy of data

¹ Instructional support staff may include: interventionists, coaches, behavioral specialists, etc. Student support personnel are comprised of school psychologists, school counselors, social workers, school nurses, etc.

² Responsibilities for facilitating MTSS implementation are not limited to, but can include:

- Promoting a schoolwide vision and mission for MTSS implementation, including the development and dissemination of a schoolwide implementation plan
- Allocating resources (e.g., time, personnel, materials) for the planning and delivery of evidence-based assessment, instruction and intervention
- Providing ongoing professional development and coaching support to school staff
- Collecting and analyzing data on MTSS implementation efforts

³ Professional development and coaching are ongoing activities that develop the capacity of staff to implement MTSS. Efforts should be aligned with results of school needs assessments and modified based on the results of professional learning.

⁴ At the school level, a school-based leadership team should guide implementation of a MTSS. This may take place within the structure of the School Improvement Team or may be a subset of this team that is charged with implementation planning. Teams may differ based on several factors but a connection should always be made in order to facilitate

effective implementation. A long-term plan for implementation of MTSS should be developed by the school based leadership team. This may be a part of the school improvement plan or separate from it but again should be aligned with the overall goals and actions within the school improvement plan.

⁵ A strategic plan for MTSS implementation should address the following components (at a minimum): a. Communication and collaboration strategies; b. Capacity building targets and activities; c. Data to monitor implementation fidelity of the critical components of MTSS

⁶ Different approaches to facilitating school-wide implementation of an MTSS model can include:

The focus on a three-stage model of consensus building, infrastructure development, and implementation of practices consistent with an MTSS model. The focus on a specific sets of activities related to successful implementation of a designated model of service delivery (e.g., National Implementation Research Network framework). The approach to facilitating school-wide implementation of an MTSS model should be connected to the School Improvement Plan (SIP), as well as other school-wide plans.

⁷ Critical elements of MTSS communicated to staff include: Curriculum standards; Assessment data used to inform instruction; Multiple tiers of instruction and intervention; Data-based problem solving used to make decisions

⁸ “Coaching” is defined as technical assistance and support provide to school staff to improve implementation of components of an MTSS model, including: Co-Planning, Modeling/Demonstration, Co-Facilitation, and Guided practice with high quality feedback. “Coaching does NOT necessarily have to be completed by one person. Coaching can be provided by a number of different individuals depending upon their specializations, skill sets, as well as the particulars of the context of activities. It is unreasonable to assume that just one individual, or one coach will have all the skills required to effectively provide coaching for MTSS in every given situation that may arise.” March, A.L. and Gaunt, B.T. (2013). Systems Coaching: A model for building capacity.

⁹ Behavior/Social-Emotional Assessment: Screening: Recommended Behavior/Social-Emotional screening data include reviewing and analyzing all students adherence to school-wide expectations through collection of:

- Minor problem behavior (classroom managed)
- Major problem behavior (office discipline referral)
- Attendance patterns
- Other areas that some schools may choose to universally screen in the area of Behavior/Social-Emotional skills using a school-wide screening for internalizing behaviors (e.g., depressive symptoms, anxiety, etc.).

Diagnostic: Diagnostic assessments for behavior/social-emotional skills include use of functional behavior assessments in order to find the root cause for the student s difficulties. Progress-Monitoring: In the area of behavior/social-emotional functioning, the monitoring of student progress with the intervention should be matched with the problem of concern. Within progress-monitoring of behavior, teams will want to consider monitoring frequency, duration, intensity and latency recording.

¹⁰ Schools will need to establish and communicate the problem solving process to be used, specific steps to be followed, and criteria to use when making decisions (e.g., what is good, questionable, or poor response to instruction/intervention). Schools should consider district and state guidelines when available.

¹¹ Processes and procedures for problem solving, data collection and use, and decision-rules include:

- Specific guidelines on the steps of problem solving to be used
- Documentation requirements
- Opportunities for engaging in data-based problem solving (e.g., Professional Learning Communities, etc)
- Roles and responsibilities of participants

¹² Resources encompass not only available monetary assets but also available personnel, instructional materials, and time that will facilitate the implementation and sustainment of an MTSS as a framework for supporting all students.

¹³ Staff refers to employees at the school that will be impacted by or will be involved in implementation of MTSS. This will always include administration, teachers, other professionals and para-professional support staff. The degree to which other employees (e.g., bus drivers, cafeteria workers, administrative support staff, etc.) are included may be determined by their level of involvement with/implementation of MTSS components at the individual school level.

¹⁴ Efforts to engage staff should align with district and state guidance regarding MTSS implementation to facilitate staff understanding of connections between school, district and state initiatives.

¹⁵ Data on student outcomes, school-level implementation fidelity, the capacity of educators to implement, and commitment from staff are needed to inform implementation. Staff roles and responsibilities will drive the specific data they need to inform implementation.

¹⁶ Family and community engagement is the active and meaningful partnership that educators build and maintain with students families and the broader community for the purpose of supporting student learning.

¹⁷ Intensive outreach to unresponsive families refers to additional activities undertaken by the school to engage families of students who need additional supports, but who are not engaging with the school's typical outreach practices (e.g., letters and phone calls home). Intensive outreach is an individualized approach requiring information gathering and problem solving to identify outreach strategies that are more likely to be successful for a family.

¹⁸ Data-based problem solving refers to a multi-step process that includes examining performance related to goals/expectations (problem identification), understanding variables causing problems (problem analysis), selecting/designing and implementing strategies to lessen barriers and achieve goals (instruction/intervention delivery), and monitoring effectiveness (monitoring/evaluation).

¹⁹ Data-based problem solving should occur (a) across content areas (reading, math, science, behavior, social-emotional and other relevant content areas for a school) (b) within and across grade levels (e.g., horizontal meetings for 6th, 7th, 8th, as well as vertical meetings), and (d) across tiers (performance data in response to instruction used to engage in problem solving for all students (Core), for some students receiving supplemental instruction (Supplemental), and for students receiving individualized support (Intensive).

²⁰ Reasons why students are not meeting expectations are sometimes referred to as hypotheses or barriers to learning. The big idea is that schools identify potential curriculum, instruction, environmental (e.g., peer distractions, classroom management issues), and learner (e.g., skill deficits) for why the student is not meeting expectations and collect data/information to determine which reasons are contributing to the problem.

²¹ Specific instruction/intervention plans include information outlining:

- The goal of the intervention/action plan
- What intervention or action steps (e.g., curriculum adjustments, instructional processes and procedures) will be put in place
- How often (daily/weekly/etc.) the intervention will be utilized
- How long each session is to be completed
- Who is responsible for intervention implementation and support
- Where and when the intervention will happen
- Plan for monitoring instruction/intervention fidelity and progress towards identified goals
- Timeframe (dates) for periodic review of progress monitoring data and decision points

²² Structured problem solving is utilized to identify resources that can be used to facilitate implementation and barriers that are hindering implementation for the purpose of developing specific action plans to increase implementation levels.

²³ Priority learning standards are curriculum standards that define what students should know and be able to do for a given content area and grade level (e.g., NCSCOS, Social-Emotional/Behavior Standards, etc.).

²⁴ Expectations for instruction often include elements related to the instructional routine (e.g., whole-group, small-group, and independent practice), amount of time dedicated to instruction, and which evidence-based instructional strategies are used.

²⁵ Both statewide assessments and formative assessments administered to all students are important to identify so that expectations for the data needed to inform decisions are consistent.

²⁶ Structured instruction of behavioral expectations and social and emotional skills is provided to all students. Classroom routines include social and emotional learning principles and classroom management strategies embedded into instruction. School climate and environments support student well-being. A small number of clearly defined school-wide expectations that are positively stated are a foundational element of a Tier One school-wide behavior support system.

²⁷ School-wide social-emotional behavior data may include Office Discipline Referrals, In-School Suspensions, Out-of-School Suspensions, and social-emotional screening data sources used to examine the effectiveness of Tier One behavior and social-emotional supports.

²⁸ Tier two interventions should be aligned with Tier One instructional goals and expectations, address high-probability barriers to achieving instructional goals and expectations, and include assessments, which measure specific skills, general outcomes, and student progress.

²⁹ Tier Two interventions should be aligned with school-wide behavior and social-emotional expectations, address high-probability barriers to meeting instructional goals and student well-being, and include assessments that monitor student discipline incidents, social-emotional skills, and well-being.

³⁰ Tier three interventions generally provide increased exposure (time in minutes) to quality instruction or intervention, more focused instruction matched to student need, and smaller groupings. Additionally, Tier Three interventions often are developed during individual student focused problem solving sessions. Importantly, Tier Three interventions focused on academic issues should be linked to Tier One and Two instructional content and processes and also should consider what behavioral and social-emotional supports are needed for success.

³¹ Tier Three interventions are matched to a student's specific behavior and social-emotional needs and ensure the student has access to Tier One and Tier Two supports. For a few students with complex needs, individualized interventions may involve wraparound supports across systems (e.g., mental health, education, medical, family, etc.). Individualized interventions include specific prevention and consequence-based strategies based on assessment information (i.e., Functional Behavior Assessment), and may include modifications to the classroom environment or instruction, teaching new skills, and reinforcement of desired behaviors as well as a range of supports such as mental health services.

Adapted from *The Self-Assessment of MTSS*. (2013). Florida's MTSS, Florida Department of Education. Adapted with permission.
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