



NORTH CAROLINA
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

North Carolina School Improvement Implementation Guide

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STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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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. [Hanover Research \(2014\)](#) defines school improvement planning as “a systematic way of planning change and tracking it over time” (p. 5). It is a road map that charts the *how* and the *when* of the changes a school makes to improve student achievement. 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

Intent

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.

Development

This guide is an update from its original 2016 version, which 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.

Connection to Statute

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. 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.

Connection to NCStar

In 2011, NCDPI began utilizing a web-based school improvement management tool, Indistar®. Indistar® is developed by the Academic Development Institute (ADI) with the firm belief that district and school improvement is best accomplished when directed by people, working in teams, closest to the students. Indistar® guides school teams through a process of charting improvement and managing the continuous improvement process. Indistar® builds accountability as well as helps schools track their improvement plans. Indistar® 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, Indistar® contains over 100 research based effective practices (indicators) and allows schools flexibility to personalize their school improvement plans to meet their distinct needs.

In 2016, NCDPI rebranded Indistar® into NCStar, using the knowledge gained from NC Turnaround and the work of District and School Transformation. With less human capital to assist school turnaround, NCDPI developed NCStar and incorporated the successful Framework for Action into the tool. The hope being that all schools statewide would focus on the key points of the Framework while developing school improvement processes on their own.

NCStar contains 130 research-based effective practices, however, North Carolina has provided each school a list of 12 KEY practices that matches the Framework for Action:

- All teachers employ effective classroom management and reinforce classroom rules and procedures by positively teaching them (A1.07)
- Instructional Teams develop standards-aligned units of instruction for each subject and grade level (A2.04)
- The school implements a tiered instructional system that allows teachers to deliver evidence-based instruction aligned with the individual needs of students across all tiers (A4.01)
- All teachers are attentive to students' emotional states, guide students in managing their emotions, and arrange for supports and interventions. (A4.06)
- The school develops and implements consistent, intentional, and on-going plans to support student transitions for grade-to-grade and level-to-level. (A4.16)
- The LEA has an LEA Support & Improvement Team (B1.01)
- A Leadership Team consisting of the principal, teachers who lead the Instructional Teams, and other professional staff meets regularly (at least twice a month) to review implementation of effective practices. (B1.03)
- The school has established a team structure among teachers with specific duties and time for instructional planning. (B2.03)
- The principal monitors curriculum and classroom instruction regularly and provides timely, clear, constructive feedback to teachers. (B3.03)
- The LEA/School regularly looks at school performance data and aggregated classroom observation data and uses that data to make decisions about school improvement and professional development needs. (C2.01)

- The LEA/School has established a system of procedures and protocols for recruiting, evaluating, rewarding, and replacing staff. (C3.04)
- The LEA/School has aligned resource allocation (money, time, human resources) within each school's instructional priorities. (D1.02)
- The school regularly communicates with parents/guardians about its expectations of them and the importance of the curriculum of the home (what parents can do at home to support their children's learning). (E1.06)

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 from NCDPI. Through NCStar, needs and support can be identified and available resources deployed. More information about NCStar as well as a series of How-to Videos may be found at **www.ncstar.weebly.com**.

Guide Contact

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 the following within the Division of District & Regional Support:

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SECTION TWO – LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

LEGISLATIVE BEGINNINGS (ARTICLE 8B)

In 1996, the North Carolina General Assembly established the School-Based Management and Accountability Program with the overall purpose of improving student performance (§ 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. Please see Appendix A for further details on Article 8B (§ 115C-105).

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 Website. 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 B). 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."

As stated throughout this document, the NCDPI-recommended processes identified in this document fully support and align with NC legal requirements.

Required Strategies for Improving Student Performance

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

1. Shall include a plan to address school safety and discipline concerns;
2. May include a decision to use state funds in accordance with G.S. §115C-105.25 (budget flexibility);
3. 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;
4. 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;
5. 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;

6. 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
7. 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 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 requirements 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 A (Chapter 115C, Article 8B).

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 2022 for the 2022-2024 cycle will expire at the end of the 2023-2024 school year. A waiver request submitted in January 2024 also will expire at the end of the 2023-2024 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 in North Carolina will be empowered to accept academic challenges, prepared to pursue their chosen path after graduating high school, and encouraged to become lifelong learners with the capacity to engage in a globally-collaborative society.
2. The mission of the North Carolina State Board of Education is to use its constitutional authority to guard and maintain the right of a sound, basic education for every child in North Carolina Public Schools.
3. The State Board of Education established the following three goals for public education:
 - a) Goal 1: Eliminate opportunity gaps by 2025
 - b) Goal 2: Improve school and district performance by 2025
 - c) Goal 3: Increase educator preparedness to meet the needs of every student by 2025.

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.

GOAL ALIGNMENT

Local school boards should align district goals to the three 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 B, or visit the NCDPI website at: [NCSBE Strategic Plan & Leandro Alignment](#).

TIMELINE OF IMPROVEMENT CYCLES

School improvement does not begin and end during each school year. **School improvement is a continuous process.**

While legislation requires that school plans are developed at least every two years, the NCDPI recommends a continuous improvement cycle that contains incremental 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.

DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

Distributed leadership is defined as “the practice of leading and managing teaching and learning in schools and school systems” (Diamond and Spillane, 2016, p. 147-154) with a purpose to improve leadership capacity (Solly, 2018). Implementing distributed leadership provides an opportunity to strengthen cooperative culture and increase buy-in for the SIP across the organization and all stakeholders. In its address of Local Board, LEA and school expectations around school improvement teams and school improvement planning, legislative requirements directly reinforce the collaborative nature of the SIP process. Additionally, distributed leadership increases the odds of school improvement being sustainable.

Teams are essential for effective school improvement planning. School improvement research (Harris, 2008; 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; Hopkins, 2015). 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; Hopkins, 2015). 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 professional community and environment (Hajisoteriou, Karousiou & Angelides, 2018), creates an opportunity for diverse ideas, perspectives, and experiences to surface from team members.

EXECUTE WITH FIDELITY

When planning for school improvement, teams should review and identify effective practices that meet the needs of the school and the student population. The term “effective” suggests that strategies and practices selected for school improvement planning should be proven to be successful with similar settings and needs. For example, NCStar provides 130 indicators or research-based effective practices that can be incorporated as objectives for school improvement planning.

While 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, 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.

NORTH CAROLINA MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT (NC MTSS)

NC MTSS is a school improvement framework that encompasses academic, behavioral, social, and emotional instruction and support. NC MTSS employs a systems approach using data-driven problem-solving to maximize growth for all.

MTSS is built on six critical components: Leadership, Communication and Collaboration, Building Capacity/Implementation Infrastructure, Problem Solving Process, Multiple Tiers of Instruction and Intervention Model, and Data/Evaluation. 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.

District-Based Leadership

NCDPI developed two validated tools aimed at measuring MTSS implementation, the Facilitated Assessments of MTSS (FAM). One tool is for district teams leading the work throughout a PSU (FAM-D) and the other is for school leaders leading MTSS at their school (FAM-S). If district teams review aggregate school data to identify needs across the district or by level (pre-K, elementary, middle, high), the central office can allocate resources, including professional development, coaching, personnel, funding, etc., to support school improvement. This work may occur through the district MTSS team and aggregate school needs can be identified through the Facilitated Assessment of MTSS - School Level (FAM-S). The FAM-D notes the district MTSS team is responsible for ensuring professional development and coaching for school MTSS teams and staff on a variety of topics, including assessments and data sources, instruction and intervention, and problem-solving.

In addition, district teams can administer the Facilitated Assessment of MTSS - District Level (FAM-D). In doing so, the district team can identify strengths and needs of the district team. Addressing identified needs at the district level facilitates more efficient and effective school improvement planning for schools.

School-Based Leadership

In addition to school administration, a leadership team is established to support school improvement. In alignment with the general statute detailed in Section Three, a School Improvement Team must exist. This team could also be the MTSS Leadership team, which is a cross-disciplinary team that is responsible for facilitating MTSS implementation, which may include school improvement planning. The FAM-S notes that the school leadership team actively facilitates the implementation of an MTSS as part of the school improvement planning process.

BUILDING THE CAPACITY/INFRASTRUCTURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

School-wide capacity and infrastructure are required to implement and sustain continuous improvement. This capacity and infrastructure usually include: (1) linked teaming structures with explicit communication loops, (2)

ongoing professional development and coaching with an emphasis on data-based problem solving and multi-tiered instruction and intervention, (3) scheduling that allows staff to plan and implement instruction and intervention, and (4) processes and procedures for engaging in data-based problem solving.

Professional development and coaching

Professional development is defined as purposeful, skill-based, and uses adult learning theory processes designed to support teachers and staff in acquiring the skills and information needed to begin using a new program or innovation (NIRN, 2019). Coaching is technical assistance and support provided to school staff to improve implementation of components of the school improvement plan, including co-planning, modeling/demonstration, co-facilitation, and guided practice with high quality feedback. Coaching does not 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 every given situation that may arise (March & Gaunt, 2013).

Within the development of a school improvement plan, team members should identify professional development and on-going coaching needed to implement and sustain the plan as written. Within an NC MTSS, the leadership team should ensure that professional development and coaching occur for all staff as it relates to their job roles and responsibilities in the areas of assessment and data sources, data-based problem solving, and multi-tiered instruction and intervention.

Scheduling

Schedules refer to both the year-long schedule of activities that may include professional development and coaching, universal screening/benchmark assessments, and data analysis. Schedules also refer to on-going (e.g., weekly) activities related to instruction, professional development and coaching, assessment, and data analysis. When schedules are referenced in education, one typically thinks about the daily schedule focused on the instruction of students, yet building a schedule around support staff and providing time for collaboration and problem solving is just as important.

When considering schedules for school improvement plan implementation, it is important to provide adequate time for professional development and coaching support. School schedules should include time allocated to professional development and on-going coaching and additional support that is differentiated based on staff need. Further, schedules should provide adequate time to administer academic, behavior, and social and emotional assessments needed to make data-based decisions. Schedules should include time for the administration of universal screening, diagnostic assessments, and progress monitoring across the areas of academic, behavior, and social and emotional. Sufficient time should be given for multiple tiers of evidence-based instruction and intervention to occur. The master schedule should be developed utilizing student data and include time for multi-tiered interventions matched to student need and the allows for flexible student grouping. Finally, the master schedule provides appropriate time for staff to engage in collaborative, data-based problem solving and decision making.

COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

Ongoing communication and collaboration are essential for successful implementation of a school improvement plan. Many innovations fail due to a lack of consensus, lack of two-way communication between implementers and leadership to support continuous improvement, and lack of involvement of 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.

Consensus building

Consensus is a cooperative process in which all stakeholders within a school create and agree to support a decision in the best interest of students (Dressler, 2006). Consensus building is a process that fosters trust and creates ownership and commitment among staff and stakeholders. An effective consensus process is inclusive and engages all participants. Consensus most likely leads to better quality outcomes that empower the group or community to move forward to work collaboratively (Hefte, 2022). One tool that can assist with measuring consensus around the critical aspects of school improvement is the North Carolina MTSS Belief Survey. The North

Carolina MTSS Beliefs Survey contains items designed to measure educator beliefs about student learning, problem-solving and expectations for instructional effectiveness. The school leadership team can examine results and use the data to facilitate discussions and build consensus for important factors related to school improvement. In addition, results can inform needed professional development and coaching.

Two-way communication

Communication needs to be bidirectional, meaning that schools share information with stakeholders, but also seek feedback from stakeholders as well. Information is shared both ways, to and from the school. Reciprocal communication is critical if the leadership team is to achieve buy-in and support from all impacted by school improvement efforts (Biech, 2007; Fixsen et al., 2005). One tool for ensuring two-way communication is through the development of a communication plan. The purpose of a communication plan is to help manage the change process. This provides a method to ensure the building leadership team is providing a consistent message, giving the necessary information to the appropriate groups, and helping them understand why the change and timeline are necessary.

Family and community engagement

Family and community engagement is defined as the active and meaningful partnerships that educators build and maintain with students' families and community organizations and individuals for the purpose of supporting student learning. It embodies the idea that all parties are equally invested in the student's educational experience and all parties bring knowledge and skills of equal value to the table to work together.

It is important to note that family and community engagement and family and community involvement are NOT synonymous. Parents/guardians who attend PTA meetings, sign school paperwork, participate in parent/teacher conferences are certainly involved; however, if they are only receiving information and following the requests of the school policy or personnel that is not considered a meaningful partnership. In a true partnership, families have a voice in decision making, not only for their child but for the regular operations of the school.

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.

MULTIPLE TIERS OF INSTRUCTION AND INTERVENTION MODEL

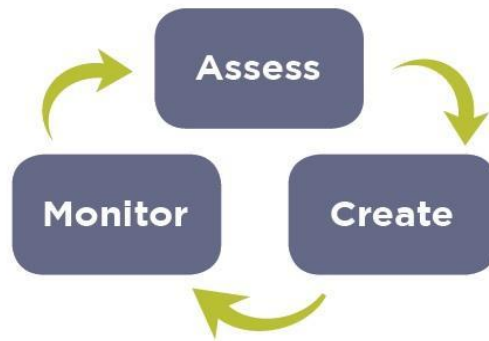
The multiple tiers of instruction and intervention model is another critical element of NC MTSS implementation. Core support includes the instruction that is provided to all students. Supplemental support includes additional instruction or intervention provided to students not meeting benchmarks. Intensive support includes concentrated, 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.

	Core	Supplemental	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; 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

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

Hanover Research (2014) shares that while many schools and districts draft outcome-focused plans, they often exclude the “means for measuring these outcomes”, i.e., the school-specific systems and processes needed to achieve their desired outcomes (p. 6). Effective planning for improvement is achieved when schools use results from ongoing and comprehensive data analysis or needs assessment, to identify effective practices, and to outline the daily actions (action steps) created, monitored and completed by the people who drive improvement within the school.

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). As a web-based tool, NCStar guides a district or school Leadership Team (i.e., SIT) in more easily charting its improvement, and in sustaining a continuous improvement process.

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, ESSA goals)
- 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)

Needs Assessment

In conducting a Needs Assessment, schools are asked to assess their implementation efforts of effective school improvement practices. 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. Districts may choose from various options to conduct a needs assessment. They may create and complete their own model for a needs assessment, or apply state-recommended tools such as the Needs Assessment - School Self-Assessment within NCStar, the Facilitated Assessment of MTSS - School Level (FAM-S), or receive a state-driven Comprehensive Needs Assessment. **As a reminder, any school receiving federal funding must complete some sort of yearly needs assessment.**

The NCDPI Division of District and Regional Support 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 overarching dimensions (Instructional Excellence & Alignment, Leadership Capacity, Professional Capacity, Planning & Operational Effectiveness, and Families & Community). This is the same rubric found on the Needs Assessment - School Self-Assessment in NCStar. In addition to the rubric, the Needs Assessment - School Self-Assessment includes a comprehensive data collection section that reflects the 5 data categories noted above.

To assess the school's use of a Multi-Tiered System of Support as a total school improvement framework, the NCDPI recommends the Facilitated Assessment of MTSS - School Level (FAM-S). The FAM-S 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 FAM-S 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 FAM-S may be found in Appendix E.

CREATE

Effective school improvement planning creates shared direction and generates attention on priorities that drive 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 six 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 that is written using the SMART (Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) characteristics provides clarity for the school community. Goal statements are supported by the use of [Performance Measures](#) in NCStar (see *Working with Performance Measures* under “docs” column of ncstar.weebly.com).

Performance Measures allow a school or district to monitor progress towards a goal by breaking the goal into more manageable data pieces. Performance Measures can allow monitoring of interim progress within a year or over years by using either leading measures (assessments/tools that are tracked multiple times throughout the year such as NC Check-Ins, Attendance/Discipline Data, etc.) or lagging measures (summative or once per year assessments such as the EOG, EOC, etc.). Performance Measures can be used to break down a goal in a variety of ways such as by grade level, subgroups, etc. The goal and your school needs determine the type of performance measures you would utilize. Performance Measures are optional, but highly beneficial for school improvement teams. The Performance Measure Planning Template can help your team plan for adding Performance Measures.

Once the goal is defined in the plan, the school will identify research based effective practices (Indicators) that will help the school in attaining its goal. Each Indicator will contain specific tasks or actions for achieving full implementation of the effective practice/Indicator. Effective practices and actions should address the root cause(s) identified by the school improvement team. A SIT must define ownership of each action. This means specifying an individual responsible for executing the action. When assigning actions to individuals to monitor remember the following: 1) Actions should be assigned to people based on their talents, gifts, and interests. 2) The person assigned to monitor the action doesn't necessarily have to be the only individual doing the work of that action step. For example, a team or group of people might be assigned to create a professional development plan, but one person would be responsible for ensuring that it is completed and report back to the school improvement team. Do not overburden an individual with too many responsibilities as that can negatively impact implementation.

The District Support & Improvement Team should review school plans regularly to see if the designated actions need revising. These reviews also provide opportunity for the Principal and District Team 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. This is the day to day working of the school improvement plan. Progress towards implementation of each action and effective practice is monitored on a regular basis and changes to the SIP are made because of this monitoring.

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 (otherwise known as monitoring) to see the impact of each objective and its corresponding actions. 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, and to modify and adjust along the way. The team should check the results of the actions 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 action. 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. Questions to consider when determining if the objective is at full implementation include:

- Is implementation of the effective practice embedded in the daily life and culture of the school?
- Is full implementation of the effective practice leading to the achievement of specific goals linked to the practice?

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 115C, ARTICLE 8B, NC GENERAL STATUTES

Go to <https://www.ncleg.gov/> to view NC Bills and Laws

Direct Link: [Chapter 115C - Article 8B](#)

Article 8B.

School-Based Management and Accountability Program.

Part 1. Implementation of Program.

§ 115C-105.20. School-Based Management and Accountability Program.

(a) The General Assembly believes that all children can learn. It is the intent of the General Assembly that the mission of the public school community is to challenge with high expectations each child to learn, to achieve, and to fulfill his or her potential. With that mission as its guide, the State Board of Education shall develop a School-Based Management and Accountability Program. The primary goal of the Program shall be to improve student performance.

(b) In order to support local boards of education and schools in the implementation of this Program, the State Board of Education shall adopt guidelines, including guidelines to:

- (1) Assist local boards and schools in the development and implementation of school-based management under Part 2 of this Article.
- (2) Recognize the schools that meet or exceed their goals.
- (3) Identify low-performing schools under G.S. 115C-105.37, and create assistance teams that the Board may assign to schools identified as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.37. The assistance teams should consist of currently practicing teachers and staff, representatives of institutions of higher education, school administrators, and others the State Board considers appropriate.
- (4) Enable assistance teams to make appropriate recommendations under G.S. 115C-105.38.
- (5) Establish a process to resolve disputes between local boards and schools in the development and implementation of school improvement plans under G.S. 115C-105.27. This process shall provide for final resolution of the disputes. (1989, c. 778, s. 3; 1991 (Reg. Sess., 1992), c. 900, s. 75.1(a); 1993, c. 321, s. 144.2(a); 1995, c. 272, s. 1; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 716, ss. 2, 3; 2011-145, s. 7.13(f); 2011-391, s. 14(b).)

§ 115C-105.21. Local participation in the Program.

(a) Local school administrative units shall participate in the School-Based Management and Accountability Program.

(b) The School-Based Management and Accountability Program shall provide increased local control of schools with the goal of improving student performance. Local boards of education:

- (1) Are allowed increased flexibility in the expenditure of State funds, in accordance with G.S. 115C-105.25; and
- (2) May be granted waivers of certain State laws, regulations, and policies that inhibit their ability to reach local accountability goals, in accordance with G.S. 115C-105.26.

(c) The School-Based Management and Accountability Program shall be based upon an accountability, recognition, assistance, and intervention process in order to hold each school and the school's personnel accountable for improved student performance in the school. (1989, c. 778, s. 3; 1991, c. 331, s. 1; 1993, c. 263, s. 1; c. 522, s. 3; 1995, c. 272, s. 2; c. 450, s. 12; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 716, ss. 2, 3.)

§ 115C-105.22. Reserved for future codification purposes.

§ 115C-105.23. Reserved for future codification purposes.

§ 115C-105.24. Reserved for future codification purposes.

Part 2. School-Based Management.

§ 115C-105.25. Budget flexibility.

- (a) Consistent with improving student performance, a local board shall provide maximum flexibility to schools in the use of funds to enable the schools to accomplish their goals.
- (b) Subject to the following limitations, local boards of education may transfer and may approve transfers of funds between funding allotment categories:
- (1) Repealed by Session Laws 2013-360, s. 8.14, effective July 1, 2013.
 - (1a) Funds for career and technical education and other purposes may be transferred only as permitted by federal law and the conditions of federal grants or as provided through any rules that the State Board of Education adopts to ensure compliance with federal regulations.
 - (1b) No funds shall be transferred out of the children with disabilities allotment category.
 - (2), (2a) Repealed by Session Laws 2013-360, s. 8.14, effective July 1, 2013.
 - (3) No funds shall be transferred into the central office administration allotment category.
 - (3a) No funds shall be transferred out of the teacher assistants allotment category.
 - (3b) No funds shall be transferred out of the academically or intellectually gifted children allotment category.
 - (4), (5) Repealed by Session Laws 2013-360, s. 8.14, effective July 1, 2013.
 - (5a) No positions shall be transferred out of the allocation for classroom teachers for kindergarten through twelfth grade, except as provided in this subdivision. Positions allocated for classroom teachers may be converted to dollar equivalents to contract for visiting international exchange teachers through a visiting international exchange teacher program approved by the State. These positions shall be converted at the statewide average salary for classroom teachers, including benefits. The converted funds shall be used only to provide visiting international exchange teachers with salaries commensurate with their experience levels, to provide any State-approved bonuses, and to cover the costs associated with supporting visiting international exchange teachers within the local school administrative unit, including programming and related activities, background checks, medical coverage, and other program administration services in accordance with the federal regulations for the Exchange Visitor Program, 22 C.F.R. Part 62.
 - (5b) Positions allocated for instructional support personnel may be converted to dollar equivalents for any purpose authorized by the policies of the State Board of Education. These positions shall be converted at the salary on the first step of the "A" Teachers Salary Schedule. Certified position allotments shall not be transferred to dollars to hire the same type of position.
 - (5c) Funds allocated for school building administration may be converted for any purpose authorized by the policies of the State Board of Education. For funds related to principal positions, the salary transferred shall be based on the first step of the Base column of the Principal Salary Schedule. For funds related to assistant principal months of employment, the salary transferred shall be based on the first step of the "A" Teachers Salary Schedule at the salary level for assistant principals. Certified position allotments shall not be transferred to dollars to hire the same type of position.
 - (5d) No positions shall be transferred out of the allocation for program enhancement teachers for kindergarten through fifth grade except as provided in this subdivision. Positions allocated for program enhancement teachers for kindergarten through fifth grade may be converted into positions allocated for classroom teachers for kindergarten through twelfth grade. For the purposes of this subdivision, the term "program enhancement" is as defined in G.S. 115C-301(c2).

- (6) through (9) Repealed by Session Laws 2013-360, s. 8.14, effective July 1, 2013.
- (10) Funds to carry out the elements of the Excellent Public Schools Act that are contained in Section 7A.1 of S.L. 2012-142 shall not be transferred.
- (10a) No funds shall be transferred out of the limited English proficiency allotment category.
- (11) No funds shall be transferred into or out of the driver education allotment category.
- (12) Funds allotted for textbooks and digital resources may only be used for the purchase of textbooks and digital resources. These funds shall not be transferred out of the allotment for any other purpose.

(c) To ensure that parents, educators, and the general public are informed on how State funds have been used to address local educational priorities, each local school administrative unit shall publish information from the prior fiscal year on its Web site by October 15 of each year, as follows:

- (1) A description of each program report code, written in plain English, and a summary of the prior fiscal year's expenditure of State funds within each program report code.
- (2) A description of each object code within a program report code, written in plain English, and a summary of the prior fiscal year's expenditure of State funds for each object code.
- (3) A description of each allotment transfer that increased or decreased the initial allotment amount by more than five percent (5%), including all of the following information:
 - a. The amount of the transfer.
 - b. The allotment category into which the funds were transferred.
 - c. The purpose code for the funds following the transfer.
 - d. A description of any teacher positions fully or partially funded as a result of the transfer, including all subject areas taught by the teacher in the position.
 - e. The educational priorities that necessitated the transfer.
- (4) Repealed by Session Laws 2017-57, s. 7.13(b), effective July 1, 2018.
- (5) A chart that clearly reflects how the local school administrative unit spent State funds.

(d) The local school administrative unit shall maintain information published pursuant to subsection (c) of this section on its Web site for at least three years after it is published.

(e) No later than December 1 of each year, the Department of Public Instruction shall collect the information reported by local school administrative units pursuant to subsection (c) of this section and report the aggregated information, including available data from the two previous fiscal years, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the Fiscal Research Division. The report shall also include information on the use of the budget flexibility provided to Advanced Teaching Roles schools pursuant to G.S. 115C-311(j). (1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 716, s. 3; 1996, 2nd Ex. Sess., c. 18, ss. 18.24(h)-(k); 1998-212, s. 9.20(b); 1999-237, s. 8.25(c); 2001-424, s. 28.22; 2005-276, s. 7.22(a); 2006-69, s. 3(b); 2011-145, s. 7.13(g); 2011-391, s. 14(b); 2013-360, s. 8.14; 2015-241, ss. 8.33, 8.39(c), 8.47(a); 2016-94, ss. 8.5, 8.16; 2017-57, ss. 7.1(b), 7.2(b), 7.12, 7.13(a), (b), 7.23J(a), 8.3(d); 2017-197, s. 2.4; 2018-2, s. 4(a), (b); 2018-5, ss. 7.11(a), 8.2(g); 2019-247, s. 2.3(f); 2020-78, s. 2.6(c).)

§ 115C-105.26. Waivers of State laws or rules.

(a) 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. If permitted under this section, a request for a waiver by a local board of education shall (i) identify the school or schools making the request, (ii) identify the State law or rule requesting to be waived, (iii) set out with specificity the circumstances under which the waiver may be used, and (iv) explain how the requested waiver will permit the school to improve student performance.

(b) The State Board of Education may grant waivers to local boards of education of State laws and rules pertaining to the following:

- (1) Class size requirements only as provided in G.S. 115C-301(g).

(2) Repealed by Session Laws 2015-241, s. 8A.6(a), effective July 1, 2015.

(3) 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).

(c) through (e) Repealed by Session Laws 2015-241, s. 8A.6(a), effective July 1, 2015.

(f) The State Board shall act within 60 days of receipt of all requests for waivers under this section.

(g) 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.

(h) By October 15 of each year, the State Board shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee with a list of the specific waivers granted to each local board of education under this section. The State Board may include any legislative recommendations identified under subsection (g) of this section in its report. (1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 716, s. 3; 1999-237, s. 8.25(b); 2006-153, s. 2; 2011-145, s. 7.13(h); 2011-391, s. 14(b); 2013-360, s. 9.7(a); 2015-241, s. 8A.6(a).)

§ 115C-105.27. Development and approval of school improvement plans.

(a) School Improvement Team. - The principal of each school, representatives of the assistant principals, instructional personnel, instructional support personnel, and teacher assistants assigned to the school building, and parents of children enrolled in the school shall constitute a school improvement team. The team shall develop a school improvement plan to improve student performance.

Representatives of the assistant principals, instructional personnel, instructional support personnel, and teacher assistants shall be elected by their respective groups by secret ballot.

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; therefore, 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.

(a1) Open Meetings. - School improvement team meetings are subject to the open meetings requirements of Article 33C of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes. Deliberations on the school safety components of the plan shall be in closed session in accordance with G.S. 143-318.11(a)(8). The principal shall ensure that these requirements are met.

(a2) Public Records. - 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.

(b) School Improvement Plan. - In order to improve student performance, the school improvement team at each school shall develop a school improvement plan that takes into consideration the annual performance goal for that school that is set by the State Board under G.S. 115C-105.35 and the goals set out in the mission statement for the public schools adopted by the State Board of Education. All 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 such as Algebra I. School improvement plans shall contain clear, unambiguous targets, explicit indicators and actual measures, and expeditious time frames for meeting the measurement standards.

The strategies for improving student performance:

(1) Shall include a plan for the use of staff development funds that may be made available to the school by the local board of education to implement the school improvement

plan. The plan may provide that a portion of these funds is used for mentor training and for release time and substitute teachers while mentors and teachers mentored are meeting;

- (1a) Repealed by Session Laws 2012-142, s. 7A.1(c), effective July 2, 2012.
- (2) Shall include a plan to address school safety and discipline concerns;
- (3) May include a decision to use State funds in accordance with G.S. 115C-105.25;
- (4) 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;
- (5) May include requests for waivers of State laws, rules, or policies for that school. A request for a waiver shall meet the requirements of G.S. 115C-105.26;
- (6) 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; and
- (7) 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]
- (8) 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.

(c) School Vote on the Plan. - Support among affected staff members is essential to successful implementation of a school improvement plan to address improved student performance at that school. 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 who voted on the plan.

(c1) Consideration of the School Safety Components of the Plan. - The superintendent shall review the school safety components of the school improvement plans and make written recommendations on them to the local board of education. Prior to a vote to accept a school's improvement plan in accordance with G.S. 115C-105.27(d), the local board of education shall review the school safety components of the plan for that school in closed session. The board shall make findings on the safety components of the plan. Neither the safety components of the plan nor the board's findings on the safety components of the plan shall be set out in the minutes of the board.

(d) Adoption of the Plan. - The local board of education shall accept or reject the school improvement plan. The local board shall not make any substantive changes in any school improvement plan that it accepts. If the local board rejects a school improvement plan, the local board shall state with specificity its reasons for rejecting the plan; the school improvement team may then prepare another plan, present it to the principals, 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 to accept or reject. If no school improvement plan is accepted for a school within 60 days after its 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 State Board 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 that process, then 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.

(e) Effective Period of the Plan. - A school improvement plan shall remain in effect for no more than two years; 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 at a school, the local board may vacate the relevant portion of the plan and may direct the school to revise that portion. The procedures set out in this subsection shall apply to amendments and revisions to school improvement plans.

(f) **Elimination of Other Unnecessary Plans.** - If a local board of education finds that a school improvement plan adequately covers another plan that the local school administrative unit is otherwise required to prepare, the local school administrative unit shall not be required to prepare an additional plan on the matter.

(g) **Compliance With Requirements.** - Any employee, parent, or other interested individual or organization is encouraged to notify the principal of any concerns regarding compliance with this section. 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 upon request provide a written response to the concern. (1989, c. 778, s. 3; 1991 (Reg. Sess., 1992), c. 900, s. 75.1(b); 1993, c. 38, s. 1; c. 263, s. 2; c. 321, s. 144.2(b); 1995, c. 272, s. 3; c. 450, s. 13; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 716, ss. 2, 3; 1997-159, s. 1; 1997-443, s. 8.29(r)(2); 1999-271, s. 1; 1999-397, s. 1; 2000-67, s. 8.1; 2001-424, s. 28.30(c); 2006-153, s. 1; 2009-223, s. 2; 2010-110, s. 1; 2011-145, s. 7.13(i), (x); 2011-379, s. 6(b); 2011-391, s. 14(b); 2012-77, s. 2; 2012-142, s. 7A.1(c); 2013-226, s. 11(a); 2013-360, s. 8.41(a).)

§§ 115C-105.28, 115C-105.29: Repealed by Session Laws 1995 (Regular Session, 1996), c. 716, s. 3.

§ 115C-105.30. Distribution of staff development funds.

Any funds the local board of education makes available to an individual school building to implement the school improvement plan at that school shall be used in accordance with that plan.

Each local board shall distribute seventy-five percent (75%) of the funds in the staff development funding allotment to the schools to be used in accordance with that school's school improvement plan. By October 1 of each year, the principal shall disclose to all affected personnel the total allocation of all funds available to the school for staff development and the superintendent shall disclose to all affected personnel the total allocation of all funds available at the system level for staff development. At the end of the fiscal year, the principal shall make available to all affected personnel a report of all disbursements from the building-level staff development funds, and the superintendent shall make available to all affected personnel a report of all disbursements at the system level of staff development funds. (1993, c. 321, s. 144.2(c); 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 716, ss. 2, 3; 2011-145, s. 7.13(j); 2011-391, s. 14(b).)

§ 115C-105.31: Repealed by Session Laws 2011-266, s. 1.18, effective July 1, 2011.

§ 115C-105.32. Parent involvement programs and conflict resolution programs as part of school improvement plans.

A school is encouraged to include a comprehensive parent involvement program as part of its school improvement plan under G.S. 115C-105.27. The State Board of Education shall develop a list of recommended strategies that it determines to be effective, which building level committees may use to establish parent involvement programs designed to meet the specific needs of their schools. The Board shall make the list available to local school administrative units and school buildings by the beginning of the 1994-95 school year.

A school is encouraged to review its need for a comprehensive conflict resolution program as part of the development of its school improvement plan under G.S. 115C-105.27. If a school determines that this program is needed, it may select from the list developed by the State Board of Education under G.S. 115C-81.15 or may develop its own materials and curricula to be approved by the local board of education. (1993, c. 509, ss. 2, 3; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 716, ss. 2, 3; 2011-145, s. 7.13(l); 2011-391, s. 14(b); 2017-126, s. 13.)

§ 115C-105.33. Safe and orderly schools.

A school improvement team or a parent organization at a school may ask the local board of education to provide assistance in promoting or restoring safety and an orderly learning environment at a school. The school improvement team or parent organization shall file a copy of this request with the State Board. If the local board fails to provide adequate assistance to the school, then the school improvement team or parent organization may ask the State Board to provide an assistance team to the school.

The State Board may provide an assistance team, established under G.S. 115C-105.38, to a school in order to promote or restore safety and an orderly learning environment at that school if one of the following applies:

(1) The local board of education or superintendent requests that the State Board provide an assistance team to a school and the State Board determines that the school needs assistance.

(2) The State Board determines within 10 days after its receipt of the request for assistance from a school improvement team or parent organization of a school that the school needs assistance and that the local board has failed to provide adequate assistance to that school.

If an assistance team is assigned to a school under this section, the team shall spend a sufficient amount of time at the school to assess the problems at the school, assist school personnel with resolving those problems, and work with school personnel and others to develop a long-term plan for restoring and maintaining safety and an orderly learning environment at the school. The assistance team also shall make recommendations to the local board of education and the superintendent on actions the board and the superintendent should consider taking to resolve problems at the school. These recommendations shall be in writing and are public records. If an assistance team is assigned to a school under this section, the powers given to the State Board and the assistance team under G.S. 115C-105.38 and G.S. 115C-105.39 shall apply as if the school had been identified as low-performing under this Article. (1997-443, s. 8.29(a)(2); 2011-145, s. 7.13(m); 2011-391, s. 14(b).)

§ 115C-105.34. Reserved for future codification purposes.

Part 3. School-Based Accountability.

§ 115C-105.35. Annual performance goals.

(a) The School-Based Management and Accountability Program shall (i) focus on student performance in the basics of reading, mathematics, and communications skills in elementary and middle schools, (ii) focus on student performance in courses required for graduation and on other measures required by the State Board in the high schools, and (iii) hold schools accountable for the educational growth of their students. To those ends, the State Board shall design and implement an accountability system that sets annual performance standards for each school in the State in order to measure the growth in performance of the students in each individual school.

(b) For purposes of this Article, the State Board shall include a "closing the achievement gap" component in its measurement of educational growth in student performance for each school. The "closing the achievement gap" component shall measure and compare the performance of each subgroup in a school's population to ensure that all subgroups as identified by the State Board are meeting State standards.

(c) Repealed by Session Laws 2015-241, s. 8A.4(a), effective July 1, 2015. (1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 716, s. 3; 2001-424, s. 28.30(a); 2003-284, s. 7.40(c); 2004-124, s. 7.12(a); 2015-241, ss. 8.25(d), 8A.4(a).)

§ 115C-105.36: Repealed by Session Laws 2015-65, s. 1.2, effective June 11, 2015.

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

(a) 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 earn an overall 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 earned an overall 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 earned.

(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.

(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); 2017-57, s. 7.26(f).)

§ 115C-105.37A. Continually low-performing schools; definition; assistance and intervention; reassignment of students.

(a) Definition of Continually Low-Performing Schools. - A continually low-performing school is a school that has received State-mandated assistance and has been designated by the State Board as low performing for at least two of three consecutive years. If the State Board identifies a school as continually low performing:

(1) The school improvement team at that school shall review its school improvement plan to ensure consistency with the plan adopted pursuant to G.S. 115C-105.38(b)(3), and

(2) The plan must be reviewed and approved by the State Board of Education.

(b) Assistance to Schools That Are Low Performing for Two Years. - If a school that has received State-mandated assistance is designated by the State Board as low performing for two consecutive years or for two of three consecutive years, the State Board shall provide a series of progressive assistance and intervention strategies to that school. These strategies shall be designed to improve student achievement and to maintain student achievement at appropriate levels and may include, to the extent that funds are available for this purpose, assistance such as reductions in class size, extension of teacher and assistant principal contracts, extension of the instructional year, and grant-based assistance.

(c) Intervention in Schools That Are Low Performing for Three or More Years. - The State Board of Education shall develop and implement a series of actions for providing assistance and intervention to schools that have previously received State-mandated assistance and have been designated by the State Board as low performing for three or more consecutive years or for at least three out of four years. These actions shall be the least intrusive actions that are consistent with the need to improve student achievement at each such school and shall be adapted to the unique characteristics of each such school and the effectiveness of other actions developed or implemented to improve student achievement at each such school.

(d) The State Board of Education shall report annually to the Superintendent of the North Carolina Innovative School District on any schools identified under this section as qualifying schools as defined in G.S. 115C-75.5 for consideration to be selected as innovative schools in accordance with Article 7A of this Chapter. (2001-424, s. 29.3; 2009-223, s. 3; 2011-145, s. 7.13(n); 2011-391, s. 14(b); 2016-110, s. 2; 2017-57, s. 7.26E(b), (f); 2018-145, s. 27(b).)

§ 115C-105.37B. Reform of continually low-performing schools.

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Article, the State Board of Education is authorized to approve a local board of education's request to reform any school in its administrative unit which the State Board of Education has identified as one of the continually low-performing schools in North Carolina.

If the State Board of Education approves a local board of education's request to reform a school, the State Board of Education may authorize the local board of education to adopt one of the following models in accordance with State Board of Education requirements:

(1) Transformation model, which would address the following four specific areas critical to transforming a continually low-performing school:

- a. Developing and increasing teacher and school leader effectiveness.
- b. Comprehensive instructional reform strategies.
- c. Increasing learning time and creating community-oriented schools.
- d. Providing operational flexibility and sustained support.

(2) Restart model, in which the State Board of Education would authorize the local board of education to operate the school with the same exemptions from statutes and rules as a charter school authorized under Article 14A of this Chapter, or under the management of an educational management organization that has been selected through a rigorous review process. A school operated under this subdivision remains under the control of the local board of education, and employees assigned to the school are employees of the local school administrative unit with the protections provided by Part 3 of Article 22 of this Chapter.

(3) Turnaround model, which would involve, among other actions, replacing the principal, if the principal has been in that position for at least three years, and rehiring no more than fifty percent (50%) of the school's staff, adopting a new governance structure at the school consistent with this Article, and implementing an instructional program aligned with the Standard Course of Study.

(4) School closure model, in which a local school administrative unit would close the school consistent with G.S. 115C-72 and enroll the students who attended the school in other, higher-achieving schools in the local school administrative unit consistent with Article 25 of this Chapter.

(b) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to develop requirements for the models for school reform established in subsection (a) of this section.

(c) The State Board shall establish a procedure to implement this section. This procedure shall include annual reporting requirements from local boards that are authorized to use one of the models under this section and shall include a procedure for removing or continuing the authorization.

(d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the authority of a local board of education as otherwise provided in this Chapter. (2010-1, s. 1; 2011-164, s. 2(b); 2013-360, s. 9.7(b); 2014-101, s. 7.)

§ 115C-105.38. Assistance teams; review by State Board.

(a) The State Board of Education may assign an assistance team to any school identified as low-performing under this Article or to any other school that requests an assistance team and that the State Board determines would benefit from an assistance team. The State Board shall give priority to low-performing schools in which the educational performance of the students is declining. The Department of Public Instruction shall, with the approval of the State Board, provide staff as needed and requested by an assistance team.

(b) When assigned to an identified low-performing school, an assistance team shall:

- (1) Review and investigate all facets of school operations and assist in developing recommendations for improving student performance at that school.
- (2) Evaluate at least semiannually the personnel assigned to the school and make findings and recommendations concerning their performance.
- (3) Collaborate with school staff, central offices, and local boards of education in the design, implementation, and monitoring of a plan that, if fully implemented, can reasonably be expected to alleviate problems and improve student performance at that school.
- (4) Make recommendations as the school develops and implements this plan.
- (5) Review the school's progress.
- (6) Report, as appropriate, to the local board of education, the community, and the State Board on the school's progress. If an assistance team determines that an accepted school improvement plan developed under G.S. 115C-105.27 is impeding student performance at a school, the team may recommend to the local board that it vacate the relevant portions of that plan and direct the school to revise those portions.

(b1) Report to the State Board of Education if a school and its local board of education are not responsive to the team's recommendations. A copy of that report shall be made available to the local board, and the local board shall have an opportunity to respond. Notwithstanding G.S. 115C-36 and other provisions of this Chapter, if the State Board confirms that the school and local board have failed to take appropriate steps to improve student performance at that school, the State Board shall assume all powers and duties previously conferred upon that local board and that school and shall have general control and supervision of all matters pertaining to that school until student performance at the school meets or exceeds the standards set for the school. The State Board may, as it considers appropriate, delegate any powers and duties to that local board or school before the school meets or exceeds those standards.

(c) If a school fails to improve student performance after assistance is provided under this section, the assistance team may recommend that the assistance continues or that the State Board take further action under G.S. 115C-105.39.

(d) The State Board shall annually review the progress made in identified low-performing schools. (1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 716, s. 3; 2002-178, s. 7; 2011-145, s. 7.13(o); 2011-391, s. 14(b).)

§ 115C-105.38A. Teacher competency assurance.

(a) General Knowledge Test. -

(1) Each assistance team assigned to a low-performing school during the 1997-98 school year shall review the team's evaluations of certified staff members to determine which staff members have been designated by the team as Category 3 teachers. The assistance team shall then determine whether lack of general knowledge contributed to the Category 3 designation. If the assistance team determines that a certified staff member's lack of general knowledge contributed to that staff member being designated as a Category 3 teacher, the assistance team shall submit the staff member's name to the State Board. Upon receipt of the notification, the State Board shall require that the certified staff members identified by the assistance teams demonstrate their general knowledge by acquiring a passing score on a test designated by the State Board. The State Board shall administer the general knowledge test required under this subdivision at the end of the 1997-98 school year.

(2) During the 1998-99 school year and thereafter, either the principal assigned to a low-performing school or the assistance team assigned to a low-performing school may recommend to the State Board that a certified staff member take a general knowledge test. A principal or an assistance team may make this recommendation if the principal or the assistance team determines that the certified staff member's performance is impaired by the staff member's lack of general knowledge. After receipt of the notification, but prior to the end of the fiscal year, the State Board shall require that all certified staff members identified under this subdivision demonstrate their general knowledge by acquiring a passing score on a test designated by the State Board.

(b) Repealed by Session Laws 1998-5, s. 1, effective June 9, 1998.

(c) Remediation. - Certified staff members who do not acquire a passing score on the test required under subsection (a) of this section shall engage in a remediation plan based upon the deficiencies identified by the test, or an assistance team, or a principal. The remediation plan for deficiencies of individual certified staff members shall consist of up to a semester of university or community college training or coursework or other similar activity to correct the deficiency. The remediation shall be developed by the State Board of Education in consultation with the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina. The State Board shall reimburse the institution providing the remediation any tuition and fees incurred under this section. If the remediation plan requires that the staff member engage in a full-time course of study or training, the staff member shall be considered on leave with pay.

(d) Retesting; Dismissal. - Upon completion of the remediation plan required under subsection (c) of this section, the licensed staff member shall take the general knowledge test a second time. If the licensed staff member fails to acquire a passing score on the second test, the State Board shall begin a dismissal proceeding under G.S. 115C-325(q)(2a) or G.S. 115C-325.13.

(e) Repealed by Session Laws 1998-5, s. 1, effective June 9, 1998.

(f) Other Actions Not Precluded. - Nothing in this section shall be construed to restrict or postpone the following actions:

(1) The dismissal of a principal under G.S. 115C-325.12.

(2) The dismissal of a teacher, assistant principal, director, or supervisor under G.S. 115C-325(q)(2) or G.S. 115C-325.13.

(3) The dismissal or demotion of an employee for any of the grounds listed under G.S. 115C-325(e) or G.S. 115C-325.4.

(4) The nonrenewal of a school administrator's or teacher's contract of employment.

(5) Repealed by Session Laws 2013-360, s. 9.7(c), effective July 1, 2014.

(g) Repealed by Session Laws 1998-5, s. 1, effective June 9, 1998. (1997-221, s. 3(a); 1998-5, s. 1; 2013-360, ss. 9.7(c), (o); 2017-157, s. 2(n).)

§ 115C-105.39. Dismissal or removal of personnel; appointment of interim superintendent.

(a) Within 30 days of the initial identification of a school as low-performing by the State Board under G.S. 115C-105.37(a), the superintendent shall take one of the following actions concerning the school's principal: (i) recommend to the local board that the principal be retained in the same position, (ii) recommend to the local board that the principal be retained in the same position and a plan of remediation should be developed, (iii) recommend to the local board that the principal be transferred, or (iv) proceed under G.S. 115C-325.4 to dismiss or demote the principal. The superintendent may only recommend a principal be retained in the same position without a plan for remediation if the principal has been at the school for less than two years or, in the case of a principal having been at the school for two years or more, if the school has both met student growth and has improved student achievement scores under G.S. 115C-83.15 for the prior school year. The principal shall not be transferred to another principal position unless (i) it is in a school classification in which the principal previously demonstrated at least 2 years of success, (ii) there is a plan to evaluate and provide remediation to the principal for at least one year following the transfer to assure the principal does not impede student performance at the school to which the principal is being transferred; and (iii) the parents of the students at the school to which the principal is being transferred are notified. The principal shall not be transferred to another low-performing school in the local school administrative unit. If the superintendent intends to recommend demotion or dismissal, the superintendent shall notify the local board. Within 15 days of (i) receiving notification that the superintendent intends to proceed under G.S. 115C-325.4 or (ii) its decision concerning the superintendent's recommendation, but no later than September 30, the local board shall submit to the State Board a written notice of the action taken and the basis for that action. If the State Board does not assign an assistance team to that school or if the State Board assigns an assistance team to that school and the superintendent proceeds under G.S. 115C-325.4 to dismiss or demote the principal, then the State Board shall take no further action. If the State Board assigns an assistance team to the school and the superintendent is not proceeding under G.S. 115C-325.4 to dismiss or demote the principal, then the State Board shall vote to accept, reject, or modify the local board's recommendations. The State Board shall notify the local board of its action within five days. If the State Board rejects or modifies the local board's recommendations and does not recommend dismissal of the principal, the State Board's notification shall include recommended action concerning the principal's assignment or terms of employment. Upon receipt of the State Board's notification, the local board shall implement the State Board's recommended action concerning the principal's assignment or terms of employment unless the local board asks the State Board to reconsider that recommendation. The State Board shall provide an opportunity

for the local board to be heard before the State Board acts on the local board's request for a reconsideration. The State Board shall vote to affirm or modify its original recommended action and shall notify the local board of its action within five days. Upon receipt of the State Board's notification, the local board shall implement the State Board's final recommended action concerning the principal's assignment or terms of employment. If the State Board rejects or modifies the local board's action and recommends dismissal of the principal, the State Board shall proceed under G.S. 115C-325.12.

(b) The State Board shall proceed under G.S. 115C-325(q)(2) or G.S. 115C-325.13 for the dismissal of teachers, assistant principals, directors, and supervisors assigned to a school identified as low-performing in accordance with G.S. 115C-325(q)(2) or G.S. 115C-325.13.

(c) The State Board may appoint an interim superintendent in a local school administrative unit:

(1) Upon the identification of more than half the schools in that unit as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.37; or

(2) Upon the recommendation from an assistance team assigned to a school located in that unit that has been identified as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.37. This recommendation shall be based upon a finding that the superintendent has failed to cooperate with the assistance team or has otherwise hindered that school's ability to improve.

The State Board may assign any of the powers and duties of the local superintendent and the local finance officer to the interim superintendent that the Board considers are necessary or appropriate to improve student performance in the local school administrative unit. The interim superintendent shall perform all of these assigned powers and duties. The State Board of Education may terminate the contract of any local superintendent entered into on or after July 1, 1996, when it appoints an interim superintendent. The Administrative Procedure Act shall apply to that decision. Neither party to that contract is entitled to damages.

(d) In the event the State Board has appointed an interim superintendent and the State Board determines that the local board of education has failed to cooperate with the interim superintendent or has otherwise hindered the ability to improve student performance in that local school administrative unit or in a school in that unit, the State Board may suspend any of the powers and duties of the local board of education that the State Board considers are necessary or appropriate to improve student performance in the local school administrative unit. The State Board shall perform all of these assigned powers and duties for a period of time to be specified by the State Board.

(e) If the State Board suspends any of the powers and duties of the local board of education under subsection (d) of this section and subsequently determines it is necessary to change the governance of the local school administrative unit in order to improve student performance, the State Board may recommend this change to the General Assembly, which shall consider, at its next session, the future governance of the identified local school administrative unit. (1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 716, s. 3; 1998-59, s. 2; 2013-360, ss. 9.7(d), (p); 2016-94, s. 8.31(a); 2017-157, s. 2(n).)

§ 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 earned an overall 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. The plan shall also include specific strategies to improve early childhood learning along with measurable goals.

(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 earned an overall 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.

(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 earned an overall 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 overall school performance grade and school growth score the school earned and an explanation of the school performance grades and school growth scores. (2015-241, s. 8A.4(c); 2017-57, s. 7.26(g); 2020-55, s. 1.)

§ 115C-105.40. Student academic performance standards.

The State Board of Education shall develop a plan to create rigorous student academic performance standards for kindergarten through eighth grade and student academic performance standards for courses in grades 9-12. The performance standards shall align, whenever possible, with the student academic performance standards developed for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The plan also shall include clear and understandable methods of reporting individual student academic performance to parents. (1997-221, s. 3(e).)

§ 115C-105.41. Students who have been placed at risk of academic failure and transition plans.

(a) In order to implement Part 1A of Article 8 of this Chapter, local school administrative units shall identify students who are at risk for academic failure and who are not successfully progressing toward grade promotion and graduation, beginning in kindergarten. Identification shall occur as early as can reasonably be done and can be based on grades, observations, diagnostic and formative assessments, State assessments, and other factors,

including reading on grade level, that impact student performance that teachers and administrators consider appropriate, without having to await the results of end-of-grade or end-of-course tests.

(b) 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. (2001-424, s. 28.17(e); 2009-542, s. 1; 2010-162, s. 1; 2011-145, s. 7.13(ee); 2011-391, s. 14(a); 2012-77, s. 4; 2012-142, s. 7A.1(d); 2013-226, s. 2; 2015-46, s. 1.)

§ 115C-105.42. Reserved for future codification purposes.

§ 115C-105.43. Reserved for future codification purposes.

§ 115C-105.44. Reserved for future codification purposes.

APPENDIX B - CHAPTER 143, ARTICLE 33C, NC GENERAL STATUTES

Go to <https://www.ncleg.gov/> to view NC Bills and Laws

Direct Link: [Chapter 143 - Article 33C](#)

Article 33C.

Meetings of Public Bodies.

§ 143-318.9. Public policy.

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. Remote meetings conducted in accordance with G.S. 166A-19.24 shall comply with this subsection even if all members of the public body are participating remotely.

(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; 2020-3, s. 4.31(b).)

§ 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, or to discuss matters relating to military installation closure or realignment. Any 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, character, fitness, appointment, or removal of a member of the public body or another 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 or to formulate and adopt the school safety components of school improvement plans by a local board of education or a school improvement team.

(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.

(10) To view a recording released pursuant to G.S. 132-1.4A.

(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; 2013-360, s. 8.41(b); 2014-79, s. 9(a); 2016-88, s. 3.)

§ 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.

If a public body changes its schedule of regular meetings, it shall cause the revised schedule 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 service's, 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.

(d) Except as provided in G.S. 166A-19.24(b)(6), this section shall not apply to remote meetings conducted in accordance with this section even if all members of the public body are participating remotely. (1979, c. 655, s. 1; 2020-3, s. 4.31(c).)

§ 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, and G.S. 166A-19.24. (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; 2020-3, s. 4.31(d).)

§ 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:

- (1) The extent to which the violation affected the substance of the challenged action;
- (2) The extent to which the violation thwarted or impaired access to meetings or proceedings that the public had a right to attend;
- (3) The extent to which the violation prevented or impaired public knowledge or understanding of the people's business;
- (4) Whether the violation was an isolated occurrence, or was a part of a continuing pattern of violations of this Article by the public body;
- (5) 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;
- (6) 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 any of the following:

- (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 that 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 these 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 the 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 the 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.
- (9) Repealed by Session Laws 1991, c. 694, s. 9.
- (10) Repealed by Session Laws 2013-234, s. 10, effective July 3, 2013.
- (11) The General Court of Justice. (1979, c. 655, s. 1; 1985, c. 757, s. 206(e); 1991, c. 694, s. 9; 2006-184, s. 6; 2006-203, s. 95; 2010-171, s. 5; 2013-234, s. 10; 2021-88, s. 13.)

APPENDIX C – NC STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN

Direct link: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/media/13261/open>

The North Carolina State Board of Education sets policy and general procedures for public school systems across the state, including teacher pay and qualifications, course content, testing requirements, and manages state education funds.

Vision: Every public school student in North Carolina will be empowered to accept academic challenges, prepared to pursue their chosen path after graduating high school, and encouraged to become lifelong learners with the capacity to engage in a globally-collaborative society.

Mission: The mission of the North Carolina State Board of Education is to use its constitutional authority to guard and maintain the right of a sound, basic education for every child in North Carolina Public Schools.

Goals	Objectives
Goal I Eliminate opportunity gaps by 2025	<p>Objective 1 - Decrease the number of exclusionary discipline practices by subgroup (suspensions and expulsions)</p> <p>Objective 2-Improve school climate measures across all schools and grade levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Component 1 - Increase the number of school-based mental health professionals. • Component 2 - Increase opportunities to develop healthy habits in students • Component 3 - Increase the number of schools and districts utilizing innovative "Breakfast After the Bell, Summer Meals, and At-Risk Afterschool Meals" programs to keep students fed, healthy and engaged <p>Objective 3 - Increase percentage of 4-year old children enrolled in state Pre-K from 22% to 34% (above the current national average)</p> <p>Objective 4 - Decrease the high school dropout rate for each subgroup</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Component 1-Increase average composite score on state-mandated college entrance exam • Component 2-Increase access, readiness, and attainment of early postsecondary opportunities (EPSOs), such as AP, IB, CTE, dual credit/enrollment, work-based learning, apprenticeships <p>Objective 5 - Decrease number of students taking remedial courses in college</p> <p>Objective 6 - Increase the number of educators of color in schools across North Carolina</p> <p>Objective 7 - Increase the number of charter schools providing equitable access to economically disadvantaged students or reflecting the LEA in which they are located</p>

<p>Goal II</p> <p>Improve school and district performance by 2025</p>	<p>Objective 1 - Allocate financial, business and technology resources according to State and Federal laws and State Board of Education policies</p> <p>Objective 2 - Increase the percentage of grades 3-8 math and ELA EOG subgroup test scores meeting the ESSA Yearly Measures of Interim Progress</p> <p>Objective 3 - Increase the percentage of students proficient in math by subgroup</p> <p>Objective 4 - Increase the percentage of students proficient in reading by the end of 3rd grade</p> <p>Objective 5 - Increase the percentage of high school reading subgroup test scores meeting the ESSA Yearly Measures of Interim Progress</p> <p>Objective 6 - Increase the percentage of students proficient in science by subgroup</p> <p>Objective 7 - Increase number of schools meeting or exceeding growth measure by subgroup</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Component 1-Increase the percentage of schools with charter-like flexibilities (Innovative Schools, Innovation Zones, Restart Schools, Renewal School Districts, Lab Schools) meeting or exceeding annual expected growth <p>Objective 8 - Increase the number of charter schools meeting or exceeding academic, operational, and financial goals</p> <p>Objective 9 - Increase the number of qualified and well-prepared principals in every school</p>
<p>Goal III</p> <p>Increase educator preparedness to meet the needs of every student by 2025</p>	<p>Objective 1 - Increase the number of culturally-relevant, equity-focused resources for educators</p> <p>Objective 2 - Increase the number of mentors available to beginning educators</p> <p>Objective 3 - Strengthen relationships between educator preparation programs (EPPs), districts, and schools to foster collaboration and better teaching practice</p> <p>Objective 4 - Increase opportunities for educator engagement inside and outside of school</p>

* NC State Board of Education 2025 Statewide Strategic Plan 8/8/2019 - 9/30/2025

APPENDIX D - NCDPI COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT SCHOOL RUBRIC

Direct link to documents on DPI site: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/districts-schools-support/district-and-regional-support/diagnostic-services>

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

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

- What are the most effective practices/programs the school implements to increase student achievement across subgroups?
- Which subgroups are particular foci for improvement at this time?
- What practices are being used to identify students who are experiencing difficulty, and what is being done to assist them?
- What processes are in place to identify underrepresented student groups in advanced classes (e.g., AIG, Honors, AP)?
- What opportunities are available to meet the needs of high-achieving students (e.g., skipping grades, earning college transfer credits)?

Attendance

- How is student attendance monitored?
- How are attendance patterns identified, and how are problems addressed?

Retention/Promotion/Graduation Rates

- How are issues that keep students from advancing to the next grade level or graduating identified and addressed?
- How does the promotion/graduation/retention rate vary across different student subgroups?
- 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			
<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Frequently evaluates the effectiveness of implemented practices/programs to improve student achievement across all subgroups.</i> 	<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Regularly evaluates the effectiveness of implemented practices/programs to improve student achievement across all subgroups.</i> 	<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Inconsistently evaluates the effectiveness of implemented practices/programs to improve student achievement across targeted subgroups.</i> 	<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Seldom/never evaluates the effectiveness of implemented practices/programs to improve student achievement.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently provides focused support to all subgroups and accelerates the progress of all subgroups with responsive support plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly provides focused support to most subgroups and accelerates the progress of targeted subgroups with responsive support plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides some focused support for remediation of some subgroups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides little support for the performance of subgroups.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Has an effective process in place to identify and provide extensive support to students experiencing difficulty meeting standards.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Has an established process to identify and provide support to students experiencing difficulty meeting standards.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Inconsistently identifies and provides limited targeted support to students experiencing difficulty meeting standards.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Has no formal process in place to identify and does not provide support to students experiencing difficulty meeting standards.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently monitors the participation of underrepresented groups in advanced classes and aggressively recruits students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly monitors the participation of underrepresented groups in advanced classes and deliberately recruits students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistently monitors participation of underrepresented groups in advanced classes with limited student recruitment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely monitors the participation of underrepresented groups in advanced classes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Offers consistent, high-quality opportunities that extend learning for high-performing students.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Offers a variety of opportunities that extend learning for high-performing students.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Offers limited opportunities that extend learning for high-performing students.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Offers no opportunities that extend learning for high-performing students.</i>
Attendance			
<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematically monitors attendance, dropout rates, and promotion/graduation rates to identify trends. 	<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently monitors attendance, dropout rates, and promotion/graduation rates. 	<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasionally monitors attendance, dropout rates, and promotion/graduation rates. 	<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely or never monitors attendance, dropout rates, and promotion/graduation rates.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Frequently and systematically facilitates the early identification of students with attendance problems and provides support for both families and students.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Regularly facilitates the early identification of students with attendance problems and provides some support for both families and students.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Occasionally facilitates the early identification of students with attendance problems and rarely provides support for families and students.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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			
<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides intervention strategies before, during, and after school for students who are at-risk for not meeting grade-level benchmarks or graduation requirements. 	<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides some intervention strategies during and/or after school for students who are at-risk for not meeting grade level benchmarks or graduation requirements. 	<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides few interventions for students who are at-risk for not meeting grade-level benchmarks or graduation requirements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages in strategies to assure that the needs of students of differing cultures, abilities, and primary languages are taken into account in class placement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has tracking practices that exist in the school, yet some efforts are in place to ensure equity in class placement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has tracking practices that exist in the school, and there are no efforts to ensure equity in class placement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematically monitors promotion and graduation rates and identifies trends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly monitors promotion and graduation rates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasionally monitors promotion and graduation rates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely or never monitors promotion and graduation rates.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implements a plan that includes all core and non-core teachers in supporting students at-risk of retention or not meeting graduation requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a plan that includes most teachers in supporting students at-risk of retention or not meeting graduation requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a plan that includes a few teachers in supporting students at-risk of retention or not meeting graduation requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has no defined plan for involving teachers in supporting students at-risk of retention or not meeting graduation requirements.

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.
• Consistently utilizes the time of counselors for appropriate direct work with all students.	• Often utilizes the time of counselors for appropriate direct work with all students.	• Uses counselors in some roles that limits time for appropriate direct work with students.	• Uses counselors in roles that minimize time for appropriate direct work with students.
• 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.
• Supports student nutrition and health through effectively operating processes and programs.	• Supports student nutrition and health through processes and programs.	• Offers some programs to support student nutrition and health.	• Offers limited support for student nutrition and health.
• 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.
• Develops and implements consistent, intentional, ongoing plans to support student transitions from grade to grade and level to level.	• Develops and implements adequate plans to support student transitions from grade to grade and level to level.	• Implements minimal plans to support student transitions from grade to grade and level to level.	• Has no intentional plan to support student transitions from grade to grade and level to level.

• Develops and frequently implements effective plans that facilitate vertical articulation and transitions.	• Regularly implements plans that facilitate regular vertical articulation and transitions.	• Inconsistently implements some plans that facilitate vertical articulation and transitions.	• Provides no clear plans to facilitate vertical 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
<p>Leadership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively involves all stakeholder groups and uses all available data in developing the School Improvement Plan. 	<p>Leadership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves many stakeholders in using data from several sources in developing the School Improvement Plan. 	<p>Leadership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves select stakeholders in using data in developing the School Improvement Plan. 	<p>Leadership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not involve stakeholders in developing the School Improvement Plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customizes structures and strategies to meet the needs of all student populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitates structures and strategies to meet the needs of most student populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides some oversight for structures and strategies to meet the needs of some student populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides little to no oversight for strategies implemented to address the needs of its student populations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently facilitates a successful process for monitoring, revising, and implementing the School Improvement Plan with shared responsibilities for all stakeholder groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitates a process for monitoring, revising, and implementing the School Improvement Plan with primary responsibility shared with the school improvement team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informs staff of necessary changes in the School Improvement Plan with little collaboration to ensure support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides no clear system for ensuring support for school changes as outlined in the School Improvement Plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains a consistent process for ensuring that the school's vision and mission drive decisions and inform the culture of the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains a process for periodically reviewing the school's vision and mission to drive decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains a process for periodically reviewing the school's vision and mission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has no process for reviewing the school's vision and mission.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively utilizes the School Improvement Plan to drive the change process and ensure continual support with shared responsibility for all stakeholder groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilizes the School Improvement Plan to drive the change process and ensure continual support with shared responsibility for most staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides periodic review and revision of the School Improvement Plan with shared responsibility for limited staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has no process for annual review of the School Improvement Plan.

• Effectively utilizes appropriate data to evaluate program effectiveness and to inform and prioritize action plans.	• Utilizes appropriate data to evaluate program effectiveness and to inform and prioritize action plans.	• Utilizes some data other than summative state assessments to inform school action plans.	• Limits data sources and bases decisions primarily on state 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frequently maintains high visibility within the school and among school staff with a systematic process for providing feedback to improve teaching and learning.	Leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducts both formal and informal classroom visits with a process for providing developmental feedback to teachers.	Leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Occasionally visits classrooms for purposes beyond staff evaluation with inconsistent or limited feedback to teachers.	Leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Effectively communicates the need for change in an understandable and transparent way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicates the need for change so that it is mostly understandable and transparent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicates the need for change that is somewhat understandable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are frequently, strategically implemented and collaboratively designed, shared, and evaluated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are regularly developed utilizing processes and schedules that facilitate the collaborative design, sharing, and evaluation of professional growth opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are inconsistently developed utilizing some processes or schedules that facilitate some collaboration or sharing of professional growth opportunities with little or no evaluation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.
• Establishes a systematic and transparent process for reviewing and allocating resources to most effectively support school needs.	• Establishes a systematic process for reviewing and allocating resources to support school needs.	• Has a plan for reviewing and/or allocating resources but does not systematically utilize the plan to support school needs.	• Has no clearly-developed system for reviewing and allocating resources from year to year.
• 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.
• Aggressively seeks funding in addition to base local and state allocations.	• Seeks funding in addition to base local and state allocations.	• Occasionally seeks funding in addition to base and state allocations.	• Does not actively seek funding beyond base local and state allocations.
• 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.
• Maximizes instructional time and quality instruction to support the mission of the school.	• Effectively aligns instructional time with student needs across grades and departments.	• Aligns instructional time with student needs in some but not all grade levels or departments.	• Lacks alignment of instructional time with student needs.
• 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			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that the school and grounds are exceptionally clean, well maintained, and safe. 	School leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that the school and grounds are clean, well maintained, and safe. 	School leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that some areas of the school and grounds are clean, well maintained, and safe. 	School leadership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not ensure that the school and grounds are clean, well maintained, and safe.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently implements a process to determine and acquire necessary instructional technology to support 21st century instructional practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determines and acquires adequate instructional technology to support 21st century instructional practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquires some instructional technology to support 21st century instructional practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has no plan to acquire instructional technology to support 21st century instructional practices.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a system of sustained professional development for staff in the innovative application of technology for planning, instructional delivery, record keeping, and communications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides ongoing professional development for staff in the application of technology for planning, instructional delivery, record keeping, and communications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides some professional development for staff in the basic applications of technology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates a welcoming environment where all families and visitors are greeted and assisted.	The school: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates an environment where most families and visitors feel welcome.	The school: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has a designated welcoming area for families and visitors and creates an environment where some families feel welcome.	The school: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has no welcoming area nor makes any effort to welcome families or visitors.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Proactively requests familial feedback and incorporates feedback into school decisions.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Provides opportunities to collect familial feedback/input on school instruction and operations with some consideration for school decisions.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Provides family engagement activities mostly limited to large school events, family/teacher conferences, and teacher phone calls home.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Provides little to no family engagement.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides a broad spectrum of forums for two-way communication with families through school report cards, meetings, announcements, newsletters, and a consistently updated website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides opportunities for timely, two-way communication with families through school report cards, newsletters, and a frequently updated website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicates with families by newsletters, school report card, and an occasionally updated website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has no clear system to provide families with required school report card information or other timely communication such as newsletters.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Maintains clear policies and processes for researching and applying best practice, familial engagement strategies and activities.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Has developed policies and procedures for engaging families in student academic performance and school operations.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Infrequently engages in discussions with families regarding student academic performance and/or school operations.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <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
<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently engages in strategies, policies, and procedures for partnering with local businesses, community organizations, and other agencies to meet the needs of the school. 	<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly implements strategies for partnering with local businesses, community organizations, and other agencies to meet the needs of the school. 	<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks established strategies, policies, and procedures for partnering with local businesses, community organizations, and other agencies to meet the needs of the school.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <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> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Provides opportunities for timely, two-way communication with the community through announcements, school status reports, and a frequently updated website.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Infrequently communicates with the community through a website and other media.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has no clear system for ongoing communication with the community.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively devotes appropriate financial resources and personnel to community partnership efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devotes financial resources and part-time personnel resources to community engagement efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devotes limited financial and no personnel resources to community engagement efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks devoted financial and/or human resources for community engagement efforts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Frequently monitors effectiveness of community engagement efforts and uses results to improve future school improvement efforts.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Regularly monitors effectiveness of community engagement efforts with some results incorporated into school improvement efforts.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Informally collects community feedback and monitors effectiveness of community engagement efforts.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <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 – FAM-S “FACILITATED ASSESSMENT OF MTSS - SCHOOL LEVEL”

Rationale & Background

It is the vision of North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NC DPI) that every NC Pre K-12 public education system implements and sustains all components of a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). The NC FAM-S measures school-level implementation of NC MTSS. The purpose of administration and its resulting data is to help school and district-level personnel identify and prioritize implementation steps. The instrument contains 41 items across the six critical components of MTSS Implementation: Leadership, Building Capacity/Implementation Infrastructure, Communication and Collaboration, Problem Solving Process, Multiple Tiers of Instruction and Intervention Model, and Data/Evaluation.

Most items in the NC FAM-S were originally developed and validated in Florida as part of the Self-Assessment of MTSS (SAM). North Carolina began using the items in 2016 after a diverse group of educational professionals examined each item to determine its accuracy and validity for use in North Carolina. In 2018, stakeholders from the NC MTSS Consortium as well as a group of identified content experts from across the state again reviewed and revised the instrument to include essential features from both NC MTSS professional development and Positive Behavior Intervention and Support. This review panel included institutes of higher education professionals as well as district and school level practitioners. The revised instrument, released in 2019, provides the field with an integrated tool which assesses the breadth and depth of academic, behavior, and social and emotional supports.

Recommended Use

The FAM-S is intended to be used within a **facilitated administration** setting which would allow the district personnel to review evidence to support the school team's proposed score. NC DPI recommends an annual facilitated administration between April and June. The facilitated administration should be led by the district MTSS/PBIS Coordinator and/or another member of the District MTSS Team. The instrument can be used at any time as an implementation self-report and guide for school leadership teams.

FAM-S Administration

Prior to Administration

The FAM-S facilitator should schedule 1.5 - 2 hours for facilitation of the tool with the school MTSS team. Prior to facilitating administration, the school MTSS team should be provided with a copy of the FAM-S and EACH member should review the item descriptors independently and provide a personal response to each item.

During

During the Facilitated Administration (including all school MTSS team members & designated facilitator from the district MTSS team)

Each item will be reviewed, and the school MTSS team members will come to a consensus on a response for each item. The facilitator will assist the school MTSS team in determining appropriate evidence for each item. The facilitator will enter each response in the FAM-S scoring system. Total scores for the facilitated administration will produce a percentage for each critical component, as well as an overall percentage. Upon completion of scoring, the facilitator will assist the school MTSS team in using the data to plan the school's next steps for MTSS implementation.

After

The district MTSS team will examine data from each administration site to identify district-wide trends and patterns and use the data to inform district-wide professional development and coaching.

Item 1	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
The principal is actively involved in and facilitates MTSS implementation .	The principal does not actively support MTSS.	The principal is actively involved in MTSS implementation by communicating an urgent desire to implement MTSS, participating in professional development on MTSS, and establishing an MTSS vision.	The principal actively supports the leadership team and staff to build capacity for implementation.	The principal actively supports data-based problem solving use at the school.

Related Notes

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

- Promoting a school-wide vision and mission for MTSS implementation, including the development and dissemination of a school-wide implementation and sustainability plan that outlines attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional areas.
- Allocating resources (e.g., time, personnel, materials) for 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.
- Ensuring communication loops between district and school teams.

Problem Solving refers to a multi-step process that includes:

- Problem Identification (examining performance related to goals/expectations),
- Problem Analysis (understanding variables causing problems),
- Plan Implementation (selecting/designing and implementing strategies to lessen barriers and achieve goals), and
- Plan Evaluation (monitoring effectiveness and adjusting plans).

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- School Improvement Plan shows evidence of MTSS systems and practices
- Agendas and meeting rosters showing evidences of principal participation
- PD plan(s) with MTSS systems and practices showing principal involvement
- Staff/student handbook with evidence of MTSS practices

Item 2	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
A leadership team is established that includes 5 to 7 members, has cross-disciplinary representation , and is responsible for facilitating MTSS implementation .	No leadership team with explicit responsibility for leading MTSS implementation exists.	A leadership team exists that includes cross-disciplinary representation.	The leadership team has explicit expectations for facilitating MTSS implementation.	The leadership team members have the beliefs, knowledge, and skills to lead implementation efforts.

Related Notes

At the school level, a school-based **leadership team** should guide implementation of an 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. If it is separate, there should be clear alignment of the MTSS implementation plan with the overall goals and action steps within the school improvement plan.

Cross-disciplinary representation may include administration, teachers, content area experts, student support personnel, instructional support personnel, exceptional children staff, individuals with expertise in behavior and social and emotional skills, and student and family representation when appropriate.

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

- Promoting a school-wide vision and mission for MTSS implementation, including the development and dissemination of a school-wide implementation and sustainability plan that outlines attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional areas.
- Allocating resources (e.g., time, personnel, materials) for 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.
- Ensuring communication loops between district and school teams.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Leadership team roster and roles
- Leadership team meeting agendas/minutes
- Leadership team's participation in professional learning opportunities

Item 3	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2)	Optimizing (3)
A linked teaming structure exists that facilitates the implementation of a multi-tiered system of support for attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional support.	No linked teaming structure exists.	1 of the following:	2-3 of the following:	all of the following:
		A linked teaming structure exists that demonstrates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams meet regularly and have regular meeting formats/agendas, minutes, and defined meeting roles. • Team members have expertise in the area being problem solved, administrative authority, knowledge of the student(s), and knowledge of the school operations. • Team members include family, community, and multi-agency support when appropriate. • District or school contact person(s) with access to external support agencies and resources for planning and implementing non-school-based interventions (e.g., intensive mental health) when appropriate. 		

Related Notes

A **linked teaming structure** refers to the teams in a school charged with implementation of MTSS. Multiple teams at a school may be charged with implementation of MTSS (e.g., school leadership team, school improvement team, grade-level teams). A formal communication protocol between teams and overlapping membership across teams exists.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Team rosters and roles
- Teams' meeting agendas/minutes
- Formal communication plan
- School organizational chart
- Meeting role descriptions

Item 4	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
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The leadership team ensures staff are actively engaged in ongoing professional development and coaching necessary to support MTSS implementation .	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.	A professional development plan is created based on the needs assessment and used to engage staff in ongoing professional development and coaching.	Ongoing professional development activities are informed by data collected on the outcomes of professional development and coaching for continuous improvement.
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Related Notes

Professional development is defined as purposeful, skill-based, and uses adult learning theory processes designed to support teachers and staff in acquiring the skills and information needed to begin using a new program or innovation (NIRN, 2019).

Coaching is technical assistance and support provided to school staff to improve implementation of components of an MTSS, 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 & Gaunt, 2013).

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

- Promoting a school-wide vision and mission for MTSS implementation, including the development and dissemination of a school-wide implementation and sustainability plan that outlines attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional areas.
- Allocating resources (e.g., time, personnel, materials) for 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.
- Ensuring communication loops between district and school teams.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Professional development and coaching plan
- Professional development roster(s)
- Needs assessment
- Professional development and coaching evaluation data
- Coaching follow-up meeting notes
- Staff handbook

Item 5	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
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A plan for MTSS implementation is developed and aligned with or part of the school improvement plan.	No plan for MTSS implementation exists.	The leadership team is engaging district, family, and community partners to identify stakeholder needs, as well as resources for and barriers to MTSS implementation.	As part of the school improvement planning process, a plan is developed that specifies MTSS implementation.	A plan for MTSS implementation is updated, as needed based on student outcome and implementation fidelity data, as part of the school improvement planning process.
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Related Notes

At the school level, a school-based **leadership team** should guide implementation of an 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. If it is separate, there should be clear alignment of the MTSS implementation plan with the overall goals and action steps within the school improvement plan.

A **school MTSS Plan** addresses the following components (at a minimum):

- Communication and collaboration strategies
- Capacity building targets and activities
- Evidence that it is informed by implementation data sources and student outcome data sources
- Plans to refine implementation based on data and feedback

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- MTSS implementation/strategic plan with alignment to or as a part of the School Improvement Plan
- Leadership team meeting agenda/minutes
- Implementation fidelity data

Item 6	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
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The leadership team is actively facilitating implementation of MTSS as part of their school improvement planning process.	The leadership team is not actively engaging in efforts to facilitate MTSS implementation.	The leadership team engages in planning and has created a plan to facilitate implementation of the essential elements of MTSS.	The leadership team provides support to educators implementing the essential elements of MTSS identified in the plan.	The leadership team uses data on implementation fidelity of the essential elements of MTSS to engage in data-based problem solving for the purpose of continuous school improvement.
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Related Notes

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 set 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

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

- Promoting a school-wide vision and mission for MTSS implementation, including the development and dissemination of a school-wide implementation and sustainability plan that outlines attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional areas.
- Allocating resources (e.g., time, personnel, materials) for 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.
- Ensuring communication loops between district and school teams.

The MTSS framework comprises **four essential elements**: screening, progress monitoring, three-tiered instructional/intervention model, and data-based decision.

- A three-tiered instructional model of integrated academic, behavioral, and social and emotional instructional and intervention supports that are evidence-based and culturally and linguistically responsive.
- Screening is generally conducted three times a year to identify the effectiveness of core instruction and to identify students who may be at risk for poor outcomes and need additional academic, behavioral, and social and emotional supports.
- Progress monitoring uses valid and reliable tools and processes to assess performance, quantify improvement or responsiveness to intervention and instruction, and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction, interventions, and supports.
- Data-based decision making includes data analysis and problem solving through teaming to make decisions about instruction, intervention, and implementation (American Institutes for Research, 2021).

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- School improvement plan with evidence (direct language or components explicitly mentioned) of MTSS
- Professional development plan
- Implementation fidelity data

Item 7	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
The essential elements of MTSS implementation are defined and understood by school staff.	No information on the essential elements of the school's MTSS is available.	The essential elements of MTSS are in the process of being defined.	The essential elements of MTSS are defined and communicated to school staff.	The curriculum, assessment, and instructional practices that define the school's essential elements of MTSS can be communicated by all school staff.

Related Notes

The MTSS framework comprises **four essential elements**: screening, progress monitoring, three-tiered instructional/intervention model, and data-based decision.

- A three-tiered instructional model of integrated academic, behavioral, and social and emotional instructional and intervention supports that are evidence-based and culturally and linguistically responsive.
- Screening is generally conducted three times a year to identify the effectiveness of core instruction and to identify students who may be at risk for poor outcomes and need additional academic, behavioral, and social and emotional supports.
- Progress monitoring uses valid and reliable tools and processes to assess performance, quantify improvement or responsiveness to intervention and instruction, and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction, interventions, and supports.
- Data-based decision making includes data analysis and problem solving through teaming to make decisions about instruction, intervention, and implementation (American Institutes for Research, 2021).

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

- Promoting a school-wide vision and mission for MTSS implementation, including the development and dissemination of a school-wide implementation and sustainability plan that outlines attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional areas.
- Allocating resources (e.g., time, personnel, materials) for 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.
- Ensuring communication loops between district and school teams.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Common instructional framework for academics and behavior
- At least 10% of staff members can define critical aspect of a tier and a content area (e.g., "Tell me one critical aspect of Core, Supplemental, or Intensive instruction for literacy, math or behavior at your school.")
- Formal comprehensive assessment system

Item 8	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
The leadership team ensures professional development and coaching for all staff members on assessments and data sources used to inform decisions relative to job roles and responsibilities.	Initial professional development is not provided to all staff members.	The staff engages in initial, job-embedded professional development focusing on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purpose and administration of assessment tools, • role of assessment/data sources in making instructional decisions, • analyzing and using assessment results to improve instruction, • using various types of data to inform instructional practices to meet the needs of diverse learners, and • communicating and partnering with families about data and assessment practices. 	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 the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes or updates to assessments/data sources, • changes to data collection, tracking and analysis, and • ongoing coaching on instructional practices and interpreting assessment results 	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 continuous improvement.

Related Notes

Professional development is defined as purposeful, skill-based, and uses adult learning theory processes designed to support teachers and staff in acquiring the skills and information needed to begin using a new program or innovation (NIRN, 2019).

Coaching is technical assistance and support provided to school staff to improve implementation of components of an MTSS, 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 & Gaunt, 2013).

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- 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 evaluation data

Item 9	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
The leadership team ensures professional development and coaching for staff members on data-based problem solving relative to their job roles/responsibilities.	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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> rationale for use of data-based problem solving, problem-solving steps to address school-wide, classroom, small-group, and individual student needs, and roles and responsibilities for team members engaging in data-based problem solving. 	Ongoing professional development and coaching on data-based problem solving is delivered and includes the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> differentiation of professional development based on staff roles/responsibilities, coaching, modeling, practice, and collaborative feedback on problem-solving steps, and support for collaboration and teaming skills. 	Data on use of problem-solving skills and application are used to inform continuous improvement of professional development and coaching efforts.

Related Notes

Professional development is defined as purposeful, skill-based, and uses adult learning theory processes designed to support teachers and staff in acquiring the skills and information needed to begin using a new program or innovation (NIRN, 2019).

Coaching is technical assistance and support provided to school staff to improve implementation of components of an MTSS, 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 & Gaunt, 2013).

Problem Solving refers to a multi-step process that includes:

- Problem Identification (examining performance related to goals/expectations),
- Problem Analysis (understanding variables causing problems),
- Plan Implementation (selecting/designing and implementing strategies to lessen barriers and achieve goals), and
- Plan Evaluation (monitoring effectiveness and adjusting plans).

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Professional development plan/calendar that includes training content on assessments, data sources, data-based problem-solving
- PLC/Grade level/Department team agendas that include professional learning on assessments, data sources, data-based problem-solving
- Other evidence of coaching or PD specific to job roles/responsibilities on assessments and data sources
- Staff handbook

Item 10	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
The leadership team ensures professional development and coaching for all staff on multi-tiered instruction and intervention relative to their job roles/responsibilities.	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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rationale for and modeling of instruction and intervention design and delivery, • alignment/integration between the practices and MTSS, • guidance around data informed instruction design and delivery, as well as intervention design and delivery, that ensures optimal learning opportunities for all sub-groups of students, and • orientation on the essential behavioral practices of teaching school-wide expectations, acknowledging appropriate behavior, correcting errors. 	Ongoing professional development and coaching on multi-tiered instruction and intervention is provided that includes the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • differentiation of professional development and coaching based on staff roles/responsibilities, • on-going coaching, and • modeling of, practice of, and collaborative feedback on, evidence-based practices. 	The leadership team regularly uses data on student needs and implementation fidelity of evidence-based practices to continuously improve professional development and coaching efforts.

Related Notes

Professional development is defined as purposeful, skill-based, and uses adult learning theory processes designed to support teachers and staff in acquiring the skills and information needed to begin using a new program or innovation (NIRN, 2019).

Coaching is technical assistance and support provided to school staff to improve implementation of components of an MTSS, 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 & Gaunt, 2013).

Multi-tiered instruction and intervention refers to the concepts of multiple layers of support for staff and students as well as the specifics of core and intervention support which may be found in the district/school core and intervention matrices.

Instruction and intervention design and delivery includes factors such as standards, instructional routines, universal behavior supports, lesson planning for active student engagement.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 Implementation fidelity data Staff handbook, lesson plans for teacher professional development 				
Item 11	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
Coaching is used to support MTSS implementation .	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.	Coaching activities are expanded to include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> opportunities to practice and collaborative and performance feedback. 	Data on professional development, implementation fidelity, and student outcomes are used to refine coaching activities.

Related Notes

<p>Coaching is technical assistance and support provided to school staff to improve implementation of components of an MTSS, 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 & Gaunt, 2013).</p> <p>Responsibilities for facilitating MTSS implementation are not limited to, but can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting a school-wide vision and mission for MTSS implementation, including the development and dissemination of a school-wide implementation and sustainability plan that outlines attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional areas. Allocating resources (e.g., time, personnel, materials) for 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. Ensuring communication loops between district and school teams.
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Examples of Supporting Evidence

- 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 evidencing coaching opportunities
- Professional development and coaching evaluation data
- Implementation fidelity data

Item 12	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
Schedules provide adequate time for professional development and coaching support.	Schedules do NOT include time allocated to professional development and coaching for MTSS.	Schedules include time allocated to professional development	Schedules include time for ongoing coaching support	Schedules permit personnel to access additional professional development and coaching support that is differentiated based on their needs.

Related Notes

Schedules refer to both the year-long schedule of activities that may include professional development and coaching, universal screening/benchmark assessments, and data analysis. Schedules also refer to on-going (e.g., weekly) activities related to professional development and coaching, assessment, and data analysis.

Coaching is technical assistance and support provided to school staff to improve implementation of components of an MTSS, 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 & Gaunt, 2013).

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Master schedule has time provided for PD and coaching
- PLC/Grade level/Department agendas evidence coaching support/coaching opportunities
- PD calendar

Item 13	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
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Schedules provide adequate time for professional development and coaching support.	Schedules do NOT include time allocated to professional development and coaching for MTSS.	Schedules include time allocated to professional development	Schedules include time for ongoing coaching support	Schedules permit personnel to access additional professional development and coaching support that is differentiated based on their needs.
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Related Notes

Schedules refer to both the year-long schedule of activities that may include professional development and coaching, universal screening/benchmark assessments, and data analysis. Schedules also refer to on-going (e.g., weekly) activities related to professional development and coaching, assessment, and data analysis.

Comprehensive behavior assessments include screening (e.g. major and minor office discipline referrals), diagnostic (e.g. functional behavior assessments), and progress monitoring measures. Screening data is reviewed at an aggregate school and/or grade level first to assess effectiveness of core before analyzing group and/or individual student data. The monitoring of student progress with an intervention should be matched with the area of concern. Teams will want to consider monitoring frequency, duration, intensity, and latency recording.

Social and emotional assessments measure and quantify students' level of social and emotional competence. These measures most often include self-report, rating scales, and surveys (CASEL, 2019). SEL assessment data are reviewed at an aggregate school and/or grade level first to assess effectiveness of core and make adjustments to core support before analyzing group and/or individual student data.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Master schedule or master calendar with time for data collection included
- Assessment calendar
- Progress monitoring fidelity data

Item 14	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
The master schedule provides adequate time for multiple tiers of evidence-based instruction and intervention to occur.	The master schedule is developed without consideration of 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.	The master schedule facilitates effective implementation of multi-tiered interventions matched to student needs by area and intensity (core, supplemental, intensive).	The master schedule allows for flexible student groupings.

Related Notes

The **master schedule** refers to allocation of resources daily (e.g., staff, time). The master schedule may also include on-going/weekly activities such as time for staff to engage in problem solving and data analysis.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Master schedule with evidence of intervention/instruction time based on needs of school population (adequate time for Core, Supplemental and Intensive)

Item 15	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
The master schedule provides adequate time for staff to engage in collaborative, data-based problem solving and decision-making.	The master schedule does not provide opportunities for collaborative, data-based problem solving and decision-making among staff.	The master schedule provides opportunities to engage in collaborative, data-based problem solving and decision-making among staff.	The master schedule provides sufficient time for the process to occur with fidelity.	The master schedule provides opportunities for collaborative, data-based problem solving and decision making among staff to occur in settings such as leadership team meetings, grade-level meetings, cross grade-level meetings, professional learning communities.

Related Notes

The **master schedule** refers to allocation of resources daily (e.g., staff, time). The master schedule may also include on-going/weekly activities such as time for staff to engage in problem solving and data analysis.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Master schedule with evidence of data-based problem solving time reserved
- Meeting agendas/minutes (staff meetings, PLC meetings, etc.)

Item 16	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
Processes/procedures and decision-rules are established for data-based problem solving at each tier.	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.	The following are communicated to staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • steps of problem solving, • procedures for accessing, submitting, and using data, and • decision rules needed to make reliable decisions. 	Data-based problem solving processes/procedures and decision-rules are refined based on data and feedback from staff, schedule changes, and resource availability.

Related Notes

Data decision rules are formal procedures that inform actions around data. Some data decision rules can be extracted directly from research. There are times, however, when districts and schools may need to design their own rules based on best practice and their unique circumstances.

Within the context of MTSS, data decision rules guide thinking around the following questions:

- How will we determine if our Core support is effective for our population?
- How will we decide if students are at risk?
- How will we address student risk- Core, Supplemental or Intensive?
- How will we know Core support changes are working for our population?
- How will we determine that our interventions and intervention systems are effective?
- How will we determine if students receiving intervention are progressing?

Problem solving refers to a multi-step process that includes:

- Problem Identification (examining performance related to goals/expectations),
- Problem Analysis (understanding variables causing problems),
- Plan Implementation (selecting/designing and implementing strategies to lessen barriers and achieve goals), and
- Plan Evaluation (monitoring effectiveness and adjusting plans).

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- 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
- Staff feedback
- Staff handbook
- Clear policy/procedure (e.g., flowchart) for addressing office-managed versus staff-managed problems.

Item 17	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
Resources available to support MTSS implementation are identified and allocated.	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.	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.	Existing resource maps and resource allocations are updated at least annually based on student need, available personnel, funding, materials, and other resources.

Related Notes

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.

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

- Promoting a school-wide vision and mission for MTSS implementation, including the development and dissemination of a school-wide implementation and sustainability plan that outlines attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional areas.
- Allocating resources (e.g., time, personnel, materials) for 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.
- Ensuring communication loops between district and school teams.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Resource allocation documentation (i.e., maps, inventories, etc.)
- MTSS implementation plan
- School Improvement Plan

Item 18	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
Staff is engaged in consensus building activities for MTSS implementation.	Staff is not provided opportunities to gain understanding of the need for MTSS.	Staff is provided opportunities to gain understanding of the need for MTSS.	Staff has opportunities to gain understanding of its relevance to their roles and responsibilities.	Staff understands the need for MTSS and its relevance to their roles and responsibilities and has opportunities to provide input on how to implement MTSS.

Related Notes

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.

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.

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

- Promoting a school-wide vision and mission for MTSS implementation, including the development and dissemination of a school-wide implementation and sustainability plan that outlines attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional areas.
- Allocating resources (e.g., time, personnel, materials) for 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.
- Ensuring communication loops between district and school teams.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- NC Beliefs Survey results indicating consensus
- Agenda and minutes from meetings where data is discussed that indicates good staff representation in problem solving
- Professional development calendar
- Staff input/feedback, i.e. surveys
- Staff handbook

Item 19	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
Staff is provided data on MTSS implementation and student outcomes at all tiers.	Staff is not provided any data regarding MTSS implementation nor student outcomes.	Staff is provided data 1x/per year regarding MTSS implementation and student outcomes.	Staff is provided data 2x/per year regarding MTSS implementation and student outcomes.	Staff are regularly (≥3x/year) provided data regarding MTSS implementation and student outcomes.

Related Notes

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.

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

- Promoting a school-wide vision and mission for MTSS implementation, including the development and dissemination of a school-wide implementation and sustainability plan that outlines attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional areas.
- Allocating resources (e.g., time, personnel, materials) for 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.
- Ensuring communication loops between district and school teams.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- 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
- Student outcome data
- Implementation data (i.e., FAM-S results, % of students receiving intervention with fidelity, etc.)

Item 20	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2)	Optimizing (3)
	None of the following:	1 of the following:	2 of the following:	all of the following:

The infrastructure exists to support the school's goals for family and community engagement in MTSS.	Family and community engagement are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · defined and monitored with data · linked to school goals in MTSS plan · include documented procedures for facilitating 2-way communication
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Related Notes

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.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Intentional connection and involvement of families in School Improvement Planning · Family engagement plan/protocol for all populations · PTA documentation · Family and community engagement data (e.g., attendance at activities) · Family and community input surveys
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Item 21	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2)	Optimizing (3)
Educators actively engage students, families, and community stakeholders at all tiers of MTSS.	None of the following:	1 of the following:	2-3 of the following:	all of the following:
	Staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · engage students and families that represent the diverse population of the school · engage students and families in problem solving when their children need additional supports · provide intensive outreach to unresponsive families · increase the skills of families to support student learning 			

Related Notes

Intensive outreach to **unresponsive families** refers to additional activities undertaken by the school to engage families of students who need additional supports but are not engaging with the school's typical outreach practices (e.g., letters, phone calls, etc.) 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.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- 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
- Student/family handbook

Item 22	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
ACROSS ALL TIERS, integrated data-based problem solving for student attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional outcomes occurs across areas and grade levels.	Attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional data may be collected BUT integrated data-based problem solving by a team does not occur: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in 2 or more areas • in at least 50% of grade levels • at any tier. 	Integrated data-based problem solving by a team occurs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in at least 2 areas • in at least 50% of grade levels • at a single tier. 	Integrated data-based problem solving by a team occurs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in at least 3 areas • in at least 75% of grade levels • at least two tiers. 	Integrated data-based problem solving by a team occurs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • across all areas • in all grade levels • in all tiers.

Related Notes

Integrated data-based problem solving should occur:

- across attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional content areas (e.g., literacy, math) for a school)
- within and across grade levels (e.g., horizontal meetings for 6th, 7th, 8th, as well as vertical meetings), and
- 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]).

Examples of Supporting Evidence

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
- Multiple sources of data used
- School policy (TFI)
- Formal decision rules

Item 23	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
Problem Identification ACROSS ALL TIERS, multiple sources of data are used to identify the difference or "gap" between expected and current student outcomes relative to attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional goals.	The gap between expected and current student outcomes is NOT identified.	The gap between expected and current student outcomes is identified.	The gap between expected and current student outcomes is associated with specific attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional goals.	The data are used to identify the appropriate tier of instruction/ intervention (i.e., "Is the gap best remedied through core changes, supplemental intervention matching, intensive intervention matching or a combination of these?")

Related Notes

Rubric scoring example:

0 - There is a problem in reading in 4th grade.

1 - Reading appears to be a problem in 4th grade, only 47% of students met the benchmark on the universal screening. That is consistent with previous year's performance.

2 - 47% of students met the benchmark on the universal screening. That is consistent with previous year's performance.

We want 75 - 80% of students to meet the benchmark.

3 - 47% of students met the benchmark on the universal screening. That is consistent with previous year's performance.

We want 75 - 80% of students to meet the benchmark. This problem should be solved by making changes to our core instruction.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- 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
- Formal decision rules

Item 24	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
Problem Analysis ACROSS ALL TIERS, attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional data are used to analyze and hypothesize reasons students are not meeting expectations.	Hypotheses are not developed for why students are not meeting expectations.	Hypotheses are developed across relevant domains (instruction, curriculum, environment, and learner) for why students are not meeting expectations.	Hypotheses are tested using multiple sources of data and across relevant domains (instruction, curriculum, environment, and learner).	Problem analysis results in a precise problem statement.

Related Notes

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, environment (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.

Rubric Scoring Examples

- 1 - Only 47% of students met the reading universal screening benchmark due to lack of explicit comprehension and vocabulary instruction.
- 2 - Only 47% of students met the reading universal screening benchmark. From reviewing, interviewing, observing, we know that rate and accuracy appear intact and that our school-wide literacy plan does not emphasize vocabulary instruction and explicit comprehension instruction.
- 3 - From reviewing, interviewing, observing, we know that rate and accuracy appear intact and that our school-wide literacy plan does not emphasize vocabulary instruction and explicit comprehension instruction. Only 47% of students met the reading universal screening benchmark due to a lack of explicit comprehension and vocabulary instruction across grade levels.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- 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)

Item 25	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
Plan Implementation ACROSS ALL TIERS, specific instructional/intervention plans are developed and implemented based on verified reasons why students are not meeting attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional expectations.	Instructional/intervention plans are NOT developed.	Instructional/Intervention plans are developed based on verified reasons students are not meeting expectations.	Instructional/ intervention plans consistently specify what will be done, by whom, when, and where with enough detail to be implemented.	Specific instructional/intervention plans are implemented with fidelity.

Related Notes

Specific **instruction/intervention plans** may be found in the district/school core matrix and intervention matrix. Plans should include the following information:

- The goal of the intervention/action plan (e.g., SMART goal)
- 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 implemented
- 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

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- 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/intervention plans with corresponding information
- Instruction/intervention implementation fidelity data
- Random selection of student support plans

Item 26	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
Plan Evaluation ACROSS ALL TIERS, student progress specific to attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional goals are monitored (this includes progress towards IEP goals, DEP goals, LEP goals)	Progress monitoring does NOT occur, and student progress is NOT evaluated.	Plans for monitoring progress toward expected student outcomes are developed.	In most cases, data are collected to monitor student progress and intervention fidelity.	Changes are made to instruction/ intervention based on student responses.

Related Notes

Specific **instruction/intervention plans** may be found in the district/school core matrix and intervention matrix. Plans should include the following information:

- The goal of the intervention/action plan (e.g., SMART goal)
- 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 implemented
- 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

IEP - Individualized Education Program
DEP - Differentiated Education Plan
LEP - Limited English Proficiency

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- 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 assessments Intervention fidelity data
- Student progress monitoring data (e.g. % of students meeting goals)

Item 27	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
ACROSS ALL TIERS: Data-based problem solving includes regular analysis of performance of diverse groups across all areas.	Data is not collected on student performance across diverse groups.	Data on student performance across diverse groups is collected.	The patterns of student performance are identified across tiers of instruction.	Data on student outcomes is used in MTSS evaluation.

Related Notes

Integrated data-based problem solving should occur (1) across attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional content areas (e.g., literacy, math) for a school) (2) within and across grade levels (e.g., horizontal meetings for 6th, 7th, 8th, as well as vertical meetings), and (3) 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]).

Problem Solving refers to a multi-step process that includes:

- Problem Identification (examining performance related to goals/expectations),
- Problem Analysis (understanding variables causing problems),
- Plan Implementation (selecting/designing and implementing strategies to lessen barriers and achieve goals), and
- Plan Evaluation (monitoring effectiveness and adjusting plans).

Diverse groups include racial/ethnic, cultural, socio-economic, language proficiency, disability status

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- 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 with specific groups of students
- MTSS Implementation Plans document procedures aligned with model
- Observation of data-based problem solving occurring with fidelity

Item 28	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
Resources for and barriers to the implementation of MTSS are addressed through a data-based problem solving process.	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 <u>one</u> of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> collects data to assess implementation levels develops action plans to increase implementation 	School leadership discusses resources for and barriers to implementation of MTSS and does <u>both</u> of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> collects data to assess implementation levels develops action plans to increase implementation

Related Notes

Problem Solving refers to a multi-step process that includes:

- Problem Identification (examining performance related to goals/expectations),
- Problem Analysis (understanding variables causing problems),
- Plan Implementation (selecting/designing and implementing strategies to lessen barriers and achieve goals), and
- Plan Evaluation (monitoring effectiveness and adjusting plans).

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Resource allocation maps with evidence of data-based problem solving use
- School Improvement Plan with evidence of resources allocated to sustaining an MTSS
- MTSS implementation plan with evidence of data-based problem solving use
- Data-based problem solving meeting agendas/minutes
- Implementation fidelity data

Item 29	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2)	Optimizing (3)
Core academic practices exist that are defined across grade levels/spans	Core academic practices have not been defined across instruction,	1 of the following:	2-3 of the following:	all of the following:

and content areas by essential components of instruction, curriculum and environment (ICE). These are refined based on both student outcome and implementation data for continuous improvement.	curriculum and environment for all grade levels/spans and content areas.	Core academic practices have been defined by all grade levels/spans and content areas AND include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <u>Instruction</u> which includes specified design of culturally responsive instruction, practices for ensuring student engagement, opportunities for scaffolding, description of practice opportunities, etc. · <u>Curriculum</u> which includes materials/resources utilized, standards/goals addressed, defined scope/sequence of skills, etc. · <u>Environment</u> which includes grouping options, time (duration and frequency), behavioral expectations of students, etc. · Academic instruction which are defined in consideration of behavior and social and emotional instruction.
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Related Notes

Culturally responsive is an approach to teaching that makes meaningful connections between what students learn in school and their cultures, languages, and life experiences (Understood for All Inc., 2020).

Behavioral expectations can be defined as broad goals for student behavior that are positively stated and limited in number, typically no more than 3 to 5.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Core academic matrix · Instructional framework · Classroom walkthrough documents · Instructional plans · School Improvement Plans/MTSS implementation plans

Item 30	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2)	Optimizing (3)
Core behavior practices exist that are defined	Core behavior practices have not been defined	1 of the following:	2-3 of the following:	all of the following:

<p>schoolwide or across all grade levels/spans by essential components of instruction, curriculum and environment (ICE).</p> <p>These are refined based on both student outcome and implementation data for continuous improvement.</p>	<p>across instruction, curriculum and environment schoolwide or for all grade levels/spans.</p>	<p>Core behavior practices are defined at the school and/or grade level AND classroom level AND incorporate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Instruction</u> which includes culturally responsive design and delivery of explicit instruction for schoolwide behavior expectations and classroom rules, routines/procedures (e.g., classroom management) on an established schedule. • <u>Curriculum</u> which includes a matrix of school-wide behavioral expectations with operational definitions of expected behavior by setting (behavior matrix), student/staff acknowledgement system for appropriate behaviors, and a well-defined continuum of consequences for problem behaviors. • <u>Environment</u> which includes adult routines to promote success (i.e., active supervision, pre-corrects, clear definition of major/minor problem behaviors, consistent logical consequences, schedule for delivery of positive reinforcement, etc.). • Behavior practices which are defined in consideration of academic and social and emotional instruction.
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Related Notes

Culturally responsive is an approach to teaching that makes meaningful connections between what students learn in school and their cultures, languages, and life experiences (Understood for All Inc, 2020).

Behavioral expectations can be defined as broad goals for student behavior that are positively stated and limited in number, typically no more than 3 to 5.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Core behavior matrix
- Classroom walkthroughs
- School Improvement Plan
- Plans for classroom management
- Clear policy/procedure (e.g., flowchart) for addressing office-managed versus staff-managed problems.
- Behavior lesson plans
- Staff/student handbook
- School policy, code of conduct

Item 31	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2)	Optimizing (3)
Core social and emotional practices exist that are	Core social and emotional practices have not been	1 of the following:	2-3 of the following:	all of the following:

defined schoolwide or across all grade levels/spans by essential components of instruction, curriculum and environment (ICE). These are refined based on both student outcome and implementation data for continuous improvement.	defined across instruction, curriculum and environment schoolwide or for all grade levels/spans.	Core social and emotional practices are defined at the school and/or grade level AND incorporate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · <u>Instruction</u> which includes specified design and delivery of culturally responsive social and emotional skill instruction. · <u>Curriculum</u> which includes materials/resources utilized, standards/goals addressed (including social and emotional learning competencies). · <u>Environment</u> which includes grouping options, time (duration and frequency) of instruction and instructional delivery settings (i.e., within academic subject areas, separate time in the day, etc.). · Social and emotional practices which are defined in consideration of academic and behavior instruction.
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Related Notes

Culturally responsive is an approach to teaching that makes meaningful connections between what students learn in school and their cultures, languages, and life experiences (Understood for All Inc, 2020).

Social and emotional learning competencies include self-awareness, self- management, social-awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2020).

Examples of Supporting Evidence

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Core SEL matrix classroom walkthroughs · School Improvement Plan · Plans for SEL instruction · SEL lesson plans
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Item 32	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2)	Optimizing (3)
Supplemental academic practices exist that are defined across grade levels/spans and content areas by essential components of instruction,	Supplemental academic practices have not been defined across instruction, curriculum and environment for all grade levels/spans and content areas. All content areas and grade spans	1-3 of the following:	4-5 of the following:	all of the following:

<p>curriculum and environment (ICE).</p> <p>These practices are specified in standard treatment intervention protocols.</p> <p>These practices are refined based on both student outcome and implementation data for continuous improvement.</p>	<p>do not have a standard treatment protocol/intervention matrix linked to core instruction.</p>	<p>Across all grade spans/content areas, a supplemental level of support is defined within an intervention matrix with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Instruction</u> which includes explicit instruction, modeling, guided practice, independent practice and culturally responsive practices. • <u>Curriculum</u> which includes systematic sequence of skills with frequent formative assessment. • <u>Environment</u> which includes students grouped appropriately by targeted skill areas and size based on program recommendations. • Clear and consistently applied data decision rules for intervention entry/exit. • Defined methods of monitoring student progress. • Supplemental academic practices which are defined in consideration of core instruction and behavior and social emotional instruction.
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Related Notes

Standard treatment intervention protocol includes components that are well specified (i.e. use a protocol) and have been shown to work generally for large numbers of students (i.e. standard); well-defined procedures, materials and practices that allow quick access for students in need.

Culturally responsive is an approach to teaching that makes meaningful connections between what students learn in school and their cultures, languages, and life experiences. (Understood for All Inc., 2020).

Data decision rules are formal procedures that inform actions around data. Some data decision rules can be extracted directly from research. There are times, however, when districts and schools may need to design their own rules based on best practice and their unique circumstances.

Within the context of MTSS, data decision rules guide thinking around the following questions:

- How will we determine if our Core support is effective for our population?
- How will we decide if students are at risk?
- How will we address student risk- Core, Supplemental or Intensive?
- How will we know Core support changes are working for our population?
- How will we determine that our interventions and intervention systems are effective?
- How will we determine if students receiving intervention are progressing?

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Intervention protocols/Intervention matrices and data decision rules
- Supplemental intervention fidelity checks
- Supplemental problem solving documentation, random review of student support plans
- Progress-monitoring data on groups of students

Item 33	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2)	Optimizing (3)
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Supplemental behavior and social and emotional practices exist that are defined schoolwide or across grade levels/spans by essential components of instruction, curriculum and environment (ICE). These practices are specified in standard treatment intervention protocols . These practices are refined based on both student outcome and implementation data for continuous improvement.	Supplemental behavior and social and emotional practices have not been defined across instruction, curriculum and environment schoolwide or for all grade levels/spans. All content areas and grade spans do not have a standard treatment protocol or intervention matrix linked to core instruction.	1-3 of the following:	4-5 of the following:	all of the following:
		Schoolwide or across all grade spans/levels, a supplemental level of support is defined within an intervention matrix with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Instruction</u> which includes modeling, guided practice and independent practice across settings to encourage generalization, and culturally responsive practices that are matched to student need. • <u>Curriculum</u> which includes clear goals that include a systematic sequence of skills with frequent formative assessment. • <u>Environment</u> which includes students grouped appropriately by targeted skill areas and size based on program recommendations. • Clear and consistently applied data decision rules for intervention entry/exit. • Defined methods of monitoring student progress. • Supplemental behavior and social and emotional practices are defined in consideration of academic instruction. 		

Related Notes

Standard treatment intervention protocol includes components that are well specified (i.e. use a protocol) and have been shown to work generally for large numbers of students (i.e. standard); well-defined procedures, materials and practices that allow quick access for students in need.

Culturally responsive is an approach to teaching that makes meaningful connections between what students learn in school and their cultures, languages, and life experiences (Understood for All Inc., 2020).

Data decision rules are formal procedures that inform actions around data. Some data decision rules can be extracted directly from research. There are times, however, when districts and schools may need to design their own rules based on best practice and their unique circumstances.

Within the context of MTSS, data decision rules guide thinking around the following questions:

- How will we determine if our Core support is effective for our population?
- How will we decide if students are at risk?
- How will we address student risk- Core, Supplemental or Intensive?
- How will we know Core support changes are working for our population?
- How will we determine that our interventions and intervention systems are effective?
- How will we determine if students receiving intervention are progressing?

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Intervention matrix and data decision rules
- Supplemental intervention fidelity checks
- Supplemental problem solving documentation, random review of student support plans
- Progress-monitoring data on groups of students

Item 34	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2)	Optimizing (3)
<p>Intensive academic practices exist that are defined across grade levels/spans and content areas by essential components of instruction, curriculum, environment and learner (ICEL).</p> <p>These practices are specified in intervention protocols.</p> <p>These practices are refined based on both student outcome and implementation data for continuous improvement.</p>	<p>Intensive academic practices have not been defined across instruction, curriculum, environment and learner for all grade levels/spans and content areas. All content areas and grade spans do not have a protocol/intervention matrix.</p>	<p>1-3 of the following:</p>	<p>4-6 of the following:</p>	<p>all of the following:</p>
<p>Across all grade spans/content areas, an intensive level of support is defined within an intervention matrix with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Instruction</u> which includes explicit/direct instruction, repeated modeling, more intensive scaffolding, guided and independent practice, and culturally responsive practices. • <u>Curriculum</u> which includes systematic sequence of skills with frequent formative assessment. • <u>Environment</u> which includes students grouped appropriately by targeted skill areas and size based on program recommendations. • Diagnostic processes for individual learners to ensure appropriate curricular and instructional match as well as appropriate intensification. • Clear and consistently applied data decision rules for intervention entry/exit. • Defined methods of monitoring student progress. • Consideration of behavioral and social and emotional skill instruction/support. 				

Related Notes

Culturally responsive is an approach to teaching that makes meaningful connections between what students learn in school and their cultures, languages, and life experiences (Understood for All Inc., 2020).

Data decision rules are formal procedures that inform actions around data. Some data decision rules can be extracted directly from research. There are times, however, when districts and schools may need to design their own rules based on best practice and their unique circumstances.

Within the context of MTSS, data decision rules guide thinking around the following questions:

- How will we determine if our Core support is effective for our population?
- How will we decide if students are at risk?
- How will we address student risk- Core, Supplemental or Intensive?
- How will we know Core support changes are working for our population?
- How will we determine that our interventions and intervention systems are effective?
- How will we determine if students receiving intervention are progressing?

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Intervention matrix and data decision rules
- Intensive intervention fidelity checks
- Intensive problem solving documentation, random review of student support plans
- Progress-monitoring data/diagnostic data on individual students

Item 35	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2)	Optimizing (3)
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Intensive behavior/social and emotional practices exist that are defined across grade levels/spans and content areas by essential components of instruction, curriculum, environment and learner (ICEL).	Intensive behavior/social and emotional practices have not been defined across instruction, curriculum, environment and learner for all grade levels/spans and content areas. All content areas and grade spans do not have a protocol/intervention matrix.	1-3 of the following:	4-7 of the following:	all of the following:
These practices are specified in intervention protocols.		<p>Across all grade spans/content areas, an intensive level of support is defined within an intervention matrix with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Instruction</u> which includes culturally responsive strategies on preventing, teaching and responding to ensure skill generalization across multiple settings. • <u>Curriculum</u> which includes sequence of targeted skills with frequent formative assessment. • <u>Environment</u> which includes students grouped appropriately by targeted skill areas and size based on program recommendations, strategies for removing rewards for problem behaviors, specific rewards for desired behaviors, and safety elements where needed. • Diagnostic processes that include operational description of the problem behavior, identification of context where problem behavior is most likely to occur and maintaining reinforcers of problem behavior. • Clear and consistently applied data decision rules for intervention entry/exit. • Defined methods of monitoring student progress and assessing ongoing fidelity of implementation. • Family and/or community (may include mental health service provider) connection and two-way communication is specified with appropriate memorandums of understanding established with outside agencies. • Consideration of needed academic supports when appropriate. 		
These practices are refined based on both student outcome and implementation data for continuous improvement.				

Related Notes

Culturally responsive is an approach to teaching that makes meaningful connections between what students learn in school and their cultures, languages, and life experiences (Understood for All Inc., 2020).

Data decision rules are formal procedures that inform actions around data. Some data decision rules can be extracted directly from research. There are times, however, when districts and schools may need to design their own rules based on best practice and their unique circumstances.

Within the context of MTSS, data decision rules guide thinking around the following questions:

- How will we determine if our Core support is effective for our population?
- How will we decide if students are at risk?
- How will we address student risk- Core, Supplemental or Intensive?
- How will we know Core support changes are working for our population?
- How will we determine that our interventions and intervention systems are effective?
- How will we determine if students receiving intervention are progressing?

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Intervention matrix and data decision rules
- Supplemental intervention fidelity checks
- Supplemental problem solving documentation, random review of student support plans
- Progress-monitoring data on groups of students

Item 36	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
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<p>A comprehensive assessment system is established, and staff understand and have access to academic, behavior, and social and emotional data sources that address the following purposes of assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · inform instruction, · identify students who are at-risk, · determine why students are at-risk, · monitor student growth/progress, and · determine if outcomes are met. 	<p>Staff does not have access to and understand attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional data sources that address the purposes of assessment.</p>	<p>Staff understands the purposes of assessment within MTSS and the leadership team selects measures for the purposes of assessment across attendance, academic, behavior, and social and emotional areas that are reliable, valid and accessible, as well as culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate.</p>	<p>Staff engages in assessment with fidelity to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Inform instruction and intervention planning, · Identify students who are at-risk (at least 3-4 times/year), · Determine why students are at-risk, · Monitor student growth/progress, and · Determine if outcomes are met. 	<p>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.</p>
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Related Notes

NC MTSS outlines the use of a **comprehensive and efficient assessment system** that is balanced, uses multiple sources, and is culturally appropriate. At full implementation, this system measures critical areas in attendance, literacy (reading and writing), math, behavioral, and social and emotional functioning in a manner that eliminates redundancy and achieves a degree of uniformity across a school district. The data gathered is designed to allow effective problem solving at all tiers and across student groups. In a comprehensive assessment system, social and emotional learning data sources are used to examine and strengthen core instruction, not to identify individual student deficits.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Assessment plan (within or separate from MTSS implementation plan), Assessment inventory
- School Improvement Plan, student outcome data
- Screening results and use in identifying students at-risk
- Intervention plans
- Evaluation data

Item 37	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
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Policies and procedures for decision-making are established for the administration of assessments, access to existing data sources, and use of 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.	Staff consistently administer assessments, access data sources and make data-based decisions using policies and procedures for decision-making with fidelity.	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 adjust the policies.
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Related Notes

Data decision rules are formal procedures that inform actions around data. Some data decision rules can be extracted directly from research. There are times, however, when districts and schools may need to design their own rules based on best practice and their unique circumstances.

Within the context of MTSS, data decision rules guide thinking around the following questions:

- How will we determine if our Core support is effective for our population?
- How will we decide if students are at risk?
- How will we address student risk- Core, Supplemental or Intensive?
- How will we know Core support changes are working for our population?
- How will we determine that our interventions and intervention systems are effective?
- How will we determine if students receiving intervention are progressing?

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- Assessment inventory, calendar
- School Improvement Plan
- Progress-monitoring data
- Evaluation data
- Staff handbook
- School website, newsletter, policy

Item 38	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
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Effective data tools are used appropriately and independently by staff.	Staff does not have access to tools that efficiently provide data needed to answer problem solving questions for academics and behavior.	The leadership team ensures availability of tools that can track and graphically display academic, behavior, and social and emotional data, and staff is trained on the use of the tools, as well as on the responsibilities for data collection, entry, and management.	Staff uses the data tools and is provided assistance as needed.	Data tools are periodically assessed, and the necessary changes are made in order to improve functionality, efficiency, and usefulness. Also, staff is proficient and independent with data tools and can easily support new staff members.
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Examples of Supporting Evidence

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment plan (within or separate from implementation plan) • Graphing results • Professional development/coaching plans on data tools use
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Item 39	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
<p>Data sources are used to evaluate the implementation and impact of MTSS at least annually. Outcomes are shared with stakeholders.</p> <p>Evaluation should occur across:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All areas • All tiers <p>All diverse groups (e.g., racial/ethnic, cultural, socio-economic, language proficiency, disability status)</p>	No data sources to evaluate implementation of the essential elements of MTSS have been identified.	The leadership team has identified data sources that will be used to evaluate implementation of the essential elements of MTSS.	The leadership team uses data sources to evaluate implementation and to make systemic improvements to the essential elements of MTSS.	The leadership team periodically conducts analyses to determine how implementation of essential elements of MTSS relate to positive student outcomes.

Related Notes

Data sources include implementation and outcome data sources:

Implementation data sources are those pieces of data that examine the practices and programs being implemented across a district and/or schools. In the simplest terms, they measure what the adults are doing. These sources are helpful to determine if planned supports and adjustments are implemented as intended. Implementation data sources may include records of professional development, curriculum implementation, fidelity checks, classroom walkthroughs, master schedules, or FAM-S data.

Outcome data are data sources that measure student outcomes such as attendance, aggregate academic data (e.g., EOG, universal screening measures), and aggregate behavior data, obtained through the comprehensive assessment system.

Systemic improvements are those that impact multiple levels, reflect valuable changes to a system, and achieve the goal of increasing student outcomes.

The MTSS framework comprises **four essential elements**: screening, progress monitoring, three-tiered instructional/intervention model, and data-based decision.

- A three-tiered instructional model of integrated academic, behavioral, and social and emotional instructional and intervention supports that are evidence-based and culturally and linguistically responsive.
- Screening is generally conducted three times a year to identify the effectiveness of core instruction and to identify students who may be at risk for poor outcomes and need additional academic, behavioral, and social and emotional supports.
- Progress monitoring uses valid and reliable tools and processes to assess performance, quantify improvement or responsiveness to intervention and instruction, and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction, interventions, and supports.
- Data-based decision making includes data analysis and problem solving through teaming to make decisions about instruction, intervention, and implementation (American Institutes for Research, 2021).

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting minutes/agendas • School improvement planning • Walkthrough data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fidelity tools • Student outcome data • District reports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff, student, and family survey data • Intervention enrollment data |
|--|--|--|

Item 40	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
Available resources are allocated effectively.	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.	The relationship between the resources allocated and the outcomes of students is evaluated at least annually.	Processes and criteria for resource allocation are refined annually based on strategies that result in improved student outcomes.

Related Notes

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.

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- School Improvement Plan or MTSS implementation plan with evidence of resources allocated to sustaining a MTSS
- Evaluation data
- Resource inventories and mapping

Item 41	Not Implementing (0)	Emerging/Developing (1)	Operationalizing (2) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing</i>	Optimizing (3) <i>Includes Emerging/Developing & Operationalizing</i>
Data sources are monitored for consistency, accuracy, and timeliness in collection and entry procedures.	Data sources are NOT monitored for accuracy or consistency.	The leadership team ensures that staff understands 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.	The leadership team uses a protocol (e.g., email notifications for failure to take attendance, reminders to staff regarding classroom managed vs. office managed problem behavior, etc.) to monitor data consistency and accuracy.	The leadership team periodically conducts analyses to determine consistency and accuracy of data and adjusts as necessary.

Related Notes

Data sources include implementation and outcome data sources:

Implementation data sources are those pieces of data that examine the practices and programs being implemented across a district and/or schools. In the simplest terms, they measure what the adults are doing. These sources are helpful to determine if planned supports and adjustments are implemented as intended. Implementation data sources may include records of professional development, curriculum implementation, fidelity checks, classroom walkthroughs, master schedules, or FAM-S data.

Outcome data are data sources that measure student outcomes such as attendance, aggregate academic data (e.g., EOG, universal screening measures), and aggregate behavior data, obtained through the comprehensive assessment system.

Systemic improvements are those that impact multiple levels, reflect valuable changes to a system, and achieve the goal of increasing student outcomes.

The MTSS framework comprises **four essential elements**: screening, progress monitoring, three-tiered instructional/intervention model, and data-based decision.

- A three-tiered instructional model of integrated academic, behavioral, and social and emotional instructional and intervention supports that are evidence-based and culturally and linguistically responsive.
- Screening is generally conducted three times a year to identify the effectiveness of core instruction and to identify students who may be at risk for poor outcomes and need additional academic, behavioral, and social and emotional supports.
- Progress monitoring uses valid and reliable tools and processes to assess performance, quantify improvement or responsiveness to intervention and instruction, and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction, interventions, and supports.
- Data-based decision making includes data analysis and problem solving through teaming to make decisions about instruction, intervention, and implementation (American Institutes for Research, 2021).

Examples of Supporting Evidence

- 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

Leadership Items 1-6		Building Capacity/Implementatio n Infrastructure Items 7-17		Communication and Collaboration Items 18-21		Problem Solving Process Items 22-28		Multiple Tiers of Instruction and Intervention Model Items 29-35		Data/Evaluation Items 36-41	
1		7		18		22		29		36	
2		8		19		23		30		37	
3		9		20		24		31		38	
4		10		21		25		32		39	
5		11				26		33		40	
6		12				27		34		41	
		13				28		35			
		14									
		15									
		16									
		17									
Total:		Total:		Total:		Total:		Total:		Total:	
									All Items Total:		

Leadership Percentage: (Leadership Total /18) X 100	
Building Capacity/Implementation Infrastructure Percentage: Building the Capacity Total /33) X 100	
Communication and Collaboration Percentage: (Communication Total /12) X 100	
Problem Solving Process Percentage: (Data-Based Total /21) X 100	
Multiple Tiers of Instruction and Intervention Model Percentage: (Three-Tiered Total/21) x 100	
Data/Evaluation Percentage: (Data/Evaluation Total/18) x 100	
FAM-S Total Percentage: (All Items Total/123) x 100	