



School Improvement Diagnostic Review

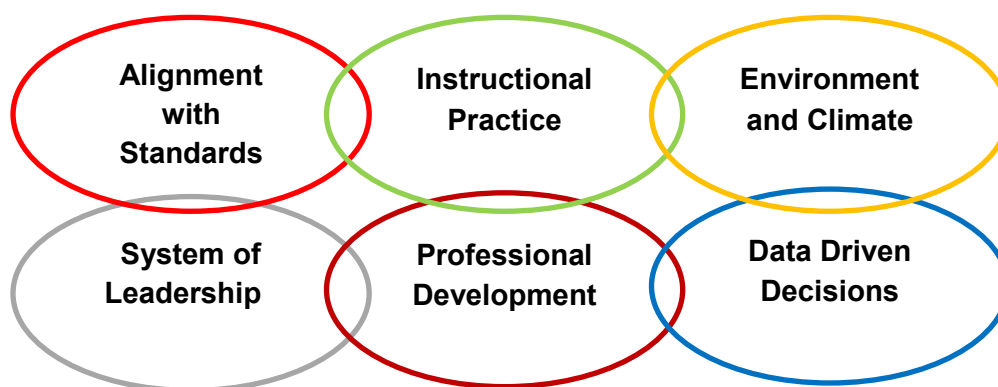
Purpose and Overview

The Ohio School Improvement Diagnostic Review (SIDR) process is designed to gather data on behaviors and practices within the school setting that provide information beyond existing data available from the Ohio Department of Education (ODE).

The primary purpose of the SIDR is to help schools and districts improve student performance by analyzing current practices against effective evidence and research-based practices, identifying areas of strength and areas needing improvement, prioritizing leveraged opportunities for action and aligning evidence and research-based practices.

This diagnostic review is conducted by an external team of experienced and skilled reviewers using standardized processes and protocols for data collection and analysis. The external review provides schools/districts with valuable insight into their current practices, as seen from an outside point of view. Results also help ODE to prioritize state and regional supports for improving student performance.

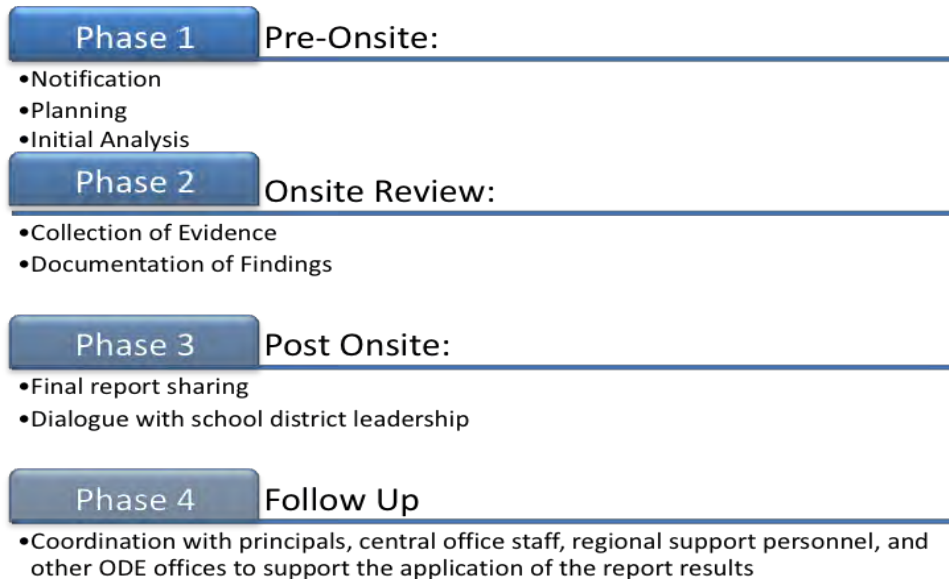
The SIDR is grounded in what is known about high performing schools—with an emphasis on what has been learned through Ohio’s Schools of Promise initiative. Over a period of nearly 10 years, ODE has recognized its high-risk/high-performing schools, publicized their achievements and studied their success stories through case studies and analysis of common themes. These findings have informed the development of Indicators of Effective Practice that provide the underlying framework for the SIDR. These Indicators are organized around six Critical Areas of Performance.



The ODE State Diagnostic Team (SDT) works in partnership with school/district leaders to plan and conduct the SIDR. Objectivity and a focus on the best interests of students and staff are essential to a successful review. The review places a high value on engaging the school/district in understanding its own performance.

The School Improvement Diagnostic Review and State Diagnostic Team are part of a larger state system of support for low performing schools. The Ohio Improvement Process (OIP) provides a four-stage framework for school improvement, within which the SIDR is a tool and the State Diagnostic Team members are a resource in all four Stages. (See OIP Graphic) A regional State Support Team (SST) facilitates the implementation of this four-stage process (along with internal facilitators when available) in partnership with District-Level Teams (DLTs), Building-Level Teams (BLTs) and Teacher-Based Teams (TBTs). The SST helps to embed actionable SIDR findings into district/school improvement plans, as well as to assist with implementation and monitoring of changes in adult practices and student performance. The SIDR Process is also aligned with School Improvement Grant (SIG) priorities and supports from SIG Transformation Specialists, as well as with Race to the Top (RttT) plans and supports from RttT Regional Coordinators.

In brief, the SIDR process has four phases (see graphic). In Phase 1, prior to the review the Ohio Department of Education notifies schools and districts of their selection for review. Working together with school leaders, the State Diagnostic Team schedules dates for the review and initial preparations are made. The team members assigned to conduct the review begin to review school documents and available data sources. The SDT contacts the regional State Support Team to coordinate supports and to share information when appropriate. Together, the SDT develops preliminary hypotheses about school/district practices based on the data and information available prior to the visit.



In Phase 2, the SDT conducts the onsite review, collecting evidence and documenting its findings. Teams conduct 1 ½-day district and/or school-level review(s) and meet as a team each day to debrief. The first day in the building, the team conducts a brief morning meeting with all building staff to make introductions and answer questions. The onsite review entails a building tour, classroom observations, interviews and review of additional documents. After the completion of its onsite data collection, the SDT convenes to build a consensus view of the building on 102 specific items. Building from this discussion, the team begins to draft the final report.

Phase 3 focuses on writing the summary report and sharing the report with school leaders. Once the final report is approved, the SDT facilitates a debriefing meeting with district/school leaders and appropriate regional support personnel. The findings are presented and the SDT assists school leaders with understanding all the elements of the report and how to begin prioritizing and integrating the findings into their school improvement plans.

Phase 4 consists of periodic follow-up checks conducted in partnership with state/regional support person to determine the progress of the district/school. In addition, ODE uses the findings from reviews across the state to inform regional needs assessments, technical assistance and professional development.



