

2012

Ohio Improvement Process (OIP) Guide

Facilitating Districtwide Improvement
in Instructional Practices and Student Performance

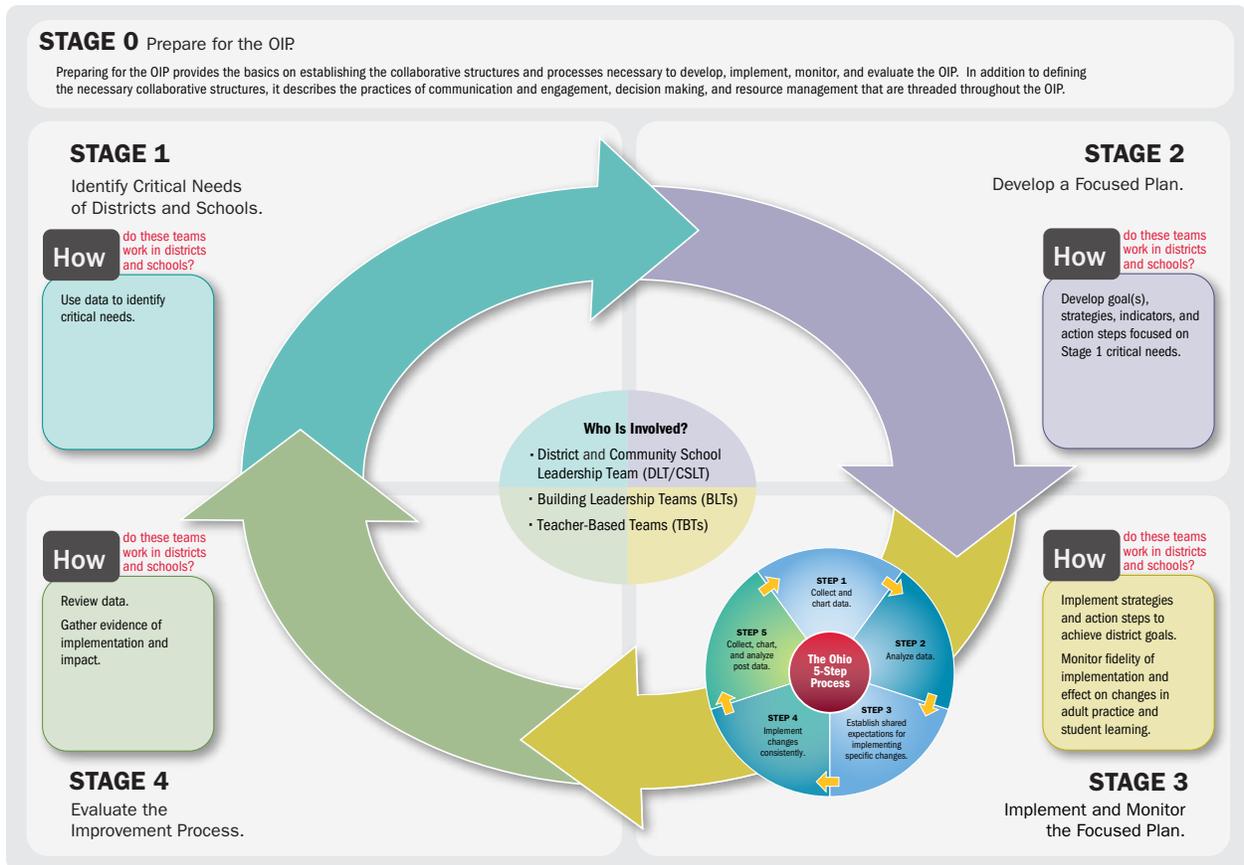


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The Ohio Improvement Process

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This guide is intended for districts, community schools, and buildings implementing the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP) and their leadership teams. Research that is the basis of the OIP can be found in the Ohio Leadership Development Framework Modules on the website www.ohioleadership.org. Further online training on each stage (Stages 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4) also appears on that website.

Overview

During the past 10 years, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) has provided guidance to districts or community schools that are involved in the continuous improvement process. This guidance, a linchpin of the Statewide System of Support (SSoS), has benefited schools, districts, and community schools. The department recognizes, however, that it needs to model continuous improvement and that the guidance and support that is provided needs to be constantly improved. The work that has gone into the development of the *OIP Guide* is the culmination of that improvement.

The *OIP Guide* should be considered as a whole. The objective is not to simply comply with state and federal requirements; it is to improve education for every student in every school. A local high-achieving education system (district, community school, buildings, classrooms) using this process will accomplish the following aims:

- Complete a comprehensive, systematic analysis of the critical areas for improving student achievement.
- Focus on a few issues that have the greatest impact on student achievement by determining cause and effect.
- Develop a few SMART goals that respond to the most critical needs.
- Agree on evidence-based or research-based measurable strategies to reach the goals.
- Indicate a small number of actions with purposeful timelines and designate a responsible person(s) and necessary resources to implement them.
- Determine focused, content-specific, high-quality professional development (HQPDP) for all staff.
- Identify specific parent involvement actions to meet the needs of parents and students.
- Create a schedule and explicit steps to monitor strategies, actions, student performance, and adult practices.
- Establish methods and techniques to communicate the plan and plan progress and results.
- Engage internal and external stakeholders throughout the process.

Seven Principles of the OIP

The vision for Ohio is “all students start ready for kindergarten, actively engage in learning, and graduate ready for college and careers,” regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, limited English proficiency, disability, gift, or talent. Each district or community school and building is working toward that end, as well as toward ensuring equitable access to high-quality instruction for all student groups in keeping with federal and state laws. Continuous improvement planning is the core process for improving instructional practice, leading to higher achievement for all students. The following seven principles summarize the essential characteristics of the OIP.

- 1. Aligns vision, mission, and philosophy.** Every step of the continuous improvement planning process should always be addressed in light of the vision, mission, and philosophy or beliefs of the district and community school. The questions should be “Do the strategies, actions, and resource allocations support our vision, mission, beliefs, and goals?” and “Are our behaviors and decisions congruent with our vision, mission, beliefs, and goals?”
- 2. Is continuous and recursive.** Districts fully committed to high performance do not view continuous improvement as a process that occurs in addition to what they do. Continuous improvement is the core work at every level of the organization and by nature repeats itself.
- 3. Relies on quality data interpretation.** An effective planning process is predicated on the ability of the district or community school, buildings, and classrooms to use (collect, organize, analyze) data to identify critical problems, develop a focused plan, monitor progress, and evaluate plan impact.
- 4. Is collaborative and collegial.** Every plan gets its strength from the people who are committed to it. To make sure the plan will yield positive results, engage the community in understanding the plan, helping to make it stronger, and ultimately, becoming invested in making it work. Include business and community representatives, students, parents, teachers, administrators, and district or community school staff in the planning process, and make the draft plan available for input from the entire community. Make sure the plan reflects the combined thinking and planning of collaborative teams who support plan development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.
- 5. Ensures communication with those who are affected by the success of the district or community school at each stage.** District or community school priority needs and causes may be related to the issues communities and schools are seeing, and their thoughts may help the planning team(s) better understand the situation. Multiple opportunities for communication and feedback should be included throughout the process.
- 6. Produces one focused, integrated plan that directs all district or community school work and resources.** Heretofore, districts and community schools have had many plans (e.g., technology, professional development, Title 1, Title 2, special education, career and technical education) for many reasons (e.g., basis of funding applications, federal or state requirements). Multiple plans diminish the district’s or community school’s ability to respond to the most critical needs. By developing one integrated, focused plan that responds to the most critical needs, the district or community school will leverage resources to achieve lasting success.
- 7. Establishes the expectation for substantive changes in student performance and adult practices.** The purpose of having a well-conceived planning process is to produce a plan that, if implemented with fidelity, will change student and adult behaviors that lead to improved instructional practice and student performance.

“Everyone leads. It takes each of us to make a difference for all of us.”

—Everyone Leads by Dan Zadra (Compiler), Kobi Yamada, and Steve Potter (Designers)
(Newtown, PA: Compendium, 2003)

Large-Scale Change

The OIP principles and process supports large scale change by

- *Emphasizing the district or community school role* and recognizing that each district and all the schools within that district are part of a system and need to operate as one, requiring a different role and relationship for district-level central office personnel (i.e., moving from program “ownership” to shared leadership, responsibility, and accountability)
- *Redefining leadership* as being about the “improvement of instructional practice and performance, regardless of role” (R. F. Elmore, *School Reform From the Inside Out: Policy, Practice, and Performance* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2004]) and recognizing that improvement is everyone’s responsibility—at all levels of the district or community school and in all districts and community schools—thus requiring a common approach and focus across all programs, departments, and offices within the district.
- *Redefining “the system”* to include a focus on aligned and coherent actions at the school, district or community school, region, and state levels that minimizes or eliminates contradictory or conflicting directives.
- *Monitoring the degree of implementation of focused strategies* to determine the effects on changes in adult practice and student achievement is a critical part of the improvement process with an emphasis on monitoring for improvement and learning—not compliance.
- *Establishing internal accountability* where adults hold each other accountable for shared work through leadership structures (DLT/CSLT, BLT, and TBTs).
- *Sustaining improvement* through a collective focus on a few targeted strategies and full implementation of these strategies districtwide or community school-wide (every building, every classroom).
- *Setting boundaries for and focusing local conversation and dialogue* to assist adults in collectively and strategically making smarter decisions about which problems to tackle and how to spend time, energy, and resources in addressing those problems (representing a change from solutions regardless of need to identified needs driving the right solutions).

Integrated, Research-Based Approach

The OIP is based on research about what causes districts and community schools to improve. In summary this research states that

- To sustain improvement of teaching and learning on a large scale, the whole district or community school must be involved and include strong lines of communication.
- The role of district or community school and school administrators should be refocused with the highest priority on improving teaching and learning. Data are used as the vehicle for changing conversations in ways that allow the most critical problems the district or community school faces to be identified and addressed.
- It is important to give equal focus to the “how,” as well as the “what,” of improving teaching and learning, continuously using a cycle of monitoring and evaluating progress in order to constantly improve achievement.

The complete OIP Guide covers the following content to help ensure the aims are accomplished.

Stage 0: Preparing for the OIP

- Collaborative structures
- District Leadership Team or Community School Leadership Team (DLT/CSLT) and Building Leadership Team (BLT), and Teacher-Based Team (TBT) membership and roles and responsibilities
- OIP orientation for DLT/CSLT or BLTs
- Shared leadership: supporting ongoing, two-way communication and engagement
- Intentional data decision making and resource management

Stage 1: Identifying Critical Needs

- Understanding the structure and requirements of the decision framework (DF) and building decision framework (BDF)
- Collecting, organizing, and summarizing data
- Completing the DF/BDF to identify and affirm critical focus areas

Stage 2: Developing a Focused Plan

- Creating SMART goals
- Developing evidence-based or research-based district or community school strategies and indicators
- Producing evidence-based or research-based district or community school and building actions and aligning resources
- Tasking the district or community school plan and aligned school improvement plans (SIPs)
- Reviewing, revising, and adopting the plan

Stage 3: Implementing and Monitoring the Focused Plan

- Implementing the plan systematically and systemically
- Maintaining a culture of inquiry through collaborative structures and processes
- Aligning HQPD across district and community school plans and building plans to achieve results
- Applying a balanced assessment system for monitoring student performance indicators
- Monitoring and analyzing changes in student performance and adult implementation to make midcourse corrections and report plan progress
- Designing an intentional monitoring system
- Making midcourse corrections and reporting plan progress
- Generalizing successes across the district so lessons learned become systemic

Stage 4: Evaluating the Improvement Process

- Evaluating the impact of the plan and process
- Annual evaluation of impact and plan process
- Reporting evaluation results
- Revising the plan: completing the **DF/BDF**
- Revising the plan: goals, goal targets, strategies, indicators, and actions
- Refining the monitoring approach

As districts and community schools improve through effective continuous planning, the planning process itself also will improve. This may be difficult to believe when the first written plan is just being implemented, but districts and community schools that are willing to continue focusing their efforts on the effective use of data and planning eventually will notice that the process seems effortless and that it is essential to their continued success.

STAGE 1

Identifying Critical Needs

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Abstract

This section describes how to use the DF/BDF including collecting, completing, analyzing, and interpreting qualitative and quantitative data to respond to essential questions. Two working agendas, with relevant talking points, key messages, and resources, are provided to support the facilitation of meetings that focus on key activities for the DLT/CSLT and BLTs to identify and affirm critical needs and focus areas.

Understanding the Structure and Requirements of the DF/BDF— Working Agenda

A. Purpose, Ground Rules Review, and Meeting Assignments

Review the meeting purpose, previously developed group rules, and meeting assignments (for example, timekeeper, recorder, or reporter).

The purpose of this session is to know how the **DF/BDF** works, understand the data needed to respond to the **DF/BDF**, and identify existing and needed data for the district, community school, or building to complete the **DF/BDF**.

B. Overview of DF/BDF Structure and Questions

Review the levels and categories with all participants. Briefly show how the **DF/BDF** works by projecting the appropriate sections of the *DF User Manual*. Note: It will be important for someone in the district or community school or building to have participated in prior training on how to use the **DF/BDF**. This on-line training can be accessed through the ODE website.

C. Explanation of Types and Methods of Data

Describe the four types of data that can be collected to respond to each **DF/BDF** question: (1) achievement or student performance, (2) perception, (3) program, and (4) demographic.

Most data are collected using one of four methods: (1) surveys—which may be collected from all respondents (for example, all teachers) or through sampling (for example, a designated number of teachers from each grade level or school); (2) interviews or focus groups—usually a sample of potential respondents who are representative of the district or community school demographics (for example, parents representing grade levels, culture, ethnicity); (3) observations—classroom, programmatic (for example, afterschool programs); and (4) documents and records (for example, assessment results, demographics, policies, lesson plans, meeting minutes).

D. Identifying Data to Complete the DF/BDF

Data Source Identification, Resource 6, provides lists of data that may be needed for informed, data-based decisions required by each level and area of the **DF/BDF**. The lists include ideas of where a district or community school may find state and local data. Although not all-inclusive, the lists serve to stimulate ideas for data sources. Bolded sources in **Resource 6** are prepopulated by the ODE. **Resource 7** provides a Microsoft Word version of the **DF Essential and Expanded Questions** for ease in viewing the entire **DF/BDF**.

Resource 6 has two uses: (1) to guide the discussion to determine what data the district or community school has **readily** available that can answer the questions in the **DF/BDF** and (2) to provide an organizer for summarizing data to support **DF/BDF** ratings and judgments. Few sites will have data to answer every question in the **DF/BDF**. If there are no data, the district or community school or building makes a choice to either (1) identify data that need to be collected for future decisions, (2) collect data in the near future to respond to questions in the **DF/BDF**, (3) include data collection as an action in the plan, or (4) choose to disregard the question at this time. Make note of the district or community school choice.

If the leadership team has 10 members or fewer, the data identification activity can be done in the whole group. If the team is larger than 10, then the DLT/CSLT or BLT can be divided in half, with each group taking responsibility for different DF levels or different content areas. If the latter is the case, have the DLT/CSLT and BLT members self-select which group to be in but ensure the number of members is fairly balanced in size. Each group will need a facilitator, timekeeper, and recorder. The overriding question is

What data and information do we have to help us answer this question?

Have the group look at the questions for each level or area, taking one area at a time. Ask the group to scan the questions within each area for two to three minutes and make individual notes of any data the district, community school, or building currently has to respond to the item.

- Using an LCD projector, project **Resource 6**. Record the name of the district or community school document that provides information to respond to each item. Only list a data source once even though it may respond to several items.
- Once all existing data have been identified, ask whether the group believes any additional data need to be collected. Make a list of these data. Explain that this may be data collected for this plan or may be collected for next year's plan. To be realistic in identifying any new data that need to be collected, the whole group will need to look at data needed for all levels before a decision can be made about what to collect.

- After completing each level and area, reach consensus on the data that will be collected for this plan and data that will be collected in the future (possible action in the completed plan). If considerable data are still needed, use the following questions to determine what is critical:
 - Will the data be the only source of data for this area or will it supplement other existing data?
 - Can the data be collected efficiently and in time to complete the **DF/BDF**?
 - What resources (people, technology, etc.) would be needed to collect the data?
 - If we do not have these data, will we be able to make an informed determination or rating?

In thinking about what data need to be collected, the DLT/CSLT and BLT will need to differentiate meaningful data from irrelevant information.

E. Agreement on Data to Be Collected

Once the list of existing and needed data has been identified, ask the group to scan the list to ensure it is relevant and doable for the district or community school at this time.

Identify who will be responsible for either gathering existing data or for determining how the data will be collected and by when. This should be written next to each of the data items so there is a visible record of assignments.

It is possible that the people who know about the data, who have the data, or who can collect the data are not on the DLT/CSLT or BLT. It will be important for team members to identify these individuals and seek their cooperation in this task.

F. Next Steps and Summary of Discussion and Decisions

Poll members to ensure they understand their assignments. Another option is to have each DLT/CSLT and BLT member summarize what he or she has agreed to do. This is important because it compels individuals to acknowledge their commitments publicly. Summarize the next steps to include: date of next meeting, initial agenda for next meeting, and how to get assistance with assignments, if needed. The summary of the discussion and decisions should be finalized and sent as a record of the meeting and a prompt to follow up on the agreements. Follow-up can occur through written reminders (e-mails, memos) or personal contact. Periodically complete the **Meeting Effectiveness Checklist, Resource 4**, to gauge efficacy of meetings over time.

Collecting, Organizing, and Summarizing Data

Completing the **Data Source Identification, Resource 6**, should help the district or community school and building identify gaps in data and determine the most relevant information that needs to be collected. It will be the responsibility of the person(s) assigned to the data to organize and summarize the data for the leadership team(s) to analyze it efficiently. There is a variety of ways to organize and summarize data. Tables, charts, graphs, and written narratives are the most common. When using tables, graphs, or charts, the source and timeframe of the data should be given. If at all possible, multiple years of data should be provided. In order to determine trends, at least three years of data is needed. To make comparisons, at least two years of data is needed.

Data summaries are primarily looking for trends and patterns that provide a focus for district or community school goals and strategies. The DLT/CSLT and BLT also should have on hand the following references, which are available on the ODE website.

- Ohio Professional Development Standards
- State Academic Content Standards (Revised Academic Content Standards and Common Core Standards in English/Language Arts [ELA] and Mathematics)

Although it is impossible to prepare for all the ways in which data can be organized and summarized, the following are common and simple examples of how it can occur.

Level 1: Achievement and Growth

Level 1 calls on teams to review student achievement and progress data to identify content areas of greatest concern. The additional levels of the **DF/BDF** provide essential questions to help districts or community school and schools conduct analysis of the root causes of factors that contribute to the current situation. The **DF** uses the Matrix of Achievement and Progress (MAAP) and SAS[®] EVAAS value-added reports to uncover patterns of progress and achievement within and across schools, grades, and subjects.

District assessment results should be discussed at this time. Reports such as objectives, performance reports, subtest reports, skills reports, content cluster reports, and mastery objective reports will need to be considered in addition to those provided by the ODE. Often district or community school assessment data are provided in summary or aggregate formats. If, however, the district, community school, or building also wants to look at local data such as writing rubric results, the team can summarize the data by charting the percentage of students who performed at the desired level or above. Once all the achievement graphs and charts are ready, the DLT/CSLT and BLT can use highlighters to emphasize the numbers in the charts using the stoplight method indicated by the colors in Figure 5.

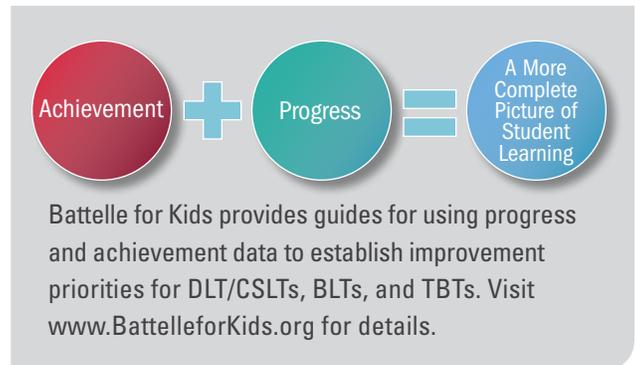


Figure 5. Organizing Data by Stoplight Method

Highlight Color	Meaning	% of students (Suggested Cutoffs)	% of students (Our Cutoff Levels)
Blue	WOW! Beyond Expectations	100%	
Green	GOOD! Meets Expectations	80–99%	
Yellow	CAUTION! Below Expectations	70–79%	
Pink	URGENT! In Need of Immediate Improvement	0–69%	

*Taken from *Data Retreat Facilitator’s Guide*, North Central Regional Education Laboratory, 2001.

The samples in Figure 6 show two data charts prepopulated in the **DF/BDF** with numbers highlighted using the stoplight method described earlier in this discussion.

Figure 6. DF/BDF Prepopulated by Stoplight Method

Grade Level	Metrics	SY	SY	SY
Grade 3	Students tested	163	140	180
	Not proficient	33	33	42
	Students proficient	130	107	138
	Proficient percentage	79.8%	76.4%	76.7%

Reading	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th
Subscale	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	
Vocabulary	89.9%	79.4%	85.2%	86.3%	89.5%	89.0%	82.4%
Reading process	81.6%	83.1%	84.6%	82.0%	86.5%	87.2%	79.0%
Informational text	91.8%	86.0%	88.3%	82.6%	85.4%	86.0%	80.1%
Literary text	87.3%	77.9%	87.7%	90.7%	86.0%	87.8%	78.4%

Three ways of analyzing achievement data to show comparisons are (1) yearly cohort group comparisons, (2) yearly grade-level comparisons, and (3) within-year progress data. Figure 7 shows how they can be represented graphically. State-level data can be applied to 1 and 2 in Figure 7. If the district, community school, or building wishes to do 3, it must rely on district-, community school-, or school-level data.

Figure 7. Showing Patterns in Achievement Data

1. Yearly Cohort Group Comparisons				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Grade 3	Student Group A			
Grade 4		Student Group A		
Grade 5			Student Group A	
Grade 6				Student Group A

2. Yearly Grade-Level Comparisons				
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Grade 3				
Grade 4	Student Group A	Student Group B	Student Group C	Student Group D
Grade 5				
Grade 6				

3. Within-Year Comparisons				
	Year 1			
	Fall	Winter	Spring	
Grade 4	Student Group A	Student Group A	Student Group A	

As a reminder, Level 1 data will result in the identification of one or two priority content areas, which will become the student performance goals for the district or community school and buildings.

Level 2: Instructional Management

The questions in Level 2 are related to curriculum, assessment, instruction, and educator effectiveness in a specific content area.

Level 2A: Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction

Effective in 2014–15, all Ohio districts and community schools will be required to implement the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics, the revisions to Ohio’s academic content standards in science and social studies, and the aligned assessments, all of which were adopted in June 2010. ODE also has prepared a model curriculum as a Web-based tool for educators that identifies instructional strategies and resources that align with the revised standards.

As districts and community schools respond to questions in Level 2A, they should use the standards and model curriculum as a benchmark. Although ODE cannot endorse or recommend specific textbooks or resources, the Center for Curriculum and Assessment has many materials on the ODE website under Model Curricula that are designed to help school districts, community schools, schools, and teachers review and choose high-quality instructional materials and strategies for their students.

Level 2B: Educator Effectiveness

Ohio has adopted a human capital management system designed to maximize educator effectiveness and ensure that every student has access to highly effective, well-supported teachers and leaders who stay in the system. There are eight components to the system: preparation, recruitment and equitable distribution, hiring, induction, professional development and learning, performance management, compensation and incentives, and working conditions. Two resources for responding to questions in Level 2 as they relate to the eight components are the Gap Analysis and Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey (see the ODE website). The latter provides data on factors that affect teacher hiring, retention, and mobility. The Teaching and Learning Conditions online survey has fewer than 40 questions and can be completed in 30 minutes or less. If the district or community school has at least 40 percent participation, districts and community schools can receive school and district or community school summaries.

The district and community schools also may choose to summarize data gleaned from the Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDP). Results from the IPDP aggregated rubric, available on the ODE website, may serve as a valuable source of data for the district or community school. The System to Achieve Results for Students (STARS) provides dates and participant information about professional development training. Districts also may have electronic professional development charting systems for their staff that tracks individual teacher professional goals, individual professional development plans, professional development contact hours, and so on, that could be used for data analysis. The data may be compared with observation and achievement data at the classroom or building level to determine whether professional development time and resources are being directed to the areas of priority need and to determine whether there is an impact on student achievement as a result of participation in professional development.

Figure 8. Ohio’s Integrated 21st Century Education System



Level 3: Expectations and Conditions

Level 2 focused on a particular content area; Level 3, in contrast, has an overall general or global effect on student academic performance across all content areas and is viewed once. At Level 3, district or community school personnel also may identify a specific issue that is unique to their district or community that needs attention to promote, facilitate, or improve student performance. Primary data sources in Level 3 are (1) perception data; (2) demographic data, such as mobility, attendance, and discipline; (3) program data; and (4) processes and procedures data. Following are ideas for organizing and summarizing these data.

(1) Perception Data

Perception data will take unique formats that depend on the nature of the data. Persons assigned to summarize perception data will need to determine guidelines or cutoff levels for survey data. Before looking at the data, the DLT/CSLT and BLT members assigned to these data should answer the question *What would positive results look like?* For example, if a survey was ranked on a five-point Likert scale, positive results might be the percentage of rankings of three or higher. The ranking percentage could be defined as the cutoff level.

Table 6. Schema for Organizing Perception Data

Highlight Color	Meaning	Survey Results (% of Rankings of 3 or Higher on a 5-Point Scale)	Our Criteria
Blue	WOW! Beyond Expectations	100%	
Green	GOOD! Meets Expectations	75–99%	
Yellow	CAUTION! Below Expectations	55–74%	
Pink	URGENT! In Need of Improvement	0–54%	

For other results, it may be useful to use a similar color-coding process as just described. Because the perception items in the **DF/BDF** are similar across students, families, and staff, the results from the questions asked may be shown as in Table 7. It should be noted that there may be many questions for which the degree of implementation results from the considered judgment of the DLT/CSLT and BLT and is not based upon a survey or other instrument.

Table 7. Displaying Results From Perception Surveys

% of Rankings of 3 or Higher on a 5-Point Satisfaction Scale	Parent Survey			Student Survey			Teacher Survey		
	EL	M	HS	EL	M	HS	EL	M	HS
Focus on positive student outcomes in (content area)	80%	65%	40%	85%	75%	60%	95%	90%	85%
Safe environment for learning									
Partners in educational process									
Sensitivity to students' needs when they experience academic or behavioral needs									
Challenging (content areas) curriculum									

The *Comprehensive School Climate Inventory*, developed by the National School Climate Center and available on their website (<http://www.schoolclimate.org/programs/csci.php>), provides data on the quality and character of school life. Student data can be disaggregated by grade level and subgroup and can be administered online and in a print version. These data are organized and summarized to show rating patterns for each group for each dimension surveyed. Charts are organized in two ways to make it easier to make different kinds of comparisons:

- By climate dimension, which shows the rating patterns for physical safety, social-emotional safety, and so on, for students versus school personnel versus parents.
- By population group, which shows the rating patterns for students, then school personnel, then parents for each dimension.

Profile charts of median ratings for different student subgroups, school personnel, and families show perceptions of school climate dimensions in consistently different ways and demonstrate which dimensions might be most sensitive to different ratings for subgroups. Subgroups are the following:

1. Students by grade, gender, race, and ethnicity
2. School personnel by grade and experience
3. Families and parents by child, grade, race, and ethnicity

(2) Demographic Data

Demographic data in the form of attendance and discipline data are provided through the ODE. Mobility data must be obtained using district or community school data. Mobility is defined as students not in the same building 120 days before the state testing window. Level 3B.4 (Multiple Risk Factors) asks about the effect of certain demographic characteristics on student performance. Using these characteristics, the DLT/CSLT and BLT members will need to look at the information for those students who have a pattern of low proficiency (pink if using the spotlight method). By each name, notations should be made on a report according to the demographic data. It also may be appropriate to code program data such as afterschool programs, summer-school programs, tutoring, and other interventions provided to students. Coding may look like this:

Code	Definition
PL	Proficiency Level —students who have a pattern of low proficiency, below standards, at risk
M	Mobility —students not in the same building 120 days before the state testing window
A	Attendance —students absent for any reason for five or more days
D	Discipline —students referred for any reason twice or more times, all students expelled or suspended
AS	Afterschool Program —students who attend 80 percent or more of the time
SS	Summer School —students who attend 80 percent or more of the time
T	Tutoring —students who receive tutoring

DLT/CSLT and BLT members should look for patterns in the data. At this point, the leadership teams should not concentrate on individual student names, but rather focus on *patterns across all the students*. It is important for the team not to attach causes to patterns. The DLT/CSLT and BLT members assigned to this task will need to identify the patterns observed for all team members to view when completing the **DF/BDF**.

(3) Program Data

Program data will take unique formats that depend on the nature of the data. Persons assigned to summarize program data will need to determine relevance to Level 3 essential **DF/BDF** questions and decide the most useful and understandable format for reporting.

(4) Process and Procedure Data

Processes and procedures cannot be coded or analyzed. They should be reviewed against the questions in relation to Level 3A. In addition to knowing whether the processes and procedures exist, the district or community school also may know whether they are followed and whether they are effective. For example, requiring each building to have TBTs and establishing procedures for the team to follow are good. The district or community school also must have records, documents, or reports, however, that show how often the team meets and what they do when they meet. In general, the questions for this level are *How frequently is it used? How is it used? How effective is it?*

Completing the DF/BDF to Identify and Affirm Critical Focus Areas— Working Agenda

A. Purpose, Ground Rules Review, and Meeting Assignments

Review meeting purpose, previously developed group rules, and meeting assignments (for example, timekeeper, recorder, or reporter).

The purpose of these meetings is to analyze the data and complete the **DF/BDF**.

The DLT/CSLT and BLT is ready to complete the **DF/BDF**. Although analysis can be conducted with statistical programs and electronic data tools, the process of digging through it, finding patterns and trends, diagramming observations, and collaborating about what is seen is a very powerful process. Completing the **DF/BDF** by the DLT/CSLT and BLT offers new insights and illuminates views that otherwise might not have been seen if the **DF/BDF** had been done by a few people or by individuals. In fact, many districts or community schools and buildings using the OIP find this analysis and interpretation to be the most valuable part of the process. As team members analyze the data and respond to the **DF/BDF** questions, not only do they see more clearly, they engage in their own professional growth with their own data. The **DF/BDF** not only includes essential questions, but also supplemental questions to assist in probing deeper through all levels. Teams will need to be selective in the use of the supplemental questions, basing decisions on the data and concerns raised by the DLT/CSLT and BLT. Many of the supplemental questions probe the performance of student subgroups, early learning, health and nutrition, and family engagement and are designed to deepen investigation of root causes of discrepancies in student achievement. The questions do not replace but rather supplement the essential questions in the **DF/BDF** and can be used as appropriate in the planning, monitoring, and evaluation stages of OIP.

B. DLT/CSLT and BLT Member Presentations— Data Summaries by Levels and Areas; Analysis and Completion of DF/BDF

All data summaries should be submitted to the facilitator or cofacilitators prior to the session. Submitting the information in advance of the meeting is necessary so that the support staff has time to prepare packets for the team members. This will give the team time to become familiar with the content before the meeting. It is also recommended that DLT/CSLT and BLT members know that they will be asked to give a three- to five-minute presentation on their data summaries by level and area. An organizer such as the **Data Source Identification, Resource 6**, to record the data summary is advisable. The role of the recorder will be critical to having a record of the DLT/CSLT and BLT discussion. As a reminder, Levels 1 and 3 produce the district or community school goals.

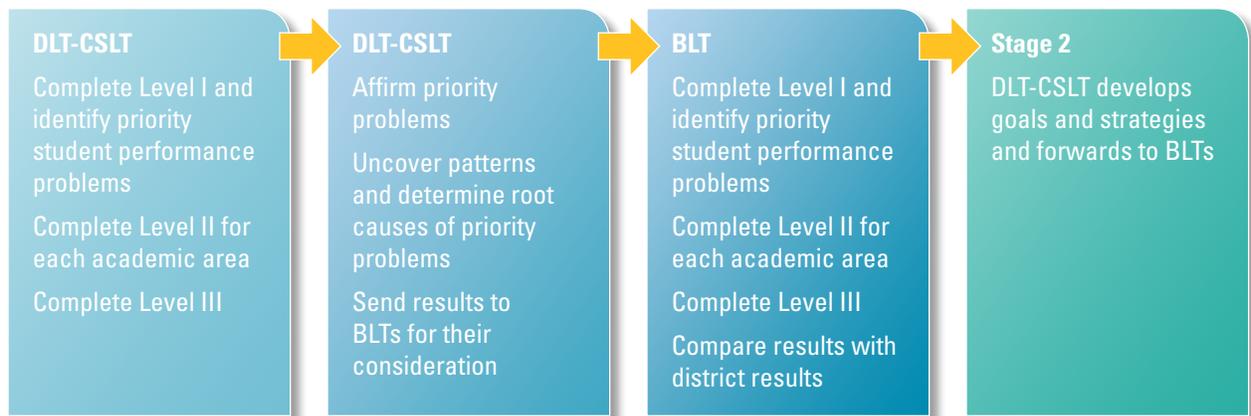
Initial discussions relative to the **DF/BDF** often focus on using existing data to the greatest extent possible. That being said, it is also clear that there are important questions that need to be discussed at most sites for which data do not often exist. For example, few districts or community schools and buildings can describe with any accuracy the level and alignment of instructional practice. Similarly, many do not know whether the “aligned” district or community school curriculum is used. Teacher mobility is not part of most discussions even though it may be an issue in medium or large districts, community schools, and buildings. In addition, many sites do not conduct student surveys or parent or community surveys. The district or community school and buildings should consider whether a need exists to collect this type of information and, if so, the best method of collection.

In the meantime, DLT/CSLT and BLTs should be led to honestly discuss whether there is sufficient and reliable data and what data might need to be collected as soon as possible. In many cases, it is best to plan for collecting the information before making judgments about the **DF/BDF** questions.

There are two options for sequencing how completion of the **DF** by the DLT/CSLT and completion of the **BDF** relate to one another.

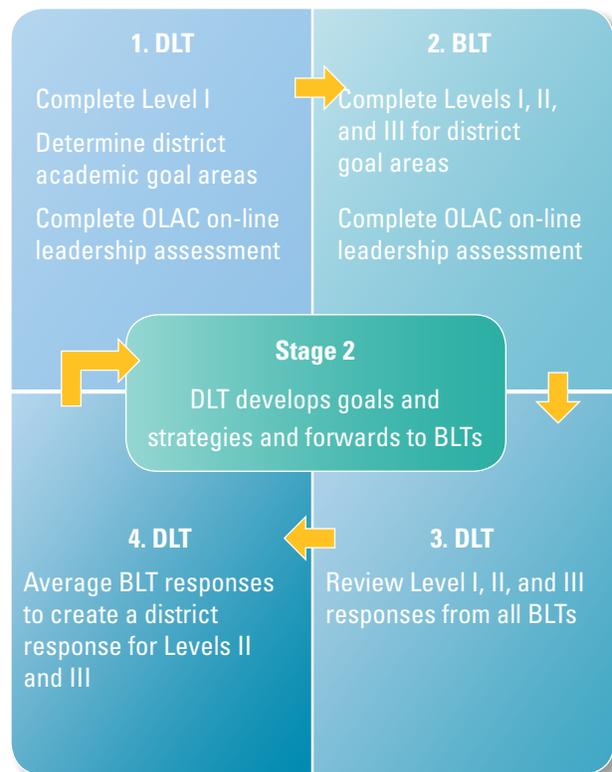
Option 1: In the option shown in Figure 9, the DLT/CSTL completes the entire **DF** before the BLTs complete the **BDF**. The BLT receives the **DF** as a basis for comparison. While the BLTs are completing the **BDF**, the DLT/CSLT begins Stage 2 by developing goals and strategies. The goals are then forwarded to the BLTs so they may create action steps aligned to the district or community school goals and strategies, while considering building needs.

Figure 9. Option 1 for Completing DF/BDF



Option 2: In the option shown in Figure 10, the DLT-CSLT completes Level 1, identifying academic goal areas. The DLT-CSLT then asks the BLTs to complete Levels 1, 2, and 3, allowing them to complete Stage 1 before the DLT completes Stage 1. The DLT then aggregates the BLT responses and averages the ratings to compute a district or community school average rating. At this point, Stage 1 is complete. The DLT then uses the results of Stage 1 to begin Stage 2.

Figure 10. Option 2 for Completing DF/BDF



C. Presentation on Current Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP) Performance

Knowing whether implementation of the current **CCIP** (district or community school plan) achieved its desired results may help inform development of the proposed plan. A presentation on how well the plan was implemented and the impact of plan implementation on improving student and adult performance should be reviewed as another source of data.

D. Analyzing Data and Completing the DF/BDF

Once the **DF/BDF** is complete, the DLT/CSLT and BLT look at the results by level and identify the district or community school and building priority problems. After going through Level 1, district or community school priority problems relating to student performance should be identified. This list can be created by looking at the level and area from the **DF/BDF** with the lowest scores and highest level of concern.

E. Reviewing Results and Confirming District Priority Problems

An understanding of the factors that contribute to each of the high-priority critical problems is necessary to set goals and identify strategies and actions to address those problems. Only those problems designated as high priority will be addressed in the improvement plan. The district, community school, or building will use the information from Stage 1 to consider the causes of these problems.

The **DF** District Profile or **BDF** Profile is an algebraic accumulation of all **DF/BDF** cell responses provided by the team throughout Stage 1. Multiple responses for each topic (e.g., Reading: Curriculum Alignment) result in a percentage level of either results (student data) or implementation (perception data). As a team reviews the **DF/BDF** Profile results, the

team should select a few high-priority areas. Focusing on more than a few will cause staff, students, and families to be overwhelmed and struggle to respond to them effectively. Once the highest priority areas are selected, saving the selections will automatically and electronically result in a district, community school, or building needs assessment. This needs assessment then becomes the basis for development of the focused plan in Stage 2, as well as the **CCIP** needs assessment (as an electronic submission into the **CCIP** during the window period allowed by ODE).

From the needs assessment, the DLT/CSLT will identify one or two academic goal areas, as well as one climate and conditions area designated for goal development in Stage 2. Other indicators from the needs assessment can be used as a basis for strategy development in the focused plan. For example, the data may show that students who have low proficiency in reading also are the students who have poor attendance. Attendance data emerge from Level 3 but relate to reading and may be one cause of low reading performance. Therefore, this critical problem is not universal. If, however, the data from Level 3 show that processes and procedures are not implemented with sufficient consistency across the district or community school, the problem may be a critical one that focuses on adult behaviors and environmental issues. The problem would then become one for the expectations and conditions priority area. The content priority area(s) and expectations and conditions priority area become the district or community school goals. These goals will need to be communicated to the BLT because the analysis of the **BDF** will need to coincide with the **DF** analysis.

Before beginning Stage 2, the leadership team should take time to affirm that the right content and expectations and conditions priority areas have been selected. This will occur through dialogue among the members. Looking back at how the questions for this area were answered in the **DF/BDF**, the team should reaffirm their answers to the following questions:

- Were the responses to the questions accurate and reflective of data rather than opinions?
- Are the data to support the selection of these priority areas strong, for example, quantitative and qualitatively balanced, high response rate on surveys?
- Is the ratio of questions to the rating high?
- Do these areas have the leverage to improve student learning and change teacher practice?

Once the DLT/CSLT is satisfied with the answers to these questions and it has communicated them to the BLT, it is ready to begin development of the focused plan (Stage 2). The DLT/CSLT and BLT also may want to consider what the district or community school could do to improve the Stage 1 process and record this information for use in Stage 4.

F. Next Steps and Summary of Discussion and Decisions

The completed **DF/BDF** that includes the profile report should be sent to all DLT/CSLT and BLT members. The facilitator or cofacilitators will need to identify any obvious data gaps found while completing the **DF/BDF** and determine how these gaps will be addressed (possibly as actions in the plan that will be developed in Stage 2).

Periodically, use the **Meeting Effectiveness Checklist (Resource 4)** to receive written feedback.

Acronyms

BDF—Building Decision Framework

BLT—Building Leadership Team

CCIP—Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan

CSLT—Community School Leadership Team

DF—Decision Framework

DIBELS—Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills

DLT—District Leadership Team

ECO—Early Childhood Outcomes Summary Form

ELA—English language arts

ELL—English language learners

ESC—Educational Service Center

HQPD—High Quality Professional Development

IMM—Implementation Management/Monitoring

IPDP—Individual Professional Development Plan

KRA-L—Kindergarten Readiness Assessment—Literacy

LEA—Local education agency (district)

LEP—Limited English proficient

MAAP—Matrix of Achievement and Progress

ODE—Ohio Department of Education

OIP—Ohio Improvement Process

OLAC—Ohio Leadership Advisory Council

PD—Professional development

PTSA—Parent-Teacher-Student Association

SAFE—Security Application for Enterprise

SIP—School improvement plan

SMART Goals—Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timely goals

SSoS—Statewide System of Support

SPoC—Single point of contact

SPP—State Performance Plan

SST—State Support Team

STARS—System to Achieve Results for Students

SWD—Students With Disabilities

SWIS—Schoolwide Information System

TBT—Teacher-Based Team

OIP Glossary

Achievement Gap: The disparity in academic performance on tests among identified groups or the difference between how a group performs and what is expected of that group. Typically, the disparity is defined as a difference between white students and students of color or between students who receive a free or reduced-price lunch and those who do not.

Actions: Specific steps to operationalize a strategy and reach a goal.

Adult Implementation Indicator: Gauge by which a strategy is determined to be met in terms of changes in practices expected of adults.

Annual Goal Target: Gauges against which to judge whether an annual goal is met.

Baseline: Starting point from which an indicator can be measured.

Building Leadership Team (BLT): A team of individuals who promote a culture of common expectations or commitment by maintaining a schoolwide focus on improving student achievement. The team fosters shared leadership and responsibility for the success of every child through the creation of purposeful communities.

Capacity Building: Providing opportunities—such as job-embedded staff development, coaching, and time for reflection on effective instructional practices—that enhance the ability of teachers and administrators to positively affect student learning.

Collaboration: Highest level of functioning in a continuum of how information, knowledge, and working together operate in any organization.

Collaborative Structure: A structure designed to increase teacher or district staff capacity in meeting the challenge to close achievement gaps and raise the bar for all students. Other terms may be used, such as data teams, grade-level teams, department teams, to describe a professional learning community in a district or building. Characterized by continuous school-based or district-based professional development, mutual support, and coaching with peers; dedicated time for collaborative work; and permission to take risks as a staff to learn, practice, and hone their skills. Effective school and district leadership is fundamental to creating collaborative structures.

Common Formative Assessments: Teacher-generated periodic or interim assessments that are collaboratively designed by teams for specific units of instruction. Common formative assessments are created as short matching pre- and postassessments to ensure same-assessment-to-same-assessment comparison of student growth. Common formative assessments usually contain a blend of item types, including selected response and constructed response, representing power standards.

Communication: Exchange of ideas and information by any of a variety of methods.

Community School Leadership Team (CSLT): See District Leadership Team.

Comprehensive Assessment System: The means by which a district measures student performance from the time that the student enters education to the time the student leaves. Includes three types of assessments:

1. Initial or diagnostic assessments that identify student strengths and weaknesses or identify what a student already knows about a topic and identify any gaps or misconceptions.
2. Formative or interim assessments used by teachers and students during instruction that provide feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievement or intended instructional outcomes.
3. Summative assessments given periodically to determine, at a particular point in time, what students know and do not know relative to content standards.

Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP): A unified grants application and verification system that consists of two parts: the Planning Tool and the Funding Application. The Planning Tool contains the goals, strategies, action steps, and district goal amounts for all grants in the CCIP. The Funding Application contains the budget, budget details, nonpublic services, and other related pages. The CCIP should be the district's focused plan for improvement.

Consensus: After discussion, a group has reached consensus on a decision if most team members agree with the decision and if those who disagree are willing to accept the decision and try to make it work. Consensus allows those who disagree to gather more data and raise an issue if indicated.

Content Standards: Specific, measurable descriptions of what students should know and be able to do at each grade in each curriculum area.

Continuous Improvement Framework: The concept that effective schools are engaged in a long-term process of improvement of teaching and learning that is demonstrated by a pattern of continuous improvement of learning for every child. The continuous improvement cycle includes determination of prioritized needs, planning for focused improvement, implementation of the plan, and monitoring and evaluation of the results.

Culturally Relevant Educational Practices: Using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically or economically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant and effective for them.

Data-Driven Decisions: Decisions that districts and schools make by knowledgeably and effectively using a range of data at the classroom, school, and district levels to improve instructional support and practices.

Data-Driven Decisions for Academic Achievement (D3A2): An ODE initiative that provides a systematic approach for Ohio educators to access data and align resources. Users are able to identify and access resources to meet specific needs from different systems that communicate using common standards, for example, Schools Interoperability Framework (SIF) to ensure consistent data standards and the Ohio Standard Identifier Code (OSIC) to show alignment to Ohio's Academic Content Standards.

Data Teams: See Teacher-Based Teams.

Decision Framework (DF): An electronic tool that ultimately provides the **CCIP** needs assessment by using essential questions that can be answered with student achievement data, perceptual data, and other forms of data at the state and local level. The essential questions are organized around levels with a focus on student achievement and growth in content areas by grade level, building, and subgroup, followed by essential questions related to the critical student performance problems identified and uncover possible causes of these problems tied to the following: curriculum, instruction, assessment, managing educator talent, and expectations and conditions, for example, school climate, parents and family, community involvement, and allocation of resources.

Decision Parameters: Factors that help make sound decisions that serve as guidelines rather than policy, rule, or procedure.

District Leadership Team (DLT): A team of individuals who promote a culture of common expectations or commitment by maintaining a districtwide focus on high achievement for all students.

Early Childhood Outcomes Summary Form (ECO): Measurement of every preschool child with a disability using a seven-point scale to document the child's progress in each of three categories (positive social and emotional skills, acquiring and using knowledge and skills, and taking appropriate action to meet needs).

English Language Learners (ELL): A student subgroup described by instructional needs that change as students gain English language proficiency; ELL students receive services based on their achievement on academic assessments.

Evaluation: The practice that DLTs and BLTs engage in to critically examine and analyze monitoring data to assess the extent to which the process and plan implementation produced the desired results.

Evidence-Based: The process of reviewing, assessing, and applying proven strategies to address data-determined needs.

Evidence of Success: Tangible documentation that shows progress toward achieving a strategy.

Expectations and Conditions Goal: A broad statement that specifies a desired change in order to improve or increase the opportunities or potential for improvement in learning and identifies the end result to be achieved within a given timeframe.

Extended Learning Time: An increase in the amount of time students have available for school by providing opportunities before and after school and during the summer, modified school calendars, and changes in the structure of the school day. Extended learning time also can be provided by reducing or eliminating pullout programs that interrupt regular instructional time, increasing the focus on learning during scheduled class time by reducing extraneous activities and scheduling longer blocks of time for classes.

Fidelity: The degree to which the plan accurately produces its effect: exact correspondence with the process and faithful to the OIP nonnegotiables and OLAC principles in the face of obstacles.

Focused Plan: A blueprint based on identified needs that directs all district work and resources and leads to improvement in student achievement.

Formative Assessment: A continuous instructional process used by teachers to obtain evidence of student understanding for the purpose of improving teaching or learning. To be effective, teachers must be skillful in using various assessment strategies and tools, such as observation, student conferences, portfolios, performance tasks, prior knowledge assessments, rubrics, feedback, and student self-assessment. More important, they must have a deep understanding of the formative assessment process and understand its close relationship to instructional scaffolding.

Grade- or Department-Level Teams: See Professional Learning Community.

Implementation Management/Monitoring Tool (IMM): An electronic tool that provides a way for districts to document how their district and school plans will be implemented. The district or school can identify items to be measured, resources needed, persons and groups responsible, timeline for implementing, and completion status of implementation items.

Indicator: There are two types of indicators. A *performance indicator* is the gauge by which a goal is determined to be met. A *progress indicator* is the gauge by which a strategy is determined to be successful. Progress indicators have a baseline measure established and short-term progress measures to assess degree of changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, policies, and practices; and documentation is identified to provide evidence that the indicator is met.

Inquiry: A search for knowledge; an investigation or research that has the aim of augmenting knowledge, resolving doubt, or solving a problem by questioning and seeking the truth.

Institutionalize: The translation of a district's mission, policies, vision, and continuous improvement plan into actions applicable to the daily activities of its administrators and staff; the integration of OIP principles into the district culture and structure.

Job-Embedded Professional Development: Ongoing professional development grounded in day-to-day teaching and designed to enhance teachers' content-specific instructional practices with the intent of improving student learning; aligned to learning standards and school and district improvement plans (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Hirsh, 2009; NSDC, 2010).

KRA-L: Assessment that measures young children's literacy skills at the beginning of the kindergarten year on six elements or indicators: answering questions, sentence repetition, rhyming identification, rhyming production, letter identification, and initial sounds.

Learning: Acquiring and applying new knowledge, behaviors, skills, or values; knowledge acquired by systematic study.

Mission: The district's purpose or the reason it exists. Fulfilling the mission is how a district realizes its vision.

Mobility: The degree to which a student population of a building 120 days before a test window is not in the same building at the time of the test window.

Monitoring: The practice that DLTs and BLTs use to supervise the plan in progress to ensure the tasks, actions, and strategies are on course and on schedule in meeting goals as measured by progress against indicators.

Multiple Risk Factors: A multiplicity of reasons for which students may be at risk of academic failure, for example, high levels of both discipline occurrences and absences.

Nonnegotiable Goal: Goals upon which all staff members act.

Observation: A statement that reflects an opinion, testimonial, or comment about data.

Pattern: Data that show a relationship within the same set of data.

Professional Learning Community or Team: *See Collaborative Structures.*

Recursiveness: The repeating of a cycle or process, either indefinitely or until a specific point is reached.

Research-Based Practices: The process of reviewing, assessing, and applying proven strategies on the basis of empirical evidence to address data-determined needs.

Root Cause: The deepest underlying cause of positive or negative symptoms within any process that if eliminated would result in elimination or substantial reduction of the symptom.

SAS EVAAS: Valuable diagnostic information about past practices and reports on students' predicted success probabilities at numerous academic milestones, K–12.

School Improvement Plan: The school's focused plan for improvement.

Schoolwide Information System (SWIS): Web-based information system designed to help school personnel use office referral data to design particular interventions for individual students and general interventions for all students.

Shared Leadership: Leadership shared by team leaders and team members—rotating to the person with the key knowledge, skills, and abilities to address the particular issues facing the team at any given moment with the focus on “improvement of instructional practice and performance, regardless of role” (Elmore, 2006).

SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable and Attainable, Results-Oriented, Targeted) Goal: A broad statement that specifies a desired measurable change in student performance to close a gap or an improvement opportunity or potential for improvement in learning and that identifies the end result to be achieved within a given time.

Stakeholder: Anyone who affects or is affected by the success of the district. Typical stakeholder groups include students, teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, school administrators, students' immediate family members, school board members, community leaders, local business and industry representatives, and citizens who live in the community.

Standards: Subject-matter benchmarks to measure students' academic achievement. Curriculum standards drive what students learn in the classroom.

State Performance Plan (SPP) Indicators: A strategic framework of 20 measures on which the state collects data in order to determine a district's or building's level of performance, to set targets for improvement, and to develop improvement strategies to improve the performance of students with disabilities in the state.

Strategy: A set of specific, measurable written statements about what a district is going to accomplish to meet a need and get closer to reaching a goal within a given time.

Strategy Indicator: The gauges by which a strategy is determined to be met in terms of student performance and adult practices.

Student Performance Goal: A broad statement that specifies a desired change in student performance to close a gap and identifies the end result to be achieved within a given time.

Students With Disabilities (SWD): Students who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; have a record of such an impairment; or are regarded as having such an impairment. Students with disabilities are those students served under “Assistance for Education of All Children With Disabilities” (Part B) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Subgroups: A smaller group distinguished in some way from other members of the larger group of which it is a part. Under federal law, each school and district is assessed to determine whether it has achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) for all students in communication arts and mathematics, as well as among each subgroup (Asian and Pacific islander, black, Hispanic, American Indian, white, free or reduced-price lunch, individualized education program [IEP], limited English proficient [LEP]) unless there are 30 or fewer students in the subgroup. There must be at least 50 students in the IEP and LEP subgroups for a school or district to be accountable for AYP.

Summative Assessment: Assessments—for example, state assessments, district benchmark assessments, end-of-term or semester exams—given periodically to determine at a particular point in time what students know and do not know relative to content standards to help evaluate the effectiveness of programs, goals, or alignment of curriculum.

Tasks: A list of steps in order to complete an action.

Teacher-Based Teams (TBT): Teacher-Based Teams (TBTs) are teams composed of teachers working together to improve instructional practice and student learning through shared work. As part of the OIP use of collaborative structures, TBTs follow a common set of guidelines described in a five-step process connected directly to the focused goals, strategies, and actions described in the school improvement plan.

Trend: A statement based on at least three years of data from the same data source.

Value-Added Data: A component of Ohio’s accountability system that measures growth or improvement over a period of time to determine the value gained by a student during that time period.

Vision: A shared understanding of what the district wants to create (picture of the future) by stakeholders who are committed.

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