

Community School Improvement Planning Checklist

This checklist is designed to assist community schools in developing and revising their Comprehensive School Improvement Plans. For additional assistance, please contact the Office of Community Schools at csimprovement@education.ohio.gov.

Planning Team

The planning team should include the following:

- Classroom teachers;
- School administrator(s) (school leader, treasurer, curriculum director);
- Parents;
- Students;
- Governing authority member(s);
- Pupil support staff (counselors, tutors);
- Support staff (administrative, operational);
- Community/business representatives.

State support team staff, sponsor representatives, management company representatives provide consultation and support

Vision/Mission

The vision is the desired state; a vision describes what will occur if the school successfully implements its mission.

The mission answers three basic questions:

- 1) What does the organization do?
- 2) For whom does the organization do it?
- 3) What is the benefit if the organization's mission is fulfilled?

A school improvement plan should not be at odds with the school's mission or vision. An improvement plan should improve what the school does and increase the benefit for its students.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment/Data Analysis

1. Did you submit a copy of the summary of data analysis with the improvement plan? Did the data analysis summary include the following:
 - List of all sources of data used;
 - Multiple sources of data and the same data from multiple points in time (trend data);
 - Multiple types of data, such as state test data (achievement and progress), attainment data (such as graduation rate or prepared for success), local diagnostic or formative assessment data, all students and student subgroup data, survey results, and chronic absenteeism, attendance and discipline data;
 - The types of analysis completed and results of analysis;
 - Identification of stakeholders (parents, community, businesses) who were part of the needs assessment process;
 - Description of the process used to engage stakeholders (surveys, meetings, inclusion on planning team);
 - How stakeholders influenced the needs assessment process and selection of the evidence-based strategy.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS:

1. What stakeholder data was part of the needs assessment?
 - Parent, student, teacher, community survey results (surveys should not be limited to general satisfaction surveys);
 - Focus group or 'town hall' feedback.
2. Did the data analysis include more than report card and test data?
 - Survey results;
 - Observations, walkthroughs;
 - Lesson plan review;
 - Curriculum audit;
 - Discipline data;
 - Attendance/chronic absenteeism;
 - Student outcome data;
 - Mobility data.
3. Did the analysis include data related to identification trigger (for example, priority, focus, special education, early literacy)?
4. If the school is a dropout recovery community school, did the analysis include data from general education report card data in addition to dropout recovery report card data?
5. Was all analysis completed prior to root cause analysis (or was data analysis pushed to an action step)?
6. Did the analysis provide enough information to identify a root cause or relevant strategy?
7. What other analysis or data might provide a more complete picture of the concern?
8. What non-test data might provide additional context and help identify the root cause of the problem?
9. Did you look at subgroup data? Proficiency level data? Progress data?
10. Did you look at student outcome data (credentials, postsecondary enrollment, employment, military enlistment, etc.)?
11. Did you include data from any special programs (21st Century grant data, before-/after-school programs, career-technical outcomes)?

Setting Priorities

1. Are priorities identified based on the results of the data analysis of the needs assessment?
2. Does the analysis support identification as a priority?
3. Is the priority specific?
4. Were stakeholders part of the process to identify priorities?
5. Do stakeholders agree with identified priorities?
6. Does the priority align to the basis for identification? School vision, mission and education plan?

Areas of Strength

1. Do areas of strength include more than report card grades and outcomes?
2. Do areas of strength go beyond expected compliance?
3. What evidence supports conclusions regarding areas of strength?

Root Cause

Root Cause Analysis is about identifying breakdowns in systems and processes, NOT people.

1. Is the root cause something you can impact?
2. Is the root cause identified the true root cause or a symptom? (Students' challenges cannot be a root cause!)
3. Is the identification of the root cause supported by the data analysis? What is the evidence?

FINDING THE ROOT CAUSE:

- The cause is something you can influence and control;
- When using the 'Five Whys' analysis, you reach a dead end by asking 'why?' until the true root cause is identified;
- Everyone agrees this is a root cause;
- The cause is logical, makes sense and provides clarity to the problem;
- If the cause of the problem is dissolved, there is realistic hope the problem can be reduced or prevented in the future.

Goals and Indicators

1. Are all goals aligned to the root cause? Appropriate for the selected evidence-based strategies?
2. Are goals specific, measurable, achievable, relevant/rigorous and time bound (SMART)?
3. Are goals aligned to school performance goals?
4. Do student outcomes include short-, intermediate- and long-term goals?
5. Are the short- and long-term targets ambitious but reasonable? How do you know?
6. Does the plan include adult implementation goals/indicators? What must happen to implement all action steps? What is evidence of implementation?
7. Is a goal a combination of multiple goals (e.g., the Performance Index) instead of a specific, actionable goal?
8. Does the plan lack supporting goals/indicators?
9. Do all goals or indicators included identify the specific measures/metrics and/or data sources that will be used? What evidence will be used?
10. Does the plan lack a description (including timelines) of ongoing data collection and analysis?
11. Are implementation indicators (process goals) present?
12. Do the goals support monitoring of implementation and action steps?

Evidence-Based Strategies

1. Programs are not strategies. If you select a program as part of your improvement plan, can you identify the strategy the program supports?
2. Does the selected strategy align to the priority identified by the needs assessment? (For example, If the priority identified is early literacy, explain that the research supporting the selected strategy matches the grade level, type of student (all or specific subgroup), and content area of reading or English language arts.)
3. Does the selected strategy complement other existing initiatives or strategies already in use?
4. Does the strategy align to the goals and indicators?

5. Did you identify the evidence level (Level 1 ("Strong"), Level 2 ("Moderate") or Level 3 ("Promising")) associated with each strategy identified in the application?
6. Can you explain why the strategy selected meets the requirements of the level identified?
7. Did you identify the clearinghouse or other source that features the strategy and associated level of evidence?
8. Did you include links to studies that support the level of evidence?
9. Can you measure the success of the selected strategy?
10. What resources are required to implement this intervention?
 - Time, money, people, training, technology, space;
 - What is the capacity of current staff to implement the strategy?
 - Does this strategy align with the mission, vision, education plan, performance expectations, other strategies?
 - Is this strategy sustainable?
 - Is another strategy a better fit?

Action Steps

1. Are action steps specific? What will be done?
2. Do action steps identify timelines and deadlines?
3. Do actions steps identify the responsible party? Is one person responsible for too many action steps?
4. Are action steps aligned to the strategy and address root cause?
5. Do action steps provide evidence of completion/ implementation and facilitate monitoring?
6. Do action steps follow a logical order?
7. Do action steps provide for points in time for review and reflection? (How does data collection and monitoring inform each of the action steps?)
8. Are the key action steps that support implementation of the selected strategy included?
9. Does each action step include an implementation goal or indicator?

Implementation Monitoring

1. How will all action steps, implementation indicators, goals and student outcomes be monitored?
2. What data/evidence and measures of progress will be collected?
3. Who is responsible for collecting each type of data?
4. Does the monitoring plan establish clear roles and responsibilities, including a system of checks and balances? (Are the same people implementing and supervising the implementation?)
5. When will data be collected?
6. Who reviews and analyzes the data? To whom are the results of the analysis presented?
7. How is the data used?
8. How is the monitoring process used to revise the project plan if necessary?
9. Is monitoring plan aligned to action steps?

Evaluation

1. Who is responsible for implementing the evaluation plan? Will there be an independent evaluation? Who will conduct the evaluation?
2. What resources are needed to conduct the evaluation?
3. What measures and data sources will be used?
4. When will evaluation activities take place?
5. How does the evaluation of this project align to the needs assessment, identified priorities, goals and strategies?
6. Will you conduct periodic formative evaluations of progress in addition to the summative evaluation at the conclusion of the project? What costs will be incurred to support evaluation activities?
7. Does the evaluation include what went wrong and course corrections?
8. Did the monitoring plan work?

Budgeting and Sustainability

1. Can you explain the connection between spending plan and specific action steps included in the proposal?
2. Is the spending plan aligned to needs assessment, root cause, goals and strategies?
3. How much does each activity cost?
4. How do you know the cost amount is accurate?
5. How will expenditures be monitored? Course corrections made?
6. Are any expenditures ongoing costs?
7. Are any expenditures 'one-time' expenses? How will the impact of these expenditures be sustained?
8. How will ongoing and recurring expenditures be funded long term?
9. What is the source of improvement funds (state, federal, private funding or reallocation of existing funds)?
10. How will you monitor expenditures to ensure sustainability?

Professional Development

1. What are the specific opportunities for professional development for school staff?
2. Why and how were they chosen?
3. What is the background of individuals providing professional development? What experience and credentials do they have?
4. How do they support the evidence-based strategy? Align to the identified priority?
5. How will you determine impact/efficacy of the professional development?
6. Are there implementation indicators associated with the professional development?

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Requirements

Community schools are recommended to review ESSA requirements in preparation for answering the supplemental planning questions in the CCIP.