THE CENTER ON
SCHOOL
TURNAROUND
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FOUR DOMAINS FOR RAPID SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Indicators of Effective Practice

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Introduction

In recent years, rapid school improvement — known most commonly as school turnaround — has emerged as the chief focus of dramatic and systemic efforts aimed at giving students better schools. To assist states, districts, and schools in leading or managing these efforts, in 2017 the Center on School Turnaround at WestEd (CST) developed *Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement: A Systems Framework.* That framework identifies four areas of focus that research and experience point to as central to rapid and significant improvement: *turnaround leadership, talent development, instructional transformation,* and *culture shift*. Within each domain, the framework also identifies three critical practices for taking action. The intent was to organize and frame the field's learning about rapid school improvement efforts and how improvement decisions made at any one level could have a lasting impact across all levels of a system comprising the state education agency (SEA), the local educa-tion agency (LEA), and the individual school.

This subsequent document, which is intended to facilitate educators' ability to take and track action within each domain, provides the specificity of indicators for each practice identified in the framework. An indicator of effective practice is what Redding (2013) calls a concrete behavioral expression of a particular professional practice that research has shown to con-tribute to student learning. The indicators presented in this document are expressed in plain language so school, district, and state teams can identify with greater certainty whether a relevant practice from the four domains is standard and routinely operational or whether more work is needed.

The authors envision these indicators playing an important role in the continuous improve-ment cycle that should be integral to any education improvement effort. The cycle proposed by CST in its work with states and districts on rapid school improvement begins with set direction, followed by assess needs, create plan, implement plan, monitor work, and adjust course (Layland & Corbett, 2017). (For more on the cycle, see the appendix.)

Once educators have set the direction for rapid improvement of their school, LEA, or SEA, indicators of effective practice may be the clearest and most appropriate metrics to use — first, in determining the status quo across the four domains (i.e., the level of effective prac-tice currently in use) and, then, in tracking progress. So, during **needs assessment,** indicators serve as the objectives against which to consider prevailing practice (Corbett & Redding, 2017). Results from this mapping in the needs assessment stage inform **the plan,** helping leaders decide, for example, where to focus initial versus subsequent efforts or whether to focus more tightly on one or two particular domains versus other domains.

When **implementation** is underway, the ability to specify, report, and understand progress at any given time is essential. Here, too, indicators play an important role. Used in **moni-toring,** they allow for a more detailed understanding of the relative progress being made, with results possibly prompting leaders to **adjust** their plan (e.g., if progress is slower than expected or is slow in one domain but not another).

This document offers three to five implementation indicators for each effective practice within each of the four domains and at each level of the system: state, district, and school. It also suggests sources of evidence to use in determining the degree to which an indicator is implemented and, in turn, whether a practice has been fully implemented. Gathering such

evidence helps the entity implementing a practice — the SEA, the LEA, or the school — understand whether it has succeeded with this one indicator of the practice.[*]

The authoring team considered the following guidelines in developing the indicators presented herein:

- Is the indicator stated in plain language, that is, free of jargon?

- Is the indicator aligned with research that attests to the importance of the practice?

- Can the indicator be used across an improvement cycle (e.g., set direction, assess needs, create plan, implement plan, monitor work, and adjust course)?

- Does the indicator enhance an understanding of the practice being implemented?

- Is the indicator essential to the practice?

- Is the intent of the indicator clearly stated so that implementation can be easily determined?

As SEAs, LEAs, and schools implement the practices in the four domains, the use of specific indicators can guide their work to drive change. Based on its own context and assessment of need, each education entity will select indicators that best fit its situation. Rapid improvement will be more sure-footed as a result.

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[*] Note that evidence related to an indicator demonstrates fidelity to the indicator's intent — that is, the degree to which it has or has not been carried out. An indicator's *effectiveness* is another matter. For instance, an indicator may call for communication of some sort, and a school or district may have examples of such communication, meaning it has succeeded in meeting the indicator. But finding out whether that communication has been effective might require evaluative measures, such as participant satisfaction surveys or an impact analysis. This particular document focuses on fidelity in implementing an indicator, but those leading improvement efforts will need to determine effectiveness as appropriate. To fully implement a practice requires implementing multiple indicators, and evidence of a *practice's* full implementation would typically include a measure of its effectiveness.

Definition of Terms

District Leadership Team: a district-level team given authority and charged with oversight of the district's improvement efforts, including school improvement and turnaround efforts

District staff: district personnel whose work is related to the nature of the indicator

District: the board, administration, and/or district staff as relevant to the nature of the indicator

Instructional Team: the teacher planning team, typically organized by grade level, subject area, or department

Leadership: applies generally to administrators and teams charged with responsibility for the actions described in the indicator; may be school, district, or state leadership

Leaders: personnel in a leadership role, which may include teacher leaders, principals, super-intendents, team leaders, and various administrative and managerial staff

School Community Council: a team including the principal, teacher representatives, and parent representatives that oversees school-home relationships

School Leadership Team: a school-level team that is given authority and charged with over-sight of the school's improvement or turnaround efforts and that is typically made up of the principal, select administrative and support staff, and lead teachers

School personnel, school staff: school employees whose work is related to the nature of the indicator

School Team: a school-specific team of school personnel of various kinds, such as the School Leadership Team, teacher instructional teams (organized by grade level, subject area, or department), and School Community Council (including parents)

State Leadership Team: a state-level team given authority for and charged with oversight of the state's improvement efforts, including oversight of district and school improvement and turnaround efforts

State: the state education agency (SEA)

Teacher: classroom teacher or related professional instructional personnel

Indicators by Domain and Practice

In the following domain-specific sections, each practice is introduced by a description of that practice and examples of how different levels of the education system can enact it. The description and examples are taken verbatim from the CST's *Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement: A Systems Framework* (2017). The indicators themselves, accompanied by sources of implementation evidence, are then presented for each level of the system: state, district, and school.

Domain 1:
Turnaround Leadership

Practice 1A: Prioritize improvement and communicate its urgency

Practice 1A Description

1. Set the strategic direction for turnaround, and establish clear policies, structures, and expectations for constituents to work toward ambitious improvement goals.

2. Articulate a commitment to turning around the lowest-performing schools and advocate fiercely across audiences for these schools.

3. Closely monitor, discuss, report, and act upon the progress of schools undertaking rapid improvement.

Examples of How Different Levels of the System Can Enact This Practice

State. Establish an office or cadre of personnel responsible for supporting policy, programmatic, and implementation efforts to lead turnaround initiatives. State leaders advocate the social and moral imperative of school turnaround through multiple public forums, leveraging communication and other strategies to garner parent and community support.

District. Identify a senior district official to lead a team that oversees local turnaround initiatives, including overseeing principal support and development, policy development, districtwide data analysis, and overall strategy direction. The superintendent articulates the need for turnaround, connecting the state's championing of it to local contexts and inviting local community members to further inform implementation efforts, policy, and resource distribution.

School. Develop leadership teams and, within the school staff, build leadership capacity for turnaround. Increasingly distribute leadership among faculty and staff to solidify commitment, increase collaboration, and provide faculty and staff with new challenges to keep them meaningfully engaged in the turnaround effort. Share turnaround priorities with students, faculty, and the school community, leveraging local media outlets to announce the school's commitment to change and to enlist parent and community partners in the effort.

State-Level Indicators

Indicator St-1A.1: State leadership sets a clear direction for the state with a stated vision, theory of action, goals, and strategies for the state's continuous and sustained improvement.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-1A.1: Direction document, agendas, and meeting minutes demonstrating where the vision has been shared

Indicator St-1A.2: State Leadership Team, designated and given authority by state leadership, directs state improvement efforts and supports policies, programs, and implementation of district and school improvement and turnaround efforts.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-1A.2: Names and roles of state officials overseeing implementation efforts; integrated SEA-level support plan

Indicator St-1A.3: State communicates and advocates for public commitment to turning around low-achieving schools.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-1A.3: Public communications (media articles; presentations, speeches; letters to stakeholders, including parents) advocating for the need for school turnaround and public commitment to it

Indicator St-1A.4: State develops and communicates a guiding framework (including roles, responsibilities, expectations) for districts and, also, for regional centers' oversight and support of school-level turnaround efforts.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-1A.4: State's framework and its communication plan; examples of communications of the framework to districts and/or regional centers

District-Level Indicators

Indicator Di-1A.1: District leadership sets a clear direction for the district with a stated vision, a theory of action, goals, and strategies for the district's continuous and sustained improvement.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-1A.1: Direction document, agendas, and meeting minutes demonstrating where the vision has been shared

Indicator Di-1A.2: District Leadership Team (or other team appointed by leadership) oversees the district's improvement, including school improvement and turnaround initiatives.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-1A.2: Names and roles of team members, description of team's responsibilities, and meeting minutes or agendas

Indicator Di-1A.3: District leadership convenes public forums and invites stakeholders, including parents and neighborhood leaders, to inform context, policy, equitable resource distribution, and implementation of turnaround efforts.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-1A.3: Descriptions, schedules, and materials related to public forums, including list of participants and minutes of meetings

Indicator Di-1A.4: District and its schools follow a board-adopted improvement and turnaround process that, for each, includes a vision, theory of action, goals, strategies, and procedures for assessing need, creating a plan, and managing plan implementation.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-1A.4: Board-adopted process and board minutes approving it

Indicator Di-1A.5: District leadership monitors the creation and implementation of district and school improvement and turnaround plans, based on needs assessments, and reports progress to the district governing board.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-1A.5: District monitoring plan, identification of key data, monitoring schedule, district policies outlining school turnaround progress, and communications between district leadership and the district governing board

School-Level Indicators

Indicator Sc-1A.1: School leadership sets a clear direction for the school with a stated vision, theory of action, goals, and strategies for rapid and sustained improvement.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-1A.1: Direction document, agendas, and meeting minutes demonstrating where the vision has been shared

Indicator Sc-1A.2: School Leadership Team itemizes and appropriately distributes leadership functions among faculty.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-1A.2: Names and roles of School Leadership Team members and a description of leadership functions and how they are assigned to faculty

Indicator Sc-1A.3: Communication strategies, as outlined in a plan developed by school leadership, are used to routinely share improvement priorities across faculty and staff, with students and with the school's broader community.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-1A.3: Communication plans; examples of communications to staff, faculty, and community articulating improvement priorities (e.g., emails, letters, staff/community meeting minutes)

Practice 1B: Monitor short- and long-term goals

Practice 1B Description

1. Develop goals informed by assessments of recent performance trends, and identify practices aimed at realizing a clearly articulated turnaround vision of significantly improved student learning.

2. Establish milestones for gauging progress. Continually update timelines and tasks to maintain the pace needed to accomplish meaningful goals quickly.

3. Respond to regular feedback on progress toward goal-directed milestones, and make timely changes in policy, programs, and personnel to get on track in achieving desired results for students.

4. Capitalize on initial turnaround successes and momentum to shift the focus from change itself to incorporating and establishing effective organizational processes, structures, and interactions that contribute to continuous organizational improvement.

Examples of How Different Levels of the System Can Enact This Practice

State. Create overarching expectations for improved student outcomes that are clearly articulated and measurable and that can be adapted for local contexts. Share clear expectations for high-performing schools, along with aspirational examples of such schools that have made rapid improvement.

District. Provide intensive, tiered support to principals and school leadership teams to help them develop action items, timelines, and responsibilities aligned with their school's turnaround plan. Provide access to data to inform goal-directed milestones, including markers for implementation, changes in professional practice, and interim and annual student assessments. Provide schools with resources, time, and concrete feedback to support them in refining and advancing their turnaround plan.

School. Develop and update the turnaround plan to ensure that it has clear short- and long-term goals. Monitor the progress of strategy implementation and make changes in personnel, programs, and methods as needed to keep the effort on track. Intervene swiftly if waning progress is detected.

State-Level Indicators

Indicator St-1B.1: State leadership sets state-level student-outcome goals with baseline and annual target measures informed by various forms of assessment.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-1B.1: State student-outcome goals with baseline and annual target measures; needs assessments

Indicator St-1B.2: State assists districts in setting district-level student-outcome goals and developing and monitoring improvement and turnaround plans with goal-aligned implementation milestones and annual target measures.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-1B.2: State training and technical assistance plans, schedules, agendas, and materials

Indicator St-1B.3: State Leadership Team establishes and monitors implementation of a state improvement plan that is aligned with the state's direction and includes implementation milestones and annual target measures.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-1B.3: State improvement plan, monitoring process, and team minutes

Indicator St-1B.4: State provides policy, guidance, and support for each district and school to set student-outcome goals and implementation milestones and to manage processes for monitoring and responding to progress data.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-1B.4: State guidance or policy, schedules, and descriptions related to support services to districts and schools

Indicator St-1B.5: State agency staff engage in support for district and school improvement, including conducting site visits to monitor plan implementation.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-1B.5: Monitoring plan and protocols, including monitoring reports and schedules

District-Level Indicators

Indicator Di-1B.1: District leadership sets the district's student-outcome goals, with baseline and annual target measures informed by various forms of assessment.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-1B.1: District improvement plan identifying goals, including alignment of goals to assessments; examples of milestones or indicators of progress

Indicator Di-1B.2: District provides training and support to principals and school leadership to set student-outcome goals, with baseline and annual target measures informed by various forms of assessment.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-1B.2: District's principal professional learning plan, agendas of meetings demonstrating technical assistance, technical assistance reports or technical assistance guidance, and documents of professional learning

Indicator Di-1B.3: District Leadership Team establishes and monitors implementation of a district improvement plan, aligned with the district's direction and including implementation milestones and annual target measures.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-1B.3: District improvement plan, monitoring process, and team minutes

Indicator Di-1B.4: District provides policy, guidance, and support for each school to set student-outcome goals and implementation milestones, to monitor progress, and to respond to progress data.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-1B.4: Guidance/district policy and schedules and descriptions for support services to schools

Indicator Di-1B.5: District staff engage in support for school improvement, including conducting site visits to monitor plan implementation.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-1B.5: Monitoring plan and protocols, including monitoring reports and schedules

School-Level Indicators

Indicator Sc-1B.1: School leadership sets student-outcome goals with baseline and annual target measures informed by various forms of assessment.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-1B.1: Needs assessment process, student-outcome goals, and baseline and annual target measures

Indicator Sc-1B.2: School Leadership Team establishes and monitors implementation of an improvement or turnaround plan that is aligned with the school's direction and includes implementation milestones and annual target measures.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-1B.2: Improvement or turnaround plan, monitoring process, and minutes of team meetings

Indicator Sc-1B.3: Improvement or turnaround plan includes necessary changes in personnel, programs, and professional practice as determined by needs assessments.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-1B.3: Plan template and actual plan, and needs assessment results

Indicator Sc-1B.4: School Leadership Team monitors and adjusts implementation of the improvement or turnaround plan through regular (typically monthly) review of progress toward goal-aligned milestones and target measures.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-1B.4: Written protocols or procedures outlining the monitoring process; minutes of meetings

Indicator Sc-1B.5: School Leadership Team provides and responds to regular (typically quarterly) feedback on progress toward goal-aligned implementation milestones and annual target measures.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-1B.5: School improvement or turnaround plan that outlines improvement process, including guidance around feedback on progress toward milestones and measures

Practice 1C: Customize and target support to meet needs

Practice 1C Description

1. Provide customized, targeted, and timely supports for turnaround efforts.

2. Align support to ensure coherence and integration with other necessary initiatives; eliminate unnecessary initiatives.

3. Regularly monitor progress to identify support needs and then act quickly and competently to address those needs.

Examples of How Different Levels of the System Can Enact This Practice

State. Conduct site visits to monitor plan implementation, and target district support based on identified priorities and progress. As an incentive to drive change, allow earned autonomy for local leaders in making key decisions. Share templates and tools to enable local leaders to make the best decisions. Provide professional learning activities for district and school leaders to establish and strengthen organizational leadership.

District. Provide tailored support to each school based on deep root-cause analysis and needs assessment to inform the school's priorities. Customize each school's level of autonomy for personnel hiring, placement, and replacement and other key decisions based on school capacity.

School. Identify the priority needs of the school, focusing on three to five immediate priorities. Request flexibility from established policies and/or procedures as justified by the data, turnaround plan, and school capacity.

State-Level Indicators

Indicator St-1C.1: State provides professional learning opportunities that convene district and school personnel to learn from each other about implementation of their school improvement and turnaround strategies.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-1C.1: Schedule and documents for professional learning (e.g., agendas for convenings, examples of tools and resources to support learning)

Indicator St-1C.2: State uses monitoring reports and other strategies to identify deficits in student performance across districts and schools and provides districts and schools with templates and tools for analyzing and responding to the findings.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-1C.2: State monitoring plan and protocols; monitoring reports; agendas and schedules for district meetings related to progress; communications between the SEA and districts participating in state-provided professional learning; SEA surveys of district needs; related communications, templates, and webpages (that provide related templates and/or tools)

Indicator St-1C.3: State's system of support is sufficiently differentiated in identifying and responding to improvement needs of districts and schools.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-1C.3: Operations documents for the state system of support, including its theory of action, needs assessment processes, and methods for identifying and responding to each district and school's improvement needs

District-Level Indicators

Indicator Di-1C.1: District provides intensive and tailored support to identified school-level priorities that are informed by root-cause analysis and school-level needs assessments.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-1C.1: District policy and/or strategy for supporting schools, root-cause analysis, and needs assessments

Indicator Di-1C.2: District regularly monitors each school's implementation of improvement and turnaround plans and has procedures for responding in a timely manner to deviations from expected progress toward milestones.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-1C.2: Monitoring schedules, protocols, and reports

Indicator Di-1C.3: District provides information and opportunities for schools (e.g., principals, staff or leadership teams) to learn lessons derived from school improvement implementation across schools, including alongside and from one another.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-1C.3: Districtwide technical assistance plans and documents for professional learning

School-Level Indicators

Indicator Sc-1C.1: School leadership assesses needs at the school, grade, and individual level and identifies three to five key priorities as part of a school improvement or turnaround plan.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-1C.1: Needs assessment and school improvement plan

Indicator Sc-1C.2: School leadership requests and receives flexibility from the district around identified areas (e.g., flexibility in hiring staff or use of funds) and offers data as rationale for the requests.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-1C.2: Communication to district officials requesting flexibility around key areas; request for district policy waivers, with references to data

Indicator Sc-1C.3: School plans and implements improvement strategies that are focused on student learning needs and tailored to address the professional learning needs of individual teachers.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-1C.3: School improvement plan and professional learning plans for staff

Domain 2:
Talent Development

Practice 2A: Recruit, develop, retain, and sustain talent

Practice 2A Description

1. Proactively plan for recruiting and developing talent with turnaround-specific competencies to quickly fill the vacancies which will inevitably occur during the turnaround process.

2. Use multiple sources of data to match candidate skills and competencies to school needs, prioritizing the highest need schools.

3. Institute succession planning activities by creating in-house district preparation programs designed to foster and generate turnaround competencies to develop future turnaround leaders and teachers.

Examples of How Different Levels of the System Can Enact This Practice

State. Develop and disseminate human resources practices designed to identify, extend, and support turnaround competencies in leaders and teachers and train districts in the use of these practices. Offer turnaround preparation programs to support the development of aspiring school leaders.

District. Create a model for selection and placement of teachers and school leaders with turnaround competencies, ensuring that turnaround schools have preferential access to teaching candidates. Challenge and support human resources staff to design programs that identify and support the development of potential turnaround leaders and teachers. Develop multiple measures and data sources to closely analyze an individual's turnaround readiness and potential as a turnaround teacher or leader (e.g., observation of candidates over time in various settings).

School. Collaborate with the district to develop a school-specific competency model for turnaround teachers to discern which competencies should be prioritized in the teacher-selection process in this school. Utilize the district turnaround talent pool as the "go-to" source for hiring assistant principals and teachers. Encourage aspiring leaders to participate in turnaround preparation programs.

State-Level Indicators

Indicator St-2A.1: State produces and disseminates samples of exemplary district policy and district/school practice regarding talent recruitment and development related to turnaround competencies.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-2A.1: Documents or webpages and dissemination schedule

Indicator St-2A.2: State provides professional learning opportunities for district personnel to understand turnaround competencies and how to develop them in teachers and leaders.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-2A.2: Descriptions and schedules of professional learning activities

Indicator St-2A.3: State provides and/or supports programs to prepare and develop turnaround leaders.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-2A.3: Program descriptions, schedules, agendas, and participation records

District-Level Indicators

Indicator Di-2A.1: District policy includes prioritization of turnaround schools in teacher selection and placement activities.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-2A.1: District policy on selection and placement

Indicator Di-2A.2: District policies, programs, and procedures include those for identifying and developing turnaround talent.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-2A.2: District policies and program descriptions related to turnaround talent development

Indicator Di-2A.3: District uses multiple measures and data sources to assess teacher and leader turnaround competencies, with special attention to readiness and potential, and uses these tools to identify and develop teachers and leaders to serve in turnaround contexts.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-2A.3: Assessment criteria and tools

Indicator Di-2A.4: District provides school leadership in the lowest-performing schools with defined, increased authority in appropriate talent-development areas (e.g., teacher hiring).

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-2A.4: Guidance/district policy regarding flexibility around resources and time for turnaround schools

School-Level Indicators

Indicator Sc-2A.1: School leadership engages school personnel to identify the unique turnaround context of their school and uses this information to determine the priority competencies for teachers and leaders.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-2A.1: School-specific turnaround competencies and models, agendas, minutes, and team meeting notes

Indicator Sc-2A.2: School leadership hires teachers and leaders from an identified talent pool for turnaround contexts developed by the district and conducts its own recruitment to ensure a staff of teachers and leaders well matched to school needs.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-2A.2: Counts and documentation of hiring source for teacher, teacher leader, coach, and assistant principal positions

Indicator Sc-2A.3: Teachers and leaders are engaged in professional development opportunities that include strategies to succeed in the turnaround environment.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-2A.3: Description of these activities and related procedures that are routine in the school

Practice 2B: Target professional learning opportunities

Practice 2B Description

1. Offer high-quality, individualized, and responsive professional learning opportunities designed to build the capacity needed for rapid school improvement.

2. Offer regular opportunities for job-embedded learning including coaching, mentoring, and observation (including peer observations).

3. Leverage and maximize the effectiveness of high-performing teachers, coaches, and leaders by using them as models and peer coaches.

Examples of How Different Levels of the System Can Enact This Practice

State. Provide training to districts on how to develop and implement a teacher professional learning model with individualization and job-embedded processes as the focus. Provide funding preference to professional learning opportunities that reflect these processes. Share examples of how districts and schools have implemented peer coaching, mentoring, and peer observation. Model a willingness to learn and grow. Ensure that development opportunities offered to districts model the formats and principles of effective professional learning.

District. Create timelines and other accountability systems that remind principals to regularly examine teacher performance and to rapidly adjust professional learning plans based on identified needs. Provide district staff with job-embedded professional learning and opportunities to learn side by side with school leaders. Ensure that district-offered professional learning experiences are differentiated, purposeful, targeted, and reflective of what is known about successful adult learning and the turnaround endeavor.

School. Create a cadre of instructional leaders (drawing from assistant principals, department coordinators, team leaders, and teachers with demonstrated instructional coaching capacity) who each respond to the professional learning needs of a manageable portion of the faculty and use data to identify those needs. Provide opportunities for leaders and teachers to learn side by side and share how their own ongoing growth impacts their individual practice as instructional and organizational leaders. Ensure that learning experiences are differentiated, purposeful, targeted, employed in rapid response to identified needs, reflective of what is known about effective adult learning, and clearly connected to the school's turnaround priorities.

State-Level Indicators

Indicator St-2B.1: State provides districts and schools with examples of how districts and schools have implemented effective professional learning opportunities.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-2B.1: Examples and description of how they are disseminated

Indicator St-2B.2: State provides training for districts and schools in developing and implementing a professional learning approach that is 1) based on identified needs and 2) offers effective high-quality professional learning opportunities for teachers and leaders.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-2B.2: Descriptions and schedules of professional learning

Indicator St-2B.3: State's trainings and learning opportunities embody the principles of effective professional learning, including reflective practice and structures to encourage individual and collective growth.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-2B.3: Descriptions and schedules of professional learning

District-Level Indicators

Indicator Di-2B.1: District policy specifies that each school will regularly examine and annually report on how it is using data to identify professional learning needs of each teacher and using these data to rapidly respond with professional learning opportunities aligned with the school's turnaround priorities.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-2B.1: Policy and reporting timelines

Indicator Di-2B.2: District offers all district staff high-quality, relevant, and job-embedded professional learning opportunities, including some opportunities to engage in the professional learning with school leaders and teachers.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-2B.2: Schedules and documents related to professional learning

Indicator Di-2B.3: District provides or supports, evaluates, and continuously improves professional learning opportunities for district and school personnel that are differentiated, purposeful, effective, and high quality.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-2B.3: Schedules and documents related to professional learning

School-Level Indicators

Indicator Sc-2B.1: School Leadership Team meets at least quarterly to review data to inform professional learning opportunities for teachers and make recommendations in rapid response to identified needs, as aligned with the school's turnaround priorities.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-2B.1: Agendas and notes of meetings that analyzed the data and reports of professional learning recommendations

Indicator Sc-2B.2: School Leadership Team engages in learning opportunities *with* teachers to learn together and reflects with them on professional practice (e.g., coaching, mentoring, observation).

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-2B.2: Schedules, rosters, and documents for professional learning

Indicator Sc-2B.3: School Leadership Team seeks out, and provides access to, professional learning opportunities that are differentiated, purposeful, effective, and high quality to benefit faculty both individually and collectively.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-2B.3: Schedules and documents related to professional learning

Practice 2C: Set clear performance expectations

Practice 2C Description

1. Create and share expectations for a level of professional performance by every role in the system.

2. Develop and implement performance-management processes that include clear means for monitoring progress, flexibility to rapidly respond to professional learning needs, and opportunities to revise milestones as needed.

Examples of How Different Levels of the System Can Enact This Practice

State. Develop protocols to assist districts in analyzing role expectations and adapting those expectations to support school turnaround. Provide support and tools to help districts establish and monitor milestones.

District. Identify which district-level roles will contribute to school turnaround efforts; review and refine job expectations and descriptions to reflect realistic and high-leverage responsibilities to support rapid school improvement.

School. Define expectations for teachers, clearly and realistically considering how to effectively leverage teacher time and effort. Develop a daily and weekly schedule that reflects this priority of effective use of teacher time. When asking more of a teacher, consider removing another responsibility.

State-Level Indicators

Indicator St-2C.1: State develops and disseminates protocols to guide districts and schools in analyzing role expectations specific to improvement and turnaround efforts.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-2C.1: Materials and description of dissemination efforts

Indicator St-2C.2: State provides training, information, and data tools to enable districts to establish and monitor goal-aligned implementation milestones related to role expectations.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-2C.2: Materials, agendas from professional learning opportunities, schedules of events, and participant rosters

Indicator St-2C.3: State provides example job descriptions that reflect realistic and high-leverage responsibilities for district and school improvement and turnaround staff.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-2C.3: Job and role descriptions

District-Level Indicators

Indicator Di-2C.1: District-level roles, designated by district leadership, contribute to and support school improvement and turnaround efforts, with an appropriate proportion of job responsibilities committed to these efforts.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-2C.1: Job and role descriptions

Indicator Di-2C.2: District human resources staff review and refine job expectations and descriptions for turnaround teacher and leader positions, ensuring that they reflect clear and realistic expectations aligned with turnaround priorities.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-2C.2: Documentation of job description reviews

Indicator Di-2C.3: District provides example calendars and schedules for schools that reflect effective use of teacher time, including time for teacher collaboration, professional learning, and review of student data.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-2C.3: Daily, weekly, and monthly school calendars

School-Level Indicators

Indicator Sc-2C.1: School Leadership Team provides clear written expectations for teachers and leaders in terms of roles, effort, and expected outcomes.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-2C.1: Job and role descriptions

Indicator Sc-2C.2: School Leadership Team develops and implements schedules to reflect effective use of teacher time, including time for teacher collaboration, professional learning, and review of student data.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-2C.2: Daily, weekly, and monthly school calendars

Indicator Sc-2C.3: School Leadership Team examines, at least once a semester, teacher and leader role descriptions and commitments so that responsibilities can be equitably distributed.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-2C.3: Documentation of a commitment analysis and resulting recommendations for responsibility redistribution

Domain 3:
Instructional Transformation

Practice 3A: Diagnose and respond to student learning needs

Practice 3A Description

1. Diagnose student learning needs and use identified needs to drive all instructional decisions.

2. Incorporate effective student supports and instructional interventions.

3. Use fluid, rapid assessment and adjustment of instructional grouping and delivery to adapt to student learning needs.

Examples of How Different Levels of the System Can Enact This Practice

State. Provide incentives around funding and support to local education agencies and schools that target staffing improvements that ensure teachers have the time and capacity to diagnose and respond to each student's needs. Provide training on fluid instructional groupings.

District. Develop protocols to assist teachers in drilling down on individual student needs and creating instructional action plans aligned to those needs. Explore creative use of instructional time, which may include, but is not limited to, options for extended learning such as longer school days, weeks, or summer sessions to support each student's needs. In doing so, any additional instructional time should be structured and staffed to ensure high-quality learning will occur (rather than simply a perpetuation of ineffective practices). Ensure that data sources (e.g., benchmark assessments) exist for teachers to conduct frequent progress monitoring of student outcomes.

School. Regularly examine individual student data, carried out in team meetings, professional learning communities (PLCs), or in other planning sessions as part of teachers' regular work and expectations. Creatively use fluid instructional groupings rather than year-long assignments that may not meet students' (and teachers') needs. For example, when students struggle with a certain concept, they could be assigned temporarily to a teacher whose data demonstrate that he or she teaches it well or differently from the students' current teacher(s), placed in a small group for reteaching, or given individualized instruction. Teachers are given time within the school day to conduct such analysis and develop plans to address identified needs. Teachers are also held accountable for doing so and for carrying out the plans they develop for students.

State-Level Indicators

Indicator St-3A.1: State provides incentives (e.g., mini-grants) for district personnel to be trained and coached on the use of a systematic approach to implementation of any practice to improve instruction (e.g., teaming structure; decision rules for training, coaching, and data systems; instructional strategies and practices).

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-3A.1: Grant applications with clearly defined and mutually agreed-upon selection criteria and deliverables

Indicator St-3A.2: State provides training and coaching to district and school leadership to develop a systematic approach to implementation and evaluation of instructional practices.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-3A.2: Dates of training and coaching sessions, with documentation of content delivered and participant rosters

Indicator St-3A.3: State, in partnership with diverse stakeholders, provides and/or supports an easy-to-use data system for districts and schools to monitor implementation and out-come data relative to instructional practice.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-3A.3: Description of data system and how it is used and improved based on practitioner feedback

District-Level Indicators

Indicator Di-3A.1: District policy includes protocols and decision rules for schools to use in the design of instructional groupings for students.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-3A.1: District protocols and decision rules

Indicator Di-3A.2: District provides and supports learning opportunities for school leaders and teachers to design and implement flexible schedules and extended instructional opportunities to meet student needs.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-3A.2: Agendas, materials, and participant lists from learning opportunities

Indicator Di-3A.3: District provides schools with an easy-to-use data system to monitor implementation data (e.g., on training, coaching, effective instructional practice) and student outcome data (e.g., benchmark data collected and used three times per year).

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-3A.3: Description of the data system and how it is used in schools

School-Level Indicators

Indicator Sc-3A.1: School teams meet regularly (at least monthly) to review implementation data (e.g., documentation from walkthroughs, practice fidelity, training, coaching) and student data (academic and socio-behavioral) for all students and individual students.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-3A.1: Each team's purpose, roles, responsibilities, and meeting schedules posted on school website

Indicator Sc-3A.2: Principal and a district liaison are active members of the School Leadership Team and provide support and advice to secure needed resources for instructional improvement.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-3A.2: Team meeting notes indicating principal and district liaison attend monthly meetings

Indicator Sc-3A.3: School teams use student learning data and instructional strategy data to design fluid instructional groupings that respond to student need.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-3A.3: Team meeting minutes and descriptions of instructional groupings

Practice 3B: Provide rigorous evidence-based instruction

Practice 3B Description

1. Set high academic standards and ensure access to rigorous standards-based curricula.

2. Provide supports to ensure evidence is used in instructional planning and facilitation of student learning.

3. As gaps are identified in the curriculum or instructional delivery, develop plans to strengthen these key components.

Examples of How Different Levels of the System Can Enact This Practice

State. Provide district-level leaders with professional learning on state standards that enables them, in turn, to plan and provide learning opportunities that bolster teacher content knowledge when needed. Provide guidance on using evidence to select curricular and instructional supports.

District. Work with schools' instructional leadership teams to refresh, update, and bolster teachers' content knowledge through ongoing professional learning opportunities on rigorous evidence-based instruction. Coordinate vertical alignment such that teachers have an understanding of what their students should have learned the prior year, before entering their classroom, and what their students will be expected to learn the following year. Examine curricular and instructional supports to ensure they are grounded in evidence, rigor, and the state standards.

School. Conduct a curriculum analysis and map lesson plans against standards to ensure the plans adequately represent the standards. Determine whether adjustments and supports are needed to ensure all students have access to the curricula. In each instructional mode utilized — whether whole class, small group, independent work, technology-based, or homework — teachers routinely utilize the best instructional practices for that mode and school leaders support their development of those practices.

State-Level Indicators

Indicator St-3B.1: State provides guidance, including online modules, for district and school staff on how to use evidence to select curricular and instructional supports.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-3B.1: Guidance document and related professional learning modules available on the state website

Indicator St-3B.2: State provides training for district and school staff on how to select evidence-based practices (chosen by a representative team) that are aligned with content areas and the state standards.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-3B.2: Training schedule and attendance rosters; description of trainings and practice opportunities

Indicator St-3B.3: State provides training for district and school staff on content knowledge aligned with a state menu of evidence-based practices and state standards.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-3B.3: Description of training and practice opportunities; training schedule and attendance rosters

District-Level Indicators

Indicator Di-3B.1: District provides school teams with the tools and coaching needed to select and operationalize evidence-based instructional practices that meet the needs of their school's students.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-3B.1: District menu of evidence-based instructional practices that are provided to schools; descriptions of tools and coaching provided by district

Indicator Di-3B.2: District provides training for district and school staff on the selection and use of evidence-based instructional practices.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-3B.2: Training descriptions, schedules, and attendance rosters

Indicator Di-3B.3: District facilitates ongoing updates by district/school teams to documents that are used by teachers in instructional planning and that vertically align standards and curriculum.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-3B.3: Training descriptions, schedules, and attendance rosters; alignment document

School-Level Indicators

Indicator Sc-3B.1: School Leadership Team constructs a credible menu of evidence-based instructional practices that adequately represent the state standards to recommend to teachers for meeting student needs.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-3B.1: Menu of evidence-based instructional practices, minutes of School Leadership Team meetings, and documentation of communication with faculty

Indicator Sc-3B.2: To meet student needs, teachers use, with a high degree of fidelity, evidence-based instructional practices that adequately represent the state standards.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-3B.2: Course syllabi, lesson plans, and classroom observation data

Indicator Sc-3B.3: School personnel receive initial and ongoing training in using evidence-based instructional practices, with opportunity to practice the skills in the training.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-3B.3: Descriptions and schedules of trainings; participant lists

Indicator Sc-3B.4: School leadership ensures that all students are taught with evidence-based instructional practices that adequately represent the state standards and are differentiated to meet their individual needs.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-3B.4: Differentiated lesson plans; student progress data; notes from school leaders who are reviewing and providing feedback on Instructional Team meeting minutes

Practice 3C: Remove barriers and provide opportunities

Practice 3C Description

1. Systematically identify barriers to student learning and opportunities to enhance learning opportunities for students who demonstrate early mastery.

2. Partner with community-based organizations, such as with health and wellness organizations, youth organizations, and other service providers, to support students in overcoming obstacles and developing the personal competencies that propel success in school and life.

Examples of How Different Levels of the System Can Enact This Practice

State. Support districts in developing early warning systems to identify students who may be falling behind, giving the school the opportunity for timely intervention. Identify and network with other state-level entities that could serve as partners for schools and districts. Create access to services that districts can tap into in order to meet students' needs that, if left unaddressed, can impede learning (e.g., health care, clothing, nutrition).

District. Identify and remove any artificial barriers (whether policies or practices) that stand in the way of every student having an opportunity to learn at higher levels. Identify the district's most prevalent non-academic barriers to student learning. Disseminate this information to principals, and during meetings with principal supervisors continually revisit how community resources can be leveraged creatively to meet students' basic needs.

School. Track student progress and help students regain lost ground through academic supports (e.g., tutoring, co-curricular activities, tiered interventions), extended learning opportunities (e.g., summer bridge programs, after-school and supplemental educational services, Saturday academies, enrichment programs), credit-recovery programs, and virtual courses. Give students demonstrating sufficient prior mastery access to higher-level assignments and courses. Network with nearby organizations in the community to identify available supports — or to generate new supports — for students. Consider having medical and dental services available on site on a regular basis. Provide on-site laundry service for families in need. Provide food for students during extended learning sessions and other periods when they are at school outside of regular school hours.

State-Level Indicators

Indicator St-3C.1: State provides an early warning data system (EWDS), developed with broad stakeholder participation, for use in all districts.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-3C.1: Meeting notes that include a complete list of stakeholders and their attendance at each meeting; EWDS information that is posted on the state website

Indicator St-3C.2: State provides a state-level Menu of Community and Social Services (MCSS), developed with broad stakeholder participation, to be included in each district's local MCSS.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-3C.2: Meeting notes that include a complete list of stakeholders and their attendance at each meeting; state-level MCSS posted on the state website

Indicator St-3C.3: State monitors the development of each district's local MCSS (which should include state-level services) and use of that MCSS by each district and its schools, and it surveys stakeholders about their satisfaction with the MCSS and its use.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-3C.3: State report of monitoring results and results from stakeholder satisfaction surveys

District-Level Indicators

Indicator Di-3C.1: District provides initial and ongoing training and coaching to school personnel on the district-adopted EWDS and related protocol.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-3C.1: Survey disseminated to measure satisfaction of staff with training and effectiveness of EWDS unmet needs of identified students

Indicator Di-3C.2: District works with community groups to annually update its MCSS, which includes services that are accessible in the district's region, and the protocol for its use.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-3C.2: Survey disseminated to measure satisfaction of staff and effectiveness of the MCSS in fulfilling unmet needs of identified students

Indicator Di-3C.3: District provides initial and ongoing training and coaching of school personnel to use the MCSS.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-3C.3: Training agenda, schedules, materials, and participant lists

Indicator Di-3C.4: District uses data collected by schools that are using the EWSD and MCSS and stakeholder surveys to measure effectiveness (defined as fulfilling unmet needs and improving student outcomes) and satisfaction with use.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-3C.4: Minutes of meetings to review data and survey results and description of actions taken as a result

School-Level Indicators

Indicator Sc-3C.1: School team meets monthly to use an EWDS and protocol to identify specific students in need of support, remove barriers, and fulfill unmet needs of identified students.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-3C.1: Team meeting notes that reflect names of students in need of support and how they will be supported (e.g., action plan for each student)

Indicator Sc-3C.2: School team meets periodically with representatives of community organizations and uses the district-developed MCSS to match students with appropriate services to fulfill their unmet needs

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-3C.2: Meeting minutes and work products, MCSS, and student action plans

Indicator Sc-3C.3: School team uses data (including stakeholder survey results) three times per year to measure effectiveness of integrating the EWDS and MCSS and satisfaction with their use.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-3C.3: Minutes of school team meetings to review data on effectiveness/satisfaction and how the team responds to the data

Domain 4:
Culture Shift

Practice 4A: Build a strong community intensely focused on student learning

Practice 4A Description

1. Celebrate successes — starting with quick wins early in the turnaround process — of students, family, teachers, and leaders. Early success promotes an expectation for further success and engenders confidence in the competence of colleagues.

2. Provide explicit expectations and support for each person's role (expected behaviors) both in the turnaround and in student progress.

3. Create opportunities for members of the school community to come together to discuss, explore, and reflect on student learning.

4. Champion high expectations (of self and others), embed them in everyday practice and language, and reinforce them through shared accountability and follow-through on strategies for dramatically improving student outcomes.

Examples of How Different Levels of the System Can Enact This Practice

State. Provide districts with tools for tracking, analyzing, and sharing data on school performance, professional practice, and student opportunities; share findings and exemplary practices across districts; set policies that require a demanding curriculum for all students.

District. Provide systems and structures to support collaborative district and school work such as dedicated time for reflection and collaboration. Align personnel evaluations with the role expectations for turnaround. Offer opportunities and avenues for sharing turnaround progress and successes.

School. Establish systems (i.e., structures, policies, procedures, and routines) for focused collaborative work; recognize student effort and academic mastery; recognize job satisfaction and camaraderie among staff as essential assets in a turnaround. Maintain a positive, encouraging classroom and school culture for students where students feel safe and supported to share their needs, struggles, and concerns. Recognize each incremental improvement but keep the focus on ultimate results at the student, teacher, and school levels. Celebrate team accomplishments and offer recognition for hard work and improvement. Frequently and openly review and discuss with stakeholders data on turnaround progress (including implementation and leading indicators).

State-Level Indicators

Indicator St-4A.1: State produces and disseminates samples of exemplary district policy and district/school practice regarding team structures, role expectations, and methods for recognizing academic achievement.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-4A.1: Examples available on the state website

Indicator St-4A.2: State provides professional learning opportunities for district personnel to develop policies and products that promote student learning through effective teams, clear role expectations, position descriptions, and evaluation criteria.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-4A.2: Descriptions and schedule of professional learning activities

Indicator St-4A.3: State produces and disseminates samples of exemplary district policy and district/school practice regarding building strong school communities and nurturing school cultures that enhance and celebrate student learning.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-4A.3: Examples available on the state website

District-Level Indicators

Indicator Di-4A.1: District policy includes description of required structures, purposes, meeting times, and work products for both district and school teams that focus on improving practice to enhance student learning.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-4A.1: District policy accessible to district and school teams

Indicator Di-4A.2: District policy includes guidelines for each school's School Leadership Team to clearly define, document, and annually review roles, responsibilities, and expectations relative to students' learning for administrators, teachers, parents/caretakers, staff, volunteers, and students.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-4A.2: District policy

Indicator Di-4A.3: District expects each school to nurture a culture that recognizes and celebrates academic achievement by including the expectation in position descriptions and evaluation criteria for school personnel.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-4A.3: Position descriptions from district policy; evaluation criteria

School-Level Indicators

Indicator Sc-4A.1: All school personnel are organized into teams with clearly defined purposes (related to improving practice in order to enhance student learning), regular meeting times, and work products.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-4A.1: Team descriptions, rosters, agendas, minutes, and team work products

Indicator Sc-4A.2: A team including teacher and parent representatives oversees school-home relationships that enhance student learning and operates with clearly defined purposes (related to improving practice in order to enhance student learning), regular meeting times, and work products.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-4A.2: Team description**,** rosters, agendas, minutes, and team work products

Indicator Sc-4A.3: School Leadership Team clearly defines, documents, and annually reviews roles, responsibilities, and expectations relative to students' learning for administrators, teachers, parents/caretakers, staff, volunteers, and students.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-4A.3: Document containing role descriptions accessible on school website; minutes of annual review by School Leadership Team

Indicator Sc-4A.4: School promotes, recognizes, and celebrates academic achievement in school rituals and routines, such as morning announcements, awards assemblies, hallway and classroom wall displays, and student competitions

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-4A.4: Description of these activities posted on the school website with related procedures that are routine in the school; wall displays

Indicator Sc-4A.5: School facilitates two-way communication and face-to-face association among school personnel, students, and students' families to work together to advance student learning.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-4A.5: Description of these activities posted on the school website

Practice 4B: Solicit and act upon stakeholder input

Practice 4B Description

1. Collective perceptions — held by school personnel, students, families, and the broader community — about the degree to which their school climate is or is not positive is gathered and used to gauge the climate-related work to be done by a school striving for turnaround.

2. Stakeholder perceptions are considered when identifying priorities and improving the underlying conditions that contribute to school climate issues.

3. Acknowledge and respond to constructive feedback, suggestions, and criticism.

Examples of How Different Levels of the System Can Enact This Practice

State. Provide instruments and protocols for conducting local perception surveys, forums, and focus groups to districts and schools; provide opportunities for parents and community members to provide feedback at state and local levels.

District. Administer a diagnostic instrument soliciting feedback from school personnel, families, students, and community members early in the turnaround process with periodic follow-up surveys to assess perceptions of the school and the turnaround effort; provide training for school leaders on assessing stakeholder perceptions and acting on what they learn.

School. Learn what constituents think by conducting surveys, forums, focus groups, and suggestion boxes. Share and act on what is learned. Take constituent input into account when making programmatic decisions. Consistently demonstrate that all voices are heard.

State-Level Indicators

Indicator St-4B.1: State provides districts and schools with examples of climate surveys and protocol for their administration, analysis, and reporting, which districts may adopt or use to inform development of their own climate survey.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-4B.1: Sample surveys and description of how they are accessed and used, available on state website

Indicator St-4B.2: State provides professional learning opportunities for district personnel to guide schools in selecting, administering, analyzing, and using data for action planning based on climate surveys.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-4B.2: Descriptions and schedules of professional learning activities

Indicator St-4B.3: State provides examples of school climate survey results, schools' analyses of their data, and the actions they took to improve school climate.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-4B.3: Examples of how schools used their climate survey data to develop action steps and how those action steps are changing school climate, available on state website

District-Level Indicators

Indicator Di-4B.1: District policy specifies that schools will administer an annual climate survey and states the procedures for its administration, analysis, action steps, and reporting.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-4B.1: District policy

Indicator Di-4B.2: District School Leadership Team annually compiles a consolidated report of results from individual school reports about the climate survey and presents it to the board with recommendations for districtwide changes in policy and practice.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-4B.2: District report, recommendations, and board minutes

Indicator Di-4B.3: District provides professional learning opportunities for school personnel on interpreting results of the annual climate survey, using it with stakeholder groups, and taking concrete action on the results.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-4B.3: Schedules and documents for professional learning, including evaluation of the learning

School-Level Indicators

Indicator Sc-4B.1: School Leadership Team annually conducts a survey of school personnel, families, and students to gauge perceptions about the school, its effectiveness, and their place in it.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-4B.1: Survey and procedures for its administration and analysis

Indicator Sc-4B.2: School Leadership Team annually releases to the school community a report of its analysis of the climate survey, including concrete actions it plans in response to the analysis.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-4B.2: Report and minutes from School Leadership Team meetings that analyze the survey results and communicate concrete actions

Indicator Sc-4B.3: School Leadership Team annually convenes meetings of school personnel and families to discuss results of the annual climate survey.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-4B.3: Agendas of meetings and attendee rosters; team decision and concrete actions communicated

Practice 4C: Engage students and families in pursuing education goals

Practice 4C Description

1. Intentionally build students' personal competencies to pursue goals, persist with tasks, appraise their progress, hone learning strategies, and direct their own learning to further enhance their capacity to learn and succeed.

2. Provide students with opportunities to connect their learning in school with their interests and aspirations.

3. Meaningfully engage parents in their child's learning, progress, interests, and long-term goals.

Examples of How Different Levels of the System Can Enact This Practice

State. Require evidence of direct linkage between family and community engagement and student outcomes in turnaround and improvement plans and reports; provide training and resources on family and community engagement; provide professional learning on student goal setting, self-regulation of learning, and family engagement in the student's progress.

District. Provide resources for sharing assessments, interest inventories, and career and college information with students and families; provide planning templates for students to plan coursework and college and career pathways; provide line items in the school budget for resources related to family engagement for the specific purpose of supporting student learning; include information about the school's data-supported progress with family engagement in monthly board reports; set aside time and provide structures for parent groups focused on improved student learning.

School. Programmatically and systematically build students' skills in setting learning goals, managing their learning, and pursuing their goals by charting progress on coursework and towards their postsecondary goals; inform and engage families in planning and supporting their students' education goals; provide students and their families with a full explanation of assessment results and interest inventories to help them make the best decisions; tap community resources and expertise to expand students' understanding of potential careers and education options.

State-Level Indicators

Indicator St-4C.1: State develops and disseminates information to guide districts and schools on including, at each grade level, curriculum and instruction to build students' skills in setting learning goals, applying learning strategies, and tracking their mastery.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-4C.1: Materials and description of dissemination efforts

Indicator St-4C.2: State provides training, information, and data tools to enable districts and schools to provide help for students and their families in formulating education goals and in understanding and using a variety of data sources about student progress and interests.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-4C.2: Materials, agendas from professional learning opportunities, schedules of events, and participant rosters

Indicator St-4C.3: State provides suggested practices and supports for districts and schools to engage all students and their families in formulating education goals and understanding and using a variety of data sources about student progress and interests.

Sources of Implementation Evidence St-4C.3: Documents containing these items

District-Level Indicators

Indicator Di-4C.1: District curriculum guides include instruction at each grade level to build students' skills in setting learning goals, applying learning strategies, and tracking their mastery.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-4C.1: Curriculum guides

Indicator Di-4C.2: District provides professional learning opportunities for all school leaders and teachers to infuse instruction with activities that help students explore possibilities, articulate their personal aspirations, and connect their learning to the pursuit of these aspirations.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-4C.2: Materials from professional learning opportunities, schedules of events, and participant rosters

Indicator Di-4C.3: District provides training, information, and data tools to enable schools to provide help for students and their families in formulating education goals and in understanding and using a variety of data sources about student progress and interests.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Di-4C.3: Materials from training, copies of information, and descriptions of data tools

School-Level Indicators

Indicator Sc-4C.1: All teachers build students' skills in setting learning goals, applying learning strategies, and tracking their mastery.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-4C.1: Documentation in curriculum guides, lesson plans, and classroom observations

Indicator Sc-4C.2: All teachers help students explore possibilities, articulate their personal aspirations, and connect their learning to the pursuit of these aspirations.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-4C.2: Documentation in curriculum guides, lesson plans, student learning plans, and classroom observations

Indicator Sc-4C.3: School helps students and their families formulate education goals and understand and use a variety of data sources about student progress and interests.

Sources of Implementation Evidence Sc-4C.3: Documentation in curriculum guides, materials for families, and agendas and schedules for events that include families and students

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Appendix: Indicators and the Improvement Cycle

Indicators are an important component in understanding whether rapid improvement efforts are successful. Layland and Corbett (2017), writing for the Council of Chief State School Officers and drawing from multiple sources, provide a stepwise process for improvement by a state, district, or school that is managed by a leadership team. Layland and Corbett's continuous improvement process (p. 34), consists of the multi-step iterative cycle shown in figure 1. Individual steps are described below.

Figure 1: Improvement Cycle
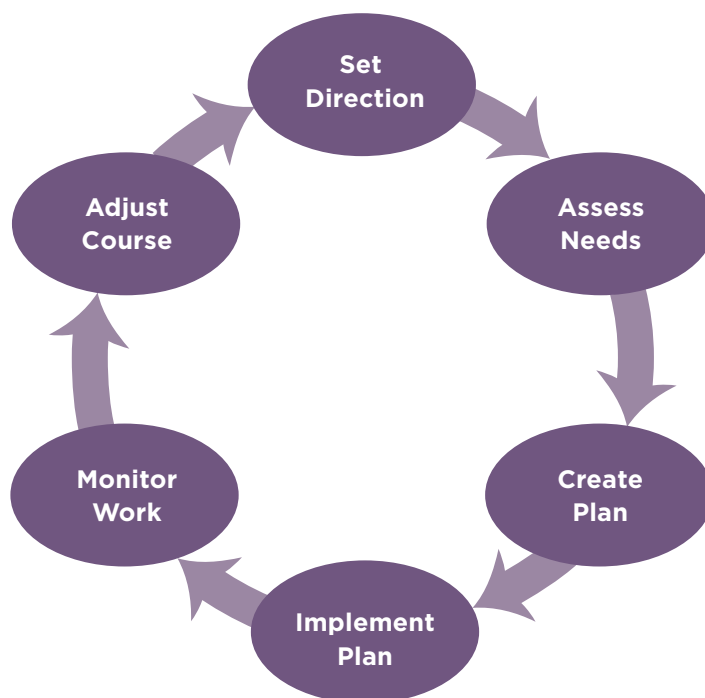
Source: Layland and Corbett (2017). Adapted with permission.

Set direction

Ideally, members of the leadership team charged with managing an improvement process for their state education agency (SEA), local education agency (LEA), or school begin work with a clear direction in mind — an understanding of what their organization wants to be able to do for its students. This direction is reflected in the organization's vision, mission, goals for students, and performance measures for determining progress toward the goals. If that direction is not already clear, part of the team's job is to clarify it.

Assess needs

With the desired direction in mind, the leadership team undertakes a needs assessment intended to describe the organization's current condition and also track its improvement progress. That needs assessment should dig into the four domains that research has identified as key to education improvement (CST, 2017). Assessment results, coupled with an understanding of the organization's intended direction, help the team decide where to focus initial improvement efforts versus subsequent efforts. When conducting a needs assessment, the effective practices and related indicators presented in this document are ideal to use as objectives against which to consider current practice. Findings from the assessment, along with other types of data related to student and staff demographics, student outcomes, personnel policies, culture/climate, stakeholder engagement, among others, help create a clear picture of what's going on in the education organization now compared to where it wants to be, that is, its direction. For a practical guide on constructing and administering needs assessments, see *Using Needs Assessments for District and School Improvement: A Tactical Guide* (Corbett & Redding, 2017). The indicators are also suited for use in monitoring progress, whether by the leadership team itself or by external coaches.

Create plan

To develop the improvement plan most likely to enable the organization to reach its goals, the leadership team must be guided by information describing the organization's aspirations (e.g., vision, mission, goals for students) and its current condition (which may include progress already underway). With this context in mind, the team can identify the domain(s) in which it appears work is most urgently needed and can begin to select practices (i.e., strategies) for moving the organization forward. Inherent in the process of creating a plan is the need to prioritize and target and to decide where and when to focus efforts so as to identify what will change and by when.

Choosing effective practices

Over time, *all* effective practices will be important to an education organization; however, in an improvement plan, some will be more immediate priorities than others, depending on a leadership team's understanding of its organization's intended direction and current context. In selecting the practices and related indicators that will be prioritized in the plan, the team also needs to consider which data will best reflect how the organization is progressing in its specific improvement efforts.

The exercise below can be used by a leadership team as it selects the practices that it thinks might best address the areas most immediately in need of rapid improvement. In the exercise, the team constructs a theory of change for any practice being considered for inclusion in the improvement plan, that is, a theory of *how* the practice will yield the desired results. To do so, the team uses an *if-then-and* logic statement, in which

- the *if* phrase identifies the particular practice being considered;

- the *then* phrase articulates how the team expects the practice to be enacted in order to generate the desired results; and

- the *and* phrase reflects the team's intentions in using the practice (i.e., the goals it wants to achieve) and, in doing so, suggests which indicators might best serve as objectives in the plan. The *and* phrase also suggests some possible outcome measures.

In the following example of a logic statement, the practice being considered is that of *diagnosing and responding to student needs* from the Instructional Transformation domain:

> *If* our district diagnoses and responds to student learning needs, *then* teachers will apply targeted interventions in a timely fashion, *and* each student will meet or exceed readiness benchmarks indicating that the student will graduate prepared for college, career, and community engagement.

To develop a logic statement:

1. The team starts by articulating a student goal, which is the *and* phrase in the *if-then-and* statement: "Each student will meet or exceed readiness benchmarks indicating that the student will graduate prepared for college, career, and community engagement."

2. The team then identifies an outcome measure: the percentage of students meeting or exceeding readiness benchmarks in both reading and math.

3. The team then *identifies a data source:* the annual state standards assessment. In this example, the team identifies baseline passing rates of 64 percent for 2018 and sets target rates of 70 percent for year 2019 and 74 percent for year 2020.

4. Based on the organization's intended direction and what the team has learned about current practice from the needs assessment and other data, it then identifies a domain in which to focus its improvement efforts, in this case, Instructional Transformation.

5. Within that domain, it then picks a practice to consider, the *if* phrase of the *if-then-and* statement; in this case the practice is, "Diagnose and respond to student learning needs."

6. The team then thinks deeply about how it expects the practice to be enacted so it will lead to the desired results. That expectation becomes the *then* phrase of the *if-then-and* statement. In this example, the expectation is that "teachers will apply targeted interventions in a timely fashion."

Caution: While it's important for teams to consider how they will measure outcomes, it's equally important for them to design a system to support the effective implementation of a practice.

To reiterate, in this *if-then-and* exercise, the *if* phrase is the practice, the *and* phrase is the student goal, and the *then* phrase is the leadership team's understanding of how the practice must be enacted for the organization to reach its goal. Of course, no one practice, however well implemented, will catapult all students to the desired outcomes, but any practice included in an improvement plan should first be tested in this way so that the team is clear about how a particular practice, in combination with others, will help the organization move toward its student goal. This understanding is critical in choosing which indicators of effective practice to include in the improvement plan.

NOTE: In addition to identifying outcome measures, a leadership team may want to identify performance measures for how a practice is carried out. In the example, the team might query *whether more teachers more appropriately applied interventions* in a targeted fashion. Using performance measures tests the level of implementation for the particular practice, while the outcome measure (step 2, above) tracks the collective effectiveness of this and other practices.

Choosing indicators of effective practice

Although the practices in the *Four Domains* framework serve as strategies that provide general direction in a plan, they do not provide the specificity needed for implementation. That specificity is provided by the indicators (and, further, subsequent actions within each indicator). Rephrasing an indicator as an objective, by changing it to a future tense, makes it a key component of an improvement plan. More-specific actions, along with timelines, can then be planned in line with the objective. The actions and timelines can then be monitored to determine fidelity to the plan. The objective's full implementation can be verified with evidence, as suggested in the main body of this document.

Using the practice from the exercise above, the following example shows how a School Leadership Team uses an indicator as an objective in its school improvement plan.

The School Leadership Team has determined that its school needs to work on the practice "diagnose and respond to student learning needs," from the Instructional Transformation domain.

It has constructed a theory of action to clarify its thinking about the practice:

> *If* our school diagnoses and responds to student learning needs, *then* teachers will apply targeted interventions in a timely fashion, *and* each student will meet or exceed readiness benchmarks indicating that the student will graduate prepared for college, career, and community engagement.

After looking at the indicators associated with this practice, the team realizes that all of them point to weaknesses in the school's instructional system. So it decides to include them as objectives in its improvement plan. Here is how it addresses one of the indicators:

The team uses Indicator Sc-3A.3: School teams use student learning data and instructional strategy data to design fluid instructional groupings that respond to student need. Sources of implementation evidence for the indicator are team meeting minutes and descriptions of instructional groupings.

For inclusion in its improvement plan, the team rewrites the indicator as an objective, in the future tense: "School teams *will* use student learning data and instructional strategy data to design fluid instructional groupings that respond to student need."

For evidence of implementation, the plan says, "The leadership team will review the minutes of the teacher instructional teams and determine that the teams routinely use both student learning data and instructional strategy data to create student groups."

The team then gets more specific, identifying actions and target completion dates and assigning responsibility, for example:

Action 1: Principal meets with teacher team leaders to develop a standard procedure for data review and student groups.

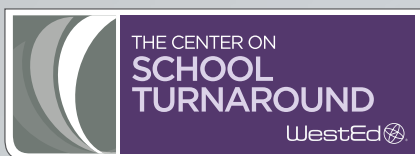**Target Completion Date:** November 15

Primary Responsibility: Principal

The team then constructs additional actions for familiarizing teachers with the procedures and examining the documentation to make sure the change is being effectively made and to make course corrections as necessary.

Monitor work and adjust course

Each month, the team monitors implementation of its improvement plan by tracking progress in completing specific actions and in fully implementing the objectives. Annually, the team examines performance measures to determine progress toward goals, and it may apply similar performance measures to its chosen practices. As part of a continuous improvement process, the team revisits the organization's direction; conducts and examines the results of new needs assessments, along with student outcome data, to see what progress has been made; and, based on these steps, revises the improvement plan.

The leadership team — whether state, district, or school — uses the improvement process to set and pursue its goals and address the results of needs assessments. Pursuing goals is a matter of adopting practices, selecting indicators, and creating actions to fully implement the objectives (indicators rephrased in future tense). Establishing timelines, identifying who's responsible for what, and tracking evidence of success are all part of the improvement process and, thus, are the ongoing work of the leadership team.

FOUR DOMAINS FOR RAPID SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: INDICATORS OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE