

School Improvement Plan – Development, Approval and Implementation

Note: All schools in a district designated as one-, two-, or three-stars by the Department of Education and Early Development are required to develop, issue, and implement a school improvement plan. A school improvement plan is required even if the school does not receive Title I funds. The following procedures for development of the plan are consistent with the requirements of 4 AAC 06.845, School Improvement Plan, and 4 AAC 06.852, Technical Assistance.

The [Superintendent/Chief School Administrator] shall designate the individual responsible to oversee development of school improvement plans. Required plans must be developed by November 1 of each school year.

A. Schools Requiring A Plan

The following schools require a school improvement plan:

1. Any school designated with a rating of one, two, or three stars;
2. Any school identified by the Department as a priority or focus school; and
3. Any school designated with a rating of four or five stars if the school:
 - a. Has failed to meet its annual measurable objectives for two consecutive years for the school as a whole or any subgroup;
 - b. Has experienced a decline in the school's graduation rate on the whole or for any subgroup (high schools only); or
 - c. Has a participation rate of less than 95% on state standards-based assessments.

B. State Involvement

If the school is identified by the Department of Education and Early Development as a priority or focus school, the school improvement plan will be prepared in consultation with the Department and is subject to Department approval.

If the school has received a one- or two-star rating, the school improvement plan must be submitted to the Department.

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY/SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT (continued)**C. Plan Preparation**

Note: State regulation, 4 AAC 06.845, requires as a general rule that school improvement plans be developed using the Department's computerized self-assessment and improvement program. An alternative process may be utilized by a district in limited instances if approved by the Department. Department approval is limited to: 1) schools that are implementing an effective school improvement plan through an accreditation process; 2) schools that are rated as four- or five-star and the plan is specific to a particular identifiable deficiency; or 3) the district can show by a preponderance of the evidence that the school has a planning process for development of an improvement plan that will address as effectively or more effectively than the Department's program each of the 6 domains and each specific deficiency at the school.

The school improvement plan will be prepared utilizing a computerized self-assessment and improvement program selected by the Department. The self-assessment program will address the following six domains: 1) curriculum; 2) assessment policy and practice; 3) instruction; 4) school learning environment; 5) professional development policy and practices; and 6) leadership.

Note: The following language implements requirements for plan participants as set forth at AS 14.03.123(d).

The school improvement plan is to be prepared with the maximum feasible public participation of the community, including, as appropriate, interested individuals, teachers, parents, parent organizations, students, tribal groups, local government representatives, and other community groups.

D. Plan Contents For Priority Schools

The Plan must provide for a system of comprehensive intervention using all required turnaround principles. The district will consult with and obtain the approval of the Department to address deficiencies in each of the six domains, as identified in the computerized self-assessment or in a desk or instructional audit.

Comprehensive turnaround principles to be implemented at the school must include:

1. School Calendar Adjustments. The school day, week, and year, will provide more time for student learning and teacher collaboration. This includes the following minimum requirements:

- a. dedicated time block each week for teacher collaboration;
- b. 90 minutes daily of core reading instruction for all students grades K-6;
- c. 30 additional minutes of intervention daily for K-6 students below grade level in reading;
- d. dedicated time block daily for structured reading interventions for students grades 7-12 who are below grade level in reading;
- e. 60 minutes daily of core math instruction for all students grades K-6; and
- f. dedicated time block daily for structured math intervention for students grades 7-12 who are below grade level in math.

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY/SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT (continued)

2. Teacher Effectiveness. The district's policies and actions will ensure that all teachers at the school are effective teachers. This includes the following actions:

- a. each teacher's effectiveness is reviewed by the district and principal, including a review of student learning data;
- b. replacement or improvement of ineffective teachers;
- c. requiring teachers transferring to the school to be proven effective; and
- d. providing job-embedded professional development that targets the specific needs of teacher and students.

3. Instructional Program. The instructional program will be strengthened through the following methods:

- a. adoption and use of research-based curricula that are aligned with state standards;
- b. implementation of reading curricula that addresses the essential elements of reading;
- c. implementation of reading and math support programs for students behind grade level;
- d. using data to inform instruction, including
 - at least three times per year, utilize a universal screening tool approved by the Department for all students, grades K-8;
 - utilize a diagnostic assessment to determine the specific reading or math deficiencies for all students one or more years below grade level; and
 - base instruction and interventions on the specific needs of the student as identified by screenings or assessments.
- e. establishing a school environment that improves school safety and discipline, including implementation of a school-wide behavior plan, and that addresses the social, emotional, and health needs of students;
- f. providing for family engagement in the school, including cultural awareness and understanding of cultural values; and
- g. providing strong leadership, including
 - reviewing the performance of the principal, including a review of student learning data;
 - retention of the existing principal or hire of a new principal based upon the existing principal's performance on indicators in the leadership domain; and
 - providing the principal with flexibility in areas that should be tailored to the needs of the school such as scheduling, staff, or budget.

4. Additional Requirements. The improvement plan must, to the extent possible, include measures to:

- a. increase local control of education;
- b. increase parental choice; and

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY/SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT (continued)

- c. not require a direct increase in state or federal funding for the school or district.

E. Plan Contents for Focus Schools

The school improvement plan for a focus school will identify targeted interventions that consider each of the comprehensive turnaround principles. Interventions will be targeted for any subgroup that is performing below grade level. In addition, appropriate interventions will be targeted to any deficiencies revealed through data analysis or the results of an instructional or desk audit.

In preparing the school improvement plan, the district will consult with the Department.

F. Plan Implementation

The school shall implement the plan immediately upon district approval. Should the Department determine that changes in the plan will improve the performance or progress of students, the school will implement the changes required by the Department.

The district will ensure appropriate technical assistance to the school during development of the plan and throughout the plan's duration. Technical assistance may be provided by the district, the Department, an institution of higher education, a private organization, an educational service agency, or another entity with experience in helping schools improve academic achievement.

Technical assistance must be based on research and may include:

1. assistance in analyzing assessment data and other examples of student work in order to identify and develop solutions to problems in instruction, parental involvement and professional development, and plan implementation, including district- and school-level responsibilities under the plan;
2. assistance in identifying and implementing professional development and instructional strategies and methods that have proven effective, through research, in addressing the specific instructional issues that caused the school's rating of one, two, or three stars; and/or
3. assistance in analyzing and revising the school's budget so that the school allocates its resources more effectively to the activities most likely to increase student academic achievement.

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY/SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT (continued)

District Improvement Plan – Development and Contents

Note: A school district must have a district improvement plan if: 1) at least 25% of its schools are designated as one or two stars; 2) at least 25% of the district's students attend a school designated as one or two stars; 3) an instructional or desk audit demonstrates significant deficiencies in the domains of: curriculum, assessment policy and practice, instruction, school learning environment, professional development policy and practices, and leadership; or 4) an instructional or desk audit shows that one or more subgroups in the district is not making progress toward the subgroup's annual measurable objectives. The following plan contents comply with the requirements set forth at 4 AAC 06.850, District improvement plan.

A district improvement plan will be prepared by [the Superintendent/Chief Administrative Officer] and submitted to the Department in the following circumstances:

1. At least 25% of the district's schools have been designated as one- or two-star schools;
2. At least 25% of the district's students attend a one or two-star designated school;
3. An instructional or desk audit at the district, or its schools, demonstrates significant deficiencies in the following domains of successful schools: curriculum, assessment policy and practice, instruction, school learning environment, professional development policy and practices, and leadership; or
4. An instructional or desk audit shows that one or more subgroups in the district is not making progress toward the subgroup's annual measurable objectives.

The district improvement plan will be developed in the same manner as school improvement plans.

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