

A Decision-Making and Planning Tool for the School Improvement Grant (SIG)

Adapted From the Center on Innovation & Improvement

The Center on Innovation & Improvement (CII) developed a tool that aids the LEA in assembling the necessary information and considering the essential questions to select an intervention model that has the greatest potential to dramatically improve outcomes for students attending a low-achieving school. The tool also helps the LEA select the strongest partners and service providers and to take the first steps in setting performance expectations and implementing the intervention.

The original tool developed by CII provided guidance and information on all four intervention models. In North Dakota, realistically, the Transformation Model is the only possibility. Therefore, we have revised the document to only include information on the Transformation Model. CII's original tool can be accessed at www.centerii.org.

Step 1-A: Develop Profile for Intervention Model

Transformation

1. State statutes and policies that address transformation, limit it, create barriers to it, or provide support for it and how:

2. District policies that address transformation, limit it, create barriers to it, or provide support for it and how:

3. District contractual agreements, including collective bargaining, that affect transformation and how:

Step 1-B: Develop Profile of Available Partners/External Providers

Transformation

The LEA replaces the principal with a highly capable principal with either a track record of transformation or clear potential to successfully lead a transformation (although the LEA may retain a recently hired principal where a turnaround, restart, or transformation was instituted in past two years and there is tangible evidence that the principal has the skills necessary to initiative dramatic change); implements a rigorous staff evaluation and development system; rewards staff who increase student achievement and/or graduation rates and removes staff who have not improved after ample opportunity; institutes comprehensive instructional reform; increases learning time and applies community-oriented school strategies; and provides greater operational flexibility and support for the school.

External partners/providers available to assist with transformation and brief description of services they provide and their track record of success.				
Partner Organization/External Provider	Lead Y/N	Support Y/N	Services Provided	Experience (Types of Schools and Results)

Step 2: Develop a Profile of the School's Context and Performance

Name of School:

Context

1. Grade levels (e.g., 9-12):
2. Total Enrollment:
3. % Free/Reduced Lunch:
4. % Special Education Students:
5. % English Language Learners:
6. Home Languages of English Language Learners (list up to 3 most frequent):
7. Briefly describe the school's enrollment area (neighborhoods, communities served):
8. Briefly describe the background and core competencies (particular skills, expertise) of the school's current key administrators and indicate the number of years they have held the position and the number of years they have been employed in the school and LEA.

Position	Background and Core Competencies	Years in Position	Years in School	Years in LEA

9. Briefly describe the process by which school administrators are evaluated. By whom? How frequently?

10. Provide a summary profile of the teaching staff. For middle schools and high schools, categorize by subject area (English, math, science, etc.). For elementary school, categorize by grade level or specialty area. Use Full Time Equivalent in counts.

Grade Level or Subject Area	Total FTE	FTE Highly Qualified in all Subjects Taught	FTE 5 yrs or less in school	FTE 6-15 yrs in school	FTE 16 or more yrs in school

11. Briefly summarize the process by which teachers are evaluated. By whom? How frequently?

12. Is teacher absenteeism a problem in this school? Please explain.

13. Briefly summarize previous and current reform and improvement efforts, within the last 5 years, and what impeded their success.

For example:

- Adopted a model and curriculum to raise reading scores, but was not able to implement with fidelity.
- District provided instructional coach, but coach was not able to have an impact due to only visiting school twice per quarter.
- Adopted a block schedule for math and reading, but inadequate professional development funds limited ability for teachers to change instructional approach and fully utilize longer instructional blocks.

Performance

1. Enter the percentage of all students who tested as proficient or better on the state standards assessment test for each subject available.

Subject	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 (if available)
Reading/Language/English					
Mathematics					

2. For the most recent year available, enter the percentage of students in each subgroup who tested proficient or better on the state standards assessment test for each subject available. Test Year:

Subject	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Asian, Pacific Island	Native American	English Language Learners	Special Education
Reading/Language/English							
Mathematics							

3. For the most recent year available, enter the percentage of students at each grade level in this school who tested proficient or better on the state standards assessment test for each subject available. Test Year:

Subject	1 st Gr.	2 nd Gr.	3 rd Gr.	4 th Gr.	5 th Gr.	6 th Gr.	7 th Gr.	8 th Gr.	9 th Gr.	10 th Gr.	11 th Gr.	12 th Gr.
Reading/Language/English												
Mathematics												

4. Average daily attendance percentage for last complete school year: _____ Year: _____

5. Student mobility rate for last complete school year: _____ Year: _____

6. Graduation rate for all students: _____

7. Graduation rate-percentage (high schools only).

All Students	White, non-Hispanic	Black, non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Asian, Pacific Island	Native American	English Language Learners	Special Education

8. Explain how the graduation rate was calculated.

Key Questions

1. Which student groups are experiencing the lowest achievement?
2. Which student groups are experiencing the lowest graduation rates, if applicable?
3. In which subjects are students experiencing the lowest achievement?
4. What characteristics of the student demographics should be taken into account in selecting a model and external partners/providers?
5. What, if any, idiosyncratic characteristics of the enrollment area should be taken into account in selecting a model and external partners/providers?
6. What characteristics of administrators and faculty should be taken into account in selecting a model and external partners?
7. What characteristics of past experience with reform efforts should be taken into account in selecting a model and external partners?

The Transformation Model

1. How will the LEA select a new leader for the school, and what experience, training, and competencies will the new leader be expected to possess?
2. How will the LEA enable the new leader to make and sustain strategic staff replacements?
3. What is the LEA's own capacity to support the transformation, including the implementation of required, recommended, and diagnostically determined strategies?
4. What changes in decision making policies and mechanisms (including greater school-level flexibility in budgeting, staffing, and scheduling) must accompany the transformation?
5. How will the district support the new leader in determining the changes in operational practice (including classroom instruction) that must accompany the transformation, and how will these changes be brought about and sustained?

Evaluation

1. Determine the performance expectations for the lead partner/provider and supporting partners/providers, with quarterly benchmarks.

Note: Developing performance expectations and benchmarks to include in the contract with each partner/provider is one of the LEA's most important responsibilities. Please see the links to web resources on page 9 to assist in making these decisions and in developing the appropriate contracts. Also engage LEA legal counsel in this process.

2. Describe how the LEA's will monitor implementation of the intervention model. Who will do what and when?

Step 3: Forge Working Relationships

Describe how the LEA will promote the working relationships among the groups and partners/providers committed to this intervention—the state, the LEA, the lead partner/provider, the support partners/providers, the internal partner/provider, the principal, school teams, and the parents and community.

Resources

See the *Handbook on Effective Implementation of School Improvement Grants* at www.centerii.org.

Also see resources below, which are also referenced in the *Handbook*.

Selecting and Contracting with External Partners/Providers

Arizona State Board for Charter Schools. (n.d.) *Charter contract between Arizona State Board for Charter Schools and John Doe*. Retrieved from <http://www.asbcs.az.gov/pdf/sample%20transfer%20contract.pdf>

Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (CCSRI). (2009). *School restructuring under No Child Left Behind: What works when? A guide for education leaders*. Washington, DC: Learning Point Associates. Retrieved from http://www.centerforsri.org/files/School_Restructuring_Guide.pdf

Chicago Public Schools. (2009). *Request for proposals/Questions for open applicants*. Chicago: Author. Retrieved from http://www.ren2010.cps.k12.il.us/docs/RFP_Open_Questions.pdf

Chicago Public Schools. (2009). *Sample contract school accountability plan*. Retrieved from http://www.ren2010.cps.k12.il.us/docs/Y2_Sample_Contract_School_Accountability_Plan.pdf

Denver Public Schools. (2009). *Charter school application*. Retrieved from http://osri.dpsk12.org/school_creation

Kowal, J. M., & Arkin, M. D. (2005). *Contracting with external education management providers*. The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement. Washington, DC: Learning Point. Retrieved from <http://www.centerforsri.org/pubs/restructuring/KnowledgeIssues3Contracting.pdf>

Kowal, J., & Hassel, B. (2009). *Establishing the right relationship terms. Starting fresh in low performing schools*. Chicago, IL: National Association of Charter Authorizers. Retrieved from <http://www.qualitycharters.org/i4a/pages/Index.cfm?pageID=3381>

Lake, R. J., & Hill, P. T. (2009). *Performance management in portfolio school districts*. Seattle, WA: Center on Reinventing Public Education. Retrieved from <http://www.crpe.org/cs/crpe/view/projects/1>

Miron, G., & Urschel, J. (2009). *Profiles of non-profit education management organizations: 2008-2009*. Boulder and Tempe: Education and the Public Interest Center & Education Policy Research Unit. Retrieved from <http://epicpolicy.org/publication/profiles-nonprofit-emos-2008-09>

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National Association of Charter School Authorizers. (2009, February). *The terms of the deal: A Quality charter school contract defined*. Retrieved from http://www.qualitycharters.org/files/public/Issue_Brief_18_Authorizing_The_Deal_FIN.pdf

National Association of Charter School Authorizers. (2009). *Authorizing policy guides and issue briefs*. Retrieved from <http://www.qualitycharters.org/i4a/pages/Index.cfm?pageID=3375>

National Association of Charter School Authorizers. (2009, September). *The charter school application process*. Retrieved from http://www.qualitycharters.org/files/public/Charter_School_Application_Process.pdf

National Association of Charter School Authorizers. (2009, September). *Charter school performance accountability*. Retrieved from http://www.qualitycharters.org/files/public/Performance_Accountability.pdf

- National Association of Charter School Authorizers. (2009, September). *Charter school contracts*. Retrieved from http://www.qualitycharters.org/files/public/Charter_School_Contracts.pdf
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- National Association of Charter School Authorizers. (2007, November). *School districts choosing to charter*. Retrieved from <http://www.qualitycharters.org/files/public/IssueBriefNo6.pdf>
- National Center on School Choice, <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/schoolchoice/research-home.html>
- National Charter School Research Project, <http://www.crpe.org/cs/crpe/view/projects/1>
- U.S. Charter Schools. (n.d.). *Document library: Contracts/Legal Agreements*. Retrieved from http://www.uscharterschools.org/pub/uscs_docs/r/menu_auth.htm#contract

Implementation

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