

District Integrated Needs Assessment (DINA)



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Kansas State Department of Education

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Kansas District Improvement Process

Stage 2: Gather and Organize Data

District Integrated Needs Assessment (DINA) Introduction

The District Integrated Needs Assessment is designed for use by all districts in Kansas to assess how district administrators and staff work together with their larger school community. The answers to district specific **perception** data can inform leadership of possibilities when planning for the future and what it takes to systematically change how they do business together.

Purpose & Components of Continuums

The District Integrated Needs Assessment Continuums provide an authentic means for measuring perception data on district-wide improvement and growth. Results of the assessment are used to:

- **acknowledge accomplishments**
- **set goals for improvement**
- **apprise school district and partners of the progress made relative to district improvement efforts**

The Continuums are a type of rubric that represents the theoretical flow of systemic district improvement. The continuums are made up of eight key, interrelated and overlapping components of systemic change:

- **Information and Analysis**
- **Student Achievement**
- **Quality Planning**
- **High Quality Professional Development**
- **Leadership**
- **Partnership Development**
- **Safe, Caring and Orderly District**
- **Continuous Improvement and Evaluation**

Understanding the Continuums

These rubrics, extending from *one* to *five* horizontally, represent a continuum of *expectations* related to district improvement with respect to the following components:

- **Approach** to the continuum
- **Implementation** of the approach
- **Outcome** that results from implementation

A *one* rating, located at the far left of each continuum, represents a district that has not yet begun to improve (reactive and/or present state).

A *five* rating, located at the far right of each continuum, represents a district that is one step removed from “world class quality” or “best practices” (proactive and/or future state).

The elements between *one* and *five* describe how that continuum is hypothesized to evolve in a continuously improving district. Each continuum moves from a reactive mode to a proactive mode – from fire fighting to prevention. The *five* in *outcome* in each continuum is the target or goal.

Vertically, the *approach*, *implementation*, and *outcome* statements, for any number *one* through *five*, are hypotheses. In other words, the *implementation* statement describes how the *approach* might look when implemented, and the *outcome* is the “pay-off” for implementing the approach. If the statements are accurate, the outcome will not be realized until the approach is actually implemented.

How district leadership uses this tool might vary depending on its improvement status. A guide for choosing how best to use the assessment is described in the following table:

| District Professional Development | District On Improvement |
|--|---|
| <p>To build upon current strengths in the district/school improvement process</p> <p>To discuss and prioritize school improvement efforts that move the district into world class quality.</p> | <p>To guide discussion and get help in identifying areas in which to concentrate its district/school improvement efforts</p> <p>To discuss and prioritize 2-3 targeted components of the district/school improvement process that can assist the district/school in meeting AYP for Title I purposes.</p> |

For districts on improvement for NCLB, the District Integrated Needs Assessment can be used as a needs assessment, fulfilling NCLB requirements in Stage 1 of the improvement process. Information gathered from this needs assessment can then be used in Stage 3-Analyzing Data.

District Continuous Improvement Continuums Directions¹

Purpose & Components of Continuums

The attached Continuums provide an authentic means for measuring district wide improvement and growth; as such they are an excellent vehicle for ongoing district self-assessment. Results of the assessment are used to:

- **acknowledge accomplishments**
- **set goals for improvement**
- **appraise school district and partners of the progress made relative to district improvement efforts**

The Continuums are a type of rubric that represents the theoretical flow of systemic district improvement. The continuums are made up of eight key, interrelated and overlapping components of systemic change:

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¹ Adapted from *The School Portfolio: A Comprehensive Framework for School Improvement*, Victoria Bernhardt, Ph. D., 2nd edition, 1999.

Using the Continuums

Your district will need to select a district improvement team made up of a representation of stakeholders if your district has not done this previously. Also, your district will need to select an individual within the identified team to facilitate the district self-assessment activity. (See continuous improvement self-assessment activity).

The most valuable way to use the continuums is to have the appointed district improvement team rate the district together. The first step is to have each member of your district team make a personal rating of where they feel the district is as a whole on the continuums. Next, the facilitator would take a quick count of how many of your district team members feel your district is *one* in *approach* to Information and Analysis, a *two*, and so on. If all members of the district team agree on the same number, the facilitator records the number and rationale for the decision and moves on. If there is a discrepancy, the facilitator asks for discussion. The discussion clarifies what is happening district wide with respect to the continuum. The goal is to get a number that represents the rating that everyone can live with. The discussion and documentation of next steps is more important than the actual number that results. The ultimate goal is to make all aspects of your district consistent and congruent with your district vision. Assessing your district on the Continuous Improvement Continuums at least twice each year is recommended.

Using these continuums will enable your district improvement team and district personnel to stay motivated, to shape and maintain your district's shared vision and assist with the continuous improvement of all elements of your district.

Remember that where your district is at any time is where it is. The important thing is what your district team does with information. Continuous improvement is a never-ending process which, when used effectively and for the right purpose, will ultimately lead your district toward providing a quality program for all children.

Continuous Improvement Continuums Self-Assessment Activity²

Purpose: This tool will help your staff access where your system is currently with respect to continuous improvement, and ultimately shows your district toward consistent progress over time. The discussion that leads to consensus is the most valuable piece of this activity. This dialogue begins the process of completing sections of your district action plan and individual school improvement plans.

Audience: District Improvement Team.

Time: approximately 3 hours for the first assessment; 90 minutes for subsequent assessments.

Materials:

- 1) One set of the Continuous Improvement Continuums (CICs) enlarged to poster size. Include masking tape or tacks to hang them.
- 2) Individual copies of CICs for staff
- 3) Chart paper
- 4) Markers
- 5) Colored dots or flags
- 6) 3 x 5 post-its

Process

Protocol:

- 1) Hang the enlarged posters on the wall
- 2) Use one color dot for all continuums
- 3) Use the attached description of the Continuums for introductions
- 4) Record all conversations on public notes
- 5) Establish ground rules and clarify importance of activity
- 6) Introduce first section (Information and Analysis)
- 7) Ask staff to read it and see if they can recognize where the District is right now with respect to *Approach, Implementation, and Outcome*
- 8) Direct staff to walk over to the Continuums on wall and place a dot where they individually believe District is in respect to *Approach, Implementation, and Outcome (this activity is called “dot mocracy”)*.
- 9) Review each dotted continuum with the staff. Focusing on *Approach*, ask for discussion of **why** they rated the District the way they did. Record the discussion highlights.
- 10) Using a show of hands try to reach consensus on a number that represents a baseline assessment of the District’s *Approach* to this continuum. If consensus is reached write the number on a post-it and post on wall continuum. Continue discussion if consensus is not reached.
- 11) Continue with *Implementation* and *Outcome*
- 12) When consensus on the 3 sections is complete ask for the “next steps.”
Where do we want to go? Why would we want to go to that area of the _____ continuum?
What do we need to do to move up or to move toward the next _____ numbered continuum?
- 13) Continue with the other continuums (2 at a time), always remembering to **record comments** using a lap top and templates on a CD. At the end of the day you will be able to generate a complete report, the template reveals the comments made most often.

Comments The CICs are designed to add a sense of urgency for improvement. Don’t let staff average scores or overrate themselves, have them work toward consensus and constantly thinking about next steps.

² *The School Portfolio Toolkit: A Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation Guide for Continuous School Improvement*, by Victoria Bernhardt, Ph. D., 2002. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education, 2002.

District Continuous Improvement Continuums
INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS

| | One | Two | Three | Four | Five |
|----------------|---|--|--|--|---|
| Approach | <p>The district does not provide assistance in helping schools understand what needs to change at the school and classroom levels, based on data.</p> <p>Data or information about school student performance and needs are not gathered in any systematic way.</p> | <p>Some school, staff, and student information is collected and used to problem solve and establish student-learning standards across the district.</p> <p>There is no systematic process for data analysis across the district.</p> | <p>The district collects data related to school and student performance (e.g., attendance, enrollment, achievement), and surveys students, staff, and parents.</p> <p>The information is used to drive the District Action Plan for district and school improvement.</p> <p>The district's assessment system includes and integrates classroom-based, school-wide, district-wide and state-wide assessments.</p> | <p>There is systematic reliance on hard data (including data for subgroups) as a basis for decision making at the district, school, and classroom levels.</p> <p>Changes in the District Action Plan are consistently based on the study of data to meet the educational needs of students and teachers.</p> <p>The district provides high quality professional development on how to effectively evaluate student progress.</p> | <p>Information is gathered in all areas of student interaction with the school.</p> <p>The district engages administrators and teachers in gathering information on their own performance.</p> <p>Accessible to all schools, data are comprehensive in scope and an accurate reflection of school and district quality.</p> |
| Implementation | <p>No information is gathered with which to make district or school changes.</p> <p>Student dissatisfaction with the learning process is seen as an irritation, not a need for improvement.</p> | <p>Some data are tracked, such as attendance, enrollment, and drop-out rates.</p> <p>Only a few individuals are asked for feedback about areas of school and district operations.</p> | <p>The district collects information on current and former students (e.g., student achievement and perceptions), analyzes and uses it in conjunction with future trends for planning.</p> <p>Identified areas for improvement are tracked over time.</p> | <p>The district uses a variety of formative and summative assessments to measure student progress in meeting state and local standards.</p> <p>Frequent monitoring of data is used to provide feedback to improve the effectiveness of teaching strategies on all students learning.</p> <p>Schools' historical performances are graphed and utilized for diagnosis by the district.</p> | <p>Innovative teaching processes that meet the needs of students are implemented across the district. Information is analyzed and used to prevent student failure.</p> <p>Root causes are known through analyses. Problems are prevented through the use of data.</p> |

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| Outcome | <p>Only anecdotal and hypothetical information are available about student performance, behavior, and satisfaction.</p> <p>Problems are solved individually with short-term results.</p> | <p>Little data are available.</p> <p>Change is limited to some areas of the district and dependent upon individual administrators and their efforts.</p> | <p>Information collected about school needs, effective assessment, and instructional practices are shared with all staff, and used to plan for district and school improvement.</p> <p>Information helps staff understand pressing issues, analyze information for positive trends, "root causes," and track results for improvement.</p> | <p>An information system is in place.</p> <p>Positive trends begin to appear in many schools and district-wide.</p> <p>There is evidence that these are caused by understanding and effectively using the data collected.</p> | <p>The district uses data to predict and prevent potential problems.</p> <p>Good to excellent achievement is the result for all schools.</p> <p>No student falls through the cracks.</p> <p>Schools and district assess and guide their growth through data-driven decisions.</p> |
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Summary: Information and Analysis

Next Steps: Information and Analysis

District Continuous Improvement Continuums
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

| | One | Two | Three | Four | Five |
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| Approach | <p>Data on student learning are minimal, if at all.</p> <p>Instructional and organizational processes critical to student success are not identified.</p> <p>Little distinction of student learning differences is made.</p> <p>Some schools believe that not all students can achieve.</p> | <p>Some data are collected on student background and performance trends.</p> <p>Learning gaps are identified to direct improvement of instruction.</p> <p>It is known that Kansas content standards are established.</p> <p>Staff understands the concept of high expectations for all students.</p> | <p>The district has a definition of student academic progress.</p> <p>The assessments, curriculum, and instruction are aligned with the district’s mission, student exit outcomes, national standards, Kansas standards, and local standards.</p> <p>Student learning standards are identified, and a continuum of learning is created across the district.</p> <p>Student performance data are collected and compared to the standards in order to analyze how to improve learning for all students.</p> <p>The district has clear policies, procedures and schedules for assessment.</p> <p>The district’s assessment system includes and integrates classroom-based, school-wide and state-wide assessments.</p> | <p>Data on student achievement are used throughout the district to pursue the improvement of student learning.</p> <p>The district ensures that teachers collaborate to implement appropriate instruction and assessment strategies for meeting student learning standards articulated across grade levels.</p> <p>The district ensures that the school’s general education curriculum, instruction and assessments are integrated and coordinated for all student groups.</p> <p>All staff believe that all students can learn.</p> | <p>The district makes an effort to exceed student achievement expectations.</p> <p>Innovative instructional changes are made to anticipate learning needs and improve student achievement.</p> <p>Districts ensure that teachers are able to identify characteristics/factors impacting student achievement; and, to know how to perform from a small set of internal quality measures.</p> |

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| Implementation | <p>All students are taught the same way.</p> <p>There is no communication between the district and schools about students' academic needs or learning styles.</p> <p>There are no analyses of how to improve instruction.</p> | <p>The district has a process in place for monitoring progress for all student groups moving toward meeting the 100% proficient goal.</p> <p>Some effort is made to track and analyze student achievement trends on a district-wide basis.</p> <p>District begins to understand the needs and learning gaps within the schools.</p> <p>Scientifically Based Research (SBR) and differentiated instructional practices are minimally used to support student learning.</p> | <p>Teachers across the district study effective instruction and assessment strategies to implement standards and to increase students' learning.</p> <p>The district supports teachers in allocating adequate and appropriate use of classroom time for instruction in all curricular areas.</p> <p>Technology is used effectively to augment instruction and enhance learning for all students.</p> <p>Student feedback and analysis of achievement data are used in conjunction with implementation support strategies and services (e.g. vocational education, Title I, migrant, student Improvement teams services).</p> <p>Students are actively involved in monitoring their own academic progress.</p> <p>Students with special needs are served to the greatest extent appropriate with students who are not disabled.</p> <p>The district ensures that learning is minimally interrupted as a result of supplemental services.</p> | <p>There is a systematic focus on implementing student learning standards and on the improvement of student learning district-wide.</p> <p>The district ensures that staff, in all programs and at all levels, are delivering the content and skills aligned in scope and sequence with State curricular standards.</p> <p>Effective instruction, SBR, and assessment strategies are implemented in each school.</p> <p>Real life applications are integrated into assessments, curriculum and instruction so that students use knowledge in practical ways (e.g. related to the real world, authentic tasks).</p> <p>Supportive programs/services are coordinated and/or aligned with the assessments, curriculum, and instruction and assessments to meet the needs of all students (e.g. English Language Learners, early childhood special education, health, academic support, career education, counseling/psychological, extracurricular).</p> <p>District supports teachers supporting one another with peer coaching and/or action research focused on implementing strategies that lead to increased achievement.</p> | <p>All teachers correlate critical instructional and assessment strategies with objective indicators of quality student achievement.</p> <p>A comparative analysis of actual individual student performance to student learning standards is utilized to adjust teaching strategies to ensure a progression of learning for all students.</p> <p>The district provides timely and early support to ensure that every student meets the state's performance standards.</p> |
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| Outcome | <p>There is wide variation in student attitudes and achievement with undesirable results.</p> <p>There is high dissatisfaction among students with learning.</p> <p>Student background is used as an excuse for low student achievement.</p> | <p>There is some evidence that student achievement trends are available to schools and are being used.</p> <p>There is much effort, but minimal observable results in improving student achievement.</p> | <p>There is an increase in communication among district and schools, students, and teachers regarding student learning.</p> <p>Teachers learn about effective instructional strategies that will implement the shared vision, student learning standards, and how to meet the needs of students.</p> <p>The schools make some gains.</p> | <p>The district has a process where schools consistently review, modify, and evaluate assessment, curriculum, and instruction using analysis of student learning and achievement data.</p> <p>Increased student achievement is evident district-wide.</p> <p>Student morale, attendance, and behavior reflected a positive learning environment.</p> <p>Staff converse often with each other about preventing student failure.</p> <p>High expectations and challenging standards are communicated to students and their parents.</p> <p>Areas for further attention are clear and incorporated into the District Action Plan.</p> | <p>Schools and teachers conduct district self-assessments to continuously improve performance.</p> <p>Improvements in student achievement are evident and clearly caused by teachers' and students' understandings of individual student learning standards, linked to appropriate and effective instructional and assessment strategies.</p> <p>There is a continuum of learning results.</p> <p>Students are prepared to transition to the next level of learning; early childhood to elementary, elementary to middle school, middle school to high school, high school graduation to higher education or employment.</p> <p>No student falls through the cracks.</p> |
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Summary: Student Achievement

Next Steps: Student Achievement

District Continuous Improvement Continuums
QUALITY PLANNING

| | One | Two | Three | Four | Five |
|----------|--|---|--|--|--|
| Approach | <p>Data are neither used nor considered important in planning</p> <p>No District Action Plan or process exists for district improvement.</p> | <p>District staff realizes the importance of mission, vision, consensus building, and having a comprehensive District Action Plan for improvement.</p> <p>Teams develop goals and timelines; and, dollars are allocated to begin the process.</p> <p>The processes for development, implementation, and communication related to the district's integrated improvement planning are in place.</p> | <p>A comprehensive District Action Plan to achieve the district vision is developed.</p> <p>The plan includes evaluation, continuous improvement, and transitions (e.g., early childhood to elementary, graduation to higher education or employment, and special education to general education).</p> | <p>One focused and integrated district-wide action plan for implementing a continuous improvement process is put into place.</p> <p>All district efforts are focused on the implementation of this plan that represents the achievement of the vision.</p> | <p>The District Action Plan for continuous improvement, with a focus on students, is firmly established throughout the district.</p> <p>There is excellent articulation and integration of all elements in the district due to quality planning.</p> <p>Leadership team ensures all elements are implemented by all appropriate parties.</p> |

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| Implementation | <p>There is no knowledge of, or direction, for District Action Planning.</p> <p>Data are not gathered, used or considered important for planning; there is no systemic way of determining what needs to change in order to improve.</p> <p>Budget is allocated on an as needed basis.</p> | <p>The district involves all stakeholders in its initial continuous improvement planning efforts.</p> <p>Improvement efforts include mapping out major steps to creating a shared vision by identifying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • values and beliefs • district goals • mission • vision • student learning standards | <p>The district reviews each school's improvement and results-based staff development (RBSD) plans in order to develop the District Action Plan.</p> <p>The District Action Plan includes implementation goals, responsibilities, and timelines. Support structures for implementing the plan are set in place.</p> <p>The district ensures that the schools are using a variety of instructional practices drawn from scientifically based research.</p> | <p>The District Action Plan is implemented through effective procedures in all areas of the district.</p> <p>All stakeholders are committed to implementing the plan aligned to the vision, mission, values and beliefs; and share responsibility for accomplishing district goals.</p> | <p>District-wide goals, mission, vision, and student learning standards are shared and articulated throughout the district and with feeder schools.</p> <p>The district coordinates the various transitions within the district:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • early childhood to elementary • elementary to middle school • middle school to high schools • graduation to higher education or employment • special education to general education <p>The attainment of identified student learning standards is linked to planning and implementation of effective instruction that meets students' needs.</p> <p>Leaders at all levels are developing expertise because planning is the norm.</p> |
| Outcome | <p>There is no evidence of comprehensive planning.</p> <p>Staff work is carried out in isolation.</p> <p>A continuum of learning for students is absent.</p> | <p>The school district community understands the benefits of working together to implement a comprehensive District Action Plan.</p> | <p>There is evidence that the District Action Plan is being implemented in some areas of the district.</p> <p>Improvements are neither systematic nor integrated district-wide.</p> | <p>The District Action Plan is known to all stakeholders. Planning is ongoing and inclusive of all stakeholders.</p> <p>Progress toward meeting SMART goals is evident throughout the district.</p> | <p>Evidence of effective teaching and learning results in significant improvement of student achievement and is attributed to quality planning at all levels of the district organization.</p> <p>Teachers and administrators understand and share the district mission and vision.</p> <p>The district action planning process is seamless and demonstrates evidence of accountability.</p> |

Summary: Quality Planning

Next Steps: Quality Planning

District Continuous Improvement Continuums
HIGH QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

| | One | Two | Three | Four | Five |
|----------|--|--|--|---|---|
| Approach | <p>There is no district-wide planned professional development.</p> <p>Professional development is external and usually equated to attending a conference alone; or is provided as a district-wide one-time presentation that are determined by district administration with little or no input from teachers or other instructional staff.</p> <p>District hierarchy determines who receives and does not receive professional development.</p> <p>Teachers, principals, and staff are seen as interchangeable parts that can be replaced.</p> | <p>There is not a viable district-wide professional development or RBSD plan.</p> <p>The “cafeteria” approaches to professional development is used, whereby individual teachers and administrators choose what they want to take, without regard to an overall district plan.</p> | <p>The shared vision, district plan and student needs are used to target focused professional development for all employees.</p> <p>Staff receives in-service on relevant instructional and leadership strategies.</p> <p>The district ensures that the teachers and support staff in the district have individual professional development plans that are aligned with their school's and district's improvement plans.</p> <p>The district ensures that all schools' RBSD plans are an integral part of the district integrated plan, the school improvement plan, and the district in-service plan.</p> | <p>Professional development and data-gathering methods are used by all teachers and administrators, and are directed toward the goals of the shared vision and the continuous improvement of the district and schools.</p> <p>District facilitates instructional staff's ongoing conversations about student achievement data.</p> <p>The district ensures all instructional staff receives training in their content areas.</p> <p>Systems thinking is considered in all professional development decisions.</p> <p>District staff are provided opportunities to learn about, and assist parents/guardians/education advocates and other stakeholders, in connecting to their children's learning.</p> | <p>Leadership and staff continuously improve all aspects of the learning organization through an innovative, data-driven, and comprehensive continuous improvement process that prevents student failure.</p> <p>Effective job-embedded professional development is ongoing for implementing the vision for student success including collegial coaching and action research focused on student learning standards.</p> <p>Policies set professional development as a priority budget line-item.</p> <p>Professional development is planned, aligned, and leads to the achievement of student learning standards.</p> |

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| Implementation | <p>District staff, principals, teachers, and school staff performance is controlled and inspected.</p> <p>Performance evaluations are used to detect mistakes.</p> | <p>Teacher professional development is sporadic and unfocused, lacking an approach for implementing new procedures and processes.</p> <p>Some leadership training begins to take place.</p> | <p>The district provides high quality professional development to teachers and administrators who are not fully licensed or highly qualified to meet licensure and high quality requirements.</p> <p>The district ensures that teachers are involved in year-round quality professional development.</p> <p>The school community and stakeholders are trained in shared decision making, team building concepts, effective communication strategies, and data analysis.</p> | <p>District-wide, teams of instructional staff continuously set and implement student achievement goals. Use of new knowledge and skills is evident.</p> <p>Leadership considers these goals and provides necessary support structures for collaboration.</p> <p>District-wide, instructional staff utilize effective support approaches as they implement new instruction and assessment strategies. Coaching and feedback structures are in place.</p> | <p>The district provides systemic support (e.g. study groups, peer collegial coaching, and mentoring, professional learning communities) for teaching to higher standards linking professional development to classroom practice and student academic and social achievement.</p> <p>The district provides and supports an increased knowledge and application of scientifically research based instructional strategies and programs and ensures that they are embedded in teaching and learning.</p> <p>Collaborative teams passionately support each other in pursuit of quality improvement at all levels.</p> <p>The district facilitates instructional staff making bold changes in instruction and assessment strategies focused on student learning standards and student learning styles.</p> <p>The district facilitates the implementation of a model for the teacher as action researcher.</p> <p>District-wide conversations focus on systemic reflection and improvement.</p> <p>The district facilitates teachers to be strong instructional leaders.</p> |
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| Outcome | <p>There is no professional growth, no staff improvement, and no student performance improvement.</p> <p>There exists a high turnover rate of employees, especially administrators.</p> <p>District staff attitudes and approaches filter down to teachers and students.</p> | <p>The effectiveness of professional development is not known or analyzed.</p> <p>Teachers in the district feel helpless and unsupported in making school-wide changes.</p> | <p>Teachers, working in teams, feel supported by the district and begin to feel they can make changes.</p> <p>Evidence shows that shared decision making works.</p> <p>The district collects evidence to verify that high quality professional development has impacted student academic achievement and staff professional growth.</p> | <p>A collegial school district is evident. Effective classroom strategies are practiced, and articulated district-wide. These strategies, focused on student learning standards, are reflective of professional development aimed at ensuring student learning and the implementation of the shared vision.</p> | <p>True systemic change and improved student achievement are a result of teachers being knowledgeable of and implementing effective, differentiated teaching strategies (differentiated instruction) for individual student learning gains.</p> <p>Instructional staff's repertoire of skills is enhanced and students are achieving.</p> <p>Professional development is driving learning at all levels.</p> |
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Summary: High Quality Professional Development

Next Steps: High Quality Professional Development

District Continuous Improvement Continuums
LEADERSHIP

| | One | Two | Three | Four | Five |
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| Approach | <p>The School Board is the decision maker.</p> <p>Decisions are reactive to state, district, and federal mandates.</p> <p>There is no knowledge of continuous improvement.</p> | <p>A shared decision-making structure is put into place and discussions begin on how to achieve a district vision.</p> <p>Most decisions are focused on solving problems and are reactive.</p> | <p>District leadership team is committed to continuous improvement.</p> <p>Leadership seeks inclusion of all schools and supports study teams by making provisions for their work.</p> | <p>District leadership team represents a true shared decision-making structure.</p> <p>Study teams are reconstructed for the implementation of a comprehensive continuous improvement plan.</p> | <p>A strong continuous improvement structure is set into place that allows for input from all sectors of the district, school, and community, ensuring strong communication, flexibility, and refinement of approach and beliefs.</p> <p>The district vision is student focused, based on data, and responsive to district/school/community values.</p> |
| Implementation | <p>The School Board makes all decisions, with little or no input from administrators, teachers, the community, or students.</p> <p>District leadership enforces board decisions and only focuses on mistakes.</p> | <p>District values and beliefs are identified; the purpose of district is defined; a district mission and student learning standards are developed with representative input.</p> <p>A structure for studying approaches to achieving student learning standards is established.</p> | <p>The district leadership team is active on study teams and integrates recommendations from the teams' research and analyses to form a comprehensive plan for continuous improvement within the context of the district mission.</p> <p>Everyone is kept informed.</p> <p>The district supports schools in informing and educating policy-makers, parents, students, and community members about the components (e.g., staff development, SIP, data interpretation, programs, allocation of resources, strategies) of the integrated improvement process.</p> | <p>Sound, effective business and financial decisions about budget and implementation of the vision are made within teams, by the school board, by the leadership team, by the individual schools, and by the full staff, as appropriate.</p> <p>Funding streams (e.g., local, state, and federal) are utilized in a coordinated manner to support student achievement.</p> <p>All decisions are communicated to the district leadership team and to the full staff.</p> | <p>The vision is implemented and articulated across all grade levels and into feeder schools.</p> <p>All members of the district community understand and apply the quality standards.</p> <p>Leadership team has systematic interactions and involvement with district administrators, teachers, parents, community, and students about the district's direction.</p> <p>Local, state, and federal resources are used to implement and measure staff learning related to student learning standards.</p> <p>Resources are allocated and/or reallocated based on greatest need.</p> |

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| Outcome | <p>Although the decision-making process is clearly known, decisions are reactive and lack focus and consistency.</p> <p>There is no evidence of staff commitment to a shared vision.</p> <p>Students and parents do not feel they are being heard.</p> | <p>The mission provides a focus for all district and school improvement and guides the action to the vision.</p> <p>The school community is committed to continuous improvement.</p> <p>Quality leadership techniques are used sporadically.</p> | <p>The district leadership team is seen as committed to planning and quality improvement and performs an annual evaluation of its progress on the District Action Plan.</p> <p>Critical areas for improvement are identified.</p> <p>Teachers are included in shared decision making.</p> | <p>There is evidence that the district leadership team listens to all levels of the organization, Implementation of the district improvement action plan is linked to student learning standards and the guiding principles of each school.</p> <p>Leadership capacity for implementing the vision throughout the district is evident.</p> | <p>Site-based management and shared decision making truly exist. All staff understand and display an intimate knowledge of how each school and district operate. Schools support and communicate with each other in the implementation of quality standards. Teachers implement the vision in their classrooms and can determine how their new approaches meet student needs and lead to the attainment of student learning standards. Leaders are standards-driven at all levels.</p> |
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Summary: Leadership

Next Steps: Leadership

District Continuous Improvement Continuums
PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

| | One | Two | Three | Four | Five |
|----------|--|---|---|--|--|
| Approach | <p>There is no established system for input from parents, business, or community.</p> <p>Status quo is desired for managing the school district.</p> | <p>Partnerships are sought, but mostly for monetary and material gain.</p> <p>Volunteer opportunities with limited value are controlled and directed by district staff.</p> <p>District facilitates open discussion between home and school and has a process to mediate differences.</p> | <p>District has knowledge of why partnerships are important and seeks to include businesses and parents in a strategic fashion related to student learning standards for increased student achievement.</p> <p>The district supports school policies and practices that build capacity among stakeholders to play an integral role in supporting and assisting student learning.</p> <p>Partners are invited to actively participate in student learning and school/district decision making opportunities.</p> | <p>District seeks effective win-win business and community partnerships and parent involvement to implement the vision.</p> <p>Desired outcomes are clearly identified.</p> <p>An effective plan for partnership development exists.</p> | <p>Community, parent, and business partnerships become integrated across all student groupings. Parent and business involvement in student learning is refined.</p> <p>The benefits of outside involvement are known by all.</p> <p>Student learning regularly takes place beyond the school and district walls.</p> |

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| Implementation | <p>Barriers are erected to close out involvement of outsiders. Outsiders are managed for least impact on status quo.</p> <p>No stakeholder support or education is offered.</p> | <p>A team is assigned to get partners and to receive input from parents, the community, and business in the district.</p> <p>Communication efforts are minimal and sporadic.</p> | <p>Involvement of business, community, and parents begins to take place in some district schools during and/or after school hours related to the vision.</p> <p>Partners begin to realize how they can support each other in achieving district goals.</p> <p>District staff understands what each partner needs and their role from the partnership.</p> <p>The importance of meaningful two-way communication between home and district/school is understood.</p> <p>Communication between home and district/school is provided in the native language to the extent practical,</p> | <p>There is systematic utilization of parents, community, and businesses district-wide.</p> <p>Areas in which the active use of these partnerships benefit student learning are clear.</p> <p>The district ensures that a diverse group of parents/guardians/education advocates are members of school/district committees.</p> <p>Communication between home and district/school is regular, two-way and meaningful.</p> | <p>Partnership development is articulated across all district groupings.</p> <p>Parents/guardians/education advocates, community, business, and educators work together in an innovative fashion to increase student learning and to prepare students for the Twenty-first Century.</p> <p>The district collaborates with outside partnerships to evaluate for continuous improvement.</p> |
| Outcome | <p>There is little or no involvement of parents, business, or community at-large.</p> <p>The district is a closed, isolated system.</p> | <p>Much effort is given to establishing partnerships. Some spotty trends emerge, such as receiving donated equipment.</p> | <p>Some substantial gains are achieved in implementing partnerships. Some student achievement increases can be attributed to this involvement.</p> | <p>Gains in student satisfaction with learning and school are clearly related to partnerships.</p> <p>All partners benefit, strengthening the overall district/school quality.</p> | <p>Previously non-achieving students enjoy learning and demonstrate significant improvements.</p> <p>Community, business, and home become common places for student learning, while district/school becomes a place for further educational opportunities.</p> <p>Partnerships and community resources enhance what the district does for students.</p> |

Summary: Partnership Development

Next Steps: Partnership Development

**District Continuous Improvement Continuums
SAFE, CARING AND ORDERLY DISTRICT**

| | One | Two | Three | Four | Five |
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| Approach | <p>The policies for discipline, student code of conduct, crisis management, and operational practices are not in place or not comprehensive.</p> <p>Facilities and physical learning environment of district schools are not considered as having a direct impact on student learning and behavior.</p> <p>District is not in federal and/or state compliance.</p> <p>Disciplinary procedures are reactive, punitive, and do not take a proactive, integrated approach.</p> | <p>The policies for discipline, student code of conduct, crisis management, and operational practices provide some procedures for handling disciplinary actions, but they are not consistent.</p> <p>Facilities and physical learning environments of district schools do not specifically promote a safe, orderly, or equitable learning climate for all students.</p> <p>A plan for major improvements in areas such as discipline, safe and drug free coordinated services, etc., is not in place</p> <p>Disciplinary procedures, although less reactive and punitive, are still approached in a non-proactive and non-integrated manner.</p> | <p>The policies for discipline, student code of conduct, crisis management, and operational practices in each district school are in place, consistently enforced by all staff, and reviewed as well as revised as needed.</p> <p>Procedures for public disclosure have been created to assure that all stakeholders are aware of code of conduct and other policies, and that they are informed of changes in a timely manner.</p> <p>Plans are in place to research what impact the facilities and physical learning environments of all district schools have on behavior and student learning.</p> <p>In an effort to move away from punitive measures and approaches, all staff are involved in researching and developing proactive and integrated (e.g., counseling services, prevention, juvenile justice) disciplinary procedures.</p> | <p>The policies for discipline, student code of conduct, crisis management, and operational practices in each district school are based on research and stakeholder (i.e., teachers, staff, students, and parents) input, and are revised annually.</p> <p>Plans exist in district schools for impacting student learning and behavior through the improvement of facilities and physical learning environments.</p> <p>The goal of each district school is to maximize learning by minimizing, if not totally eliminating, incidents of disciplinary problem.</p> <p>District disciplinary procedures are proactive and integrated.</p> | <p>The district promotes scientifically based research (SBR) alternative discipline practices that ensure the safety and dignity of students and staff, preserve the integrity of the learning environment, and address the causes of a student's misbehavior in skills and long-term outcomes.</p> <p>The district plan for committing resources for implementing effective learning environments in all schools, has received local board and community support.</p> <p>The district involves students in participatory learning and decision making through restorative practices (e.g., opportunities for students to build relationships and problem-solve, and to play an active role in addressing the wrong and making things right).</p> <p>An evaluation process is designed to ensure efficacy in plans, procedures, and policies.</p> |

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| Implementation | <p>The policies for discipline, student code of conduct, crisis management, and operational practices are not enforced.</p> <p>Facilities and physical learning environments of district schools are not conducive to safe, orderly, or equitable learning climates for all students; major improvements are needed.</p> <p>Implemented disciplinary procedures are punitive and reactive in nature.</p> <p>Support services for students are not utilized or fully functional in district schools</p> | <p>Although the policies for discipline, student code of conduct, crisis management, and operational practices provide some procedures for handling disciplinary actions, they are not consistently enforced.</p> <p>District school facilities and physical environment do not promote a safe, orderly, or equitable learning climate for all students; although isolated improvements are taking place, they are not systemic.</p> <p>Implemented disciplinary procedures are less punitive and reactive.</p> <p>Support services for students are utilized to some degree but not in an effective or efficient manner.</p> | <p>District ensures that student behavior and other issues are handled quickly and consistently by the leadership in each building.</p> <p>A research-based plan for promoting an effective physical learning environment in all district schools is being implemented.</p> <p>Disciplinary procedures implemented are generally proactive, research-based, and well integrated with other helping services in the school and community.</p> <p>Support services for students are utilized in an effective and efficient manner.</p> | <p>The policies for discipline, student code of conduct, crisis management, and operational practices, in each district school, are enforced with absolute consistency on a daily basis, across all levels, and are revised annually for efficacy.</p> <p>Needs assessments are used annually for the evaluation of improving facilities and the physical learning environment.</p> <p>Public disclosure to all stakeholders is made regarding expectations for students, and changes in expectations are made in a timely manner.</p> <p>All stakeholders (e.g., parents, school staff, and community) are an integral part of the student discipline procedures and actions.</p> <p>Implemented disciplinary procedures are proactive, research-based, and well integrated with other helping services in the school and community, and evaluated annually.</p> | <p>Scientifically-based research alternatives to suspension and expulsion are built into the disciplinary policy and are appropriately and consistently used.</p> <p>The district allocates resources to implement its plan for effective learning environments in all schools; and, the local board and community champion these efforts.</p> <p>All district students are actively engaged in participatory learning and decision making through proactive, research based, and restorative practices.</p> |
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| Outcome | <p>Teachers feel hopeless about student learning; students and staff feel unsafe and powerless to effect change.</p> <p>Classrooms are chaotic and don't provide consistent student learning.</p> <p>The physical environments of district schools are in disorder, disorganized, and unsafe.</p> <p>Student achievement is in an unacceptable state of decline.</p> <p>The rates for student dropout, attendance, and referral to counselors, mental health services, and/or court system, are unacceptably on the increase.</p> | <p>Although student learning, safety, and the power to effect change are still major concerns, fewer teachers and students feel hopeless.</p> <p>Classroom instruction is less effective as a result of inconsistent disciplinary procedures.</p> <p>Documented, yet isolated improvements, are taking place for district school facilities and physical learning environments.</p> <p>School and student data falls below state targets.</p> | <p>There is district-wide evidence that all district school's leadership handles student behavior and other issues in a consistent and timely manner.</p> <p>There is district-wide evidence that scientific based research that promotes an effective physical learning environment is being implemented in all district schools.</p> <p>Data supports the effective and efficient manner in which the district utilizes student services.</p> <p>School and student data are at state target levels.</p> <p>A decrease in the student achievement gap is a documented result of proactive, research-based, and well-integrated services.</p> <p>Students are respectful of one another's person and property.</p> <p>Physical aggression is kept to a minimum, or not present in the school setting.</p> <p>District has a K-12 comprehensive prevention program. Prevention-focused lesson plans and activities are integrated into the regular school program.</p> | <p>District schools are non-threatening to stakeholders, and provide a safe and nurturing environment that fosters learning for all.</p> <p>Timely and equitable justice occurs as a result of consistent enforcement of the district's code of conduct and its other policies.</p> <p>District staff, students and visitors observe that inappropriate behavior on the part of school staff members or students is handled swiftly and in the interest of preserving the dignity of the individual.</p> <p>Both disciplinary and positive supports are quickly directed toward offenders. Behavioral interventions are consistently monitored and adjusted as necessary to resolve problems and ensure their effectiveness.</p> <p>Stakeholder participation in district schools and partnerships with other helping services are evident and effective.</p> <p>Data reflect that school and student outcomes have been achieved at or above state target levels.</p> | <p>District students are not at risk for failure because learning is not jeopardized by suspension or expulsions.</p> <p>Because stakeholders are knowledgeable of, and are working collaboratively to implement effective best practices, true systemic change and improved district safety results.</p> <p>Students feel safe and confident in their learning environment.</p> <p>The district supports prevention programs and implementing high quality SBR training for all stakeholders in a safe, caring and orderly environment.</p> <p>Prevention programs are locally initiated; activities are highly structured, integrated into the regular school program, and are supervised at all levels.</p> <p>Inappropriate behavior on the part of staff members or students is non-existent.</p> <p>Student and staff absenteeism is minimal.</p> <p>Data exists to document that district schools are more safe, caring and orderly.</p> |
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Summary: Safe, Caring and Orderly District

Next Steps: Safe, Caring and Orderly District

District Continuous Improvement Continuums
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND EVALUATION

| | One | Two | Three | Four | Five |
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| Approach | Neither goals nor strategies exist for the evaluation and continuous improvement of the district organization or for elements of the organization. | The approach to continuous improvement and evaluation is solving problems. If there are no problems, or if solutions can be made quickly, there is no need for improvements or analyses. Changes in parts of the system are not coordinated with all other parts. | Some elements of the district organization are evaluated for effectiveness. Some elements are improved on the basis of the evaluation findings. | All elements of the district's operations are evaluated for improvement. Efforts are consistently made to ensure congruence of the elements with respect to the continuum of learning that student's experience. | All aspects of the district organization are rigorously evaluated and improved on a continuous basis. Students, and the maintenance of a comprehensive learning continuum for students, become the focus of all aspects of the school district improvement process. |
| Implementation | With no overall plan for evaluation and continuous improvement, strategies are changed by individual schools, teachers, and/or administrators only when something sparks the need to improve. Reactive decisions and activities are a daily mode of operation. | Isolated changes are made in some areas of the district organization in response to problem incidents. Changes are not preceded by comprehensive analyses, such as an understanding of the root causes of problems. The effectiveness of the elements of the district organization is not known. | Some elements of the district organization are improved on the basis of comprehensive analyses of root causes of problems, client perceptions, data, and operational effectiveness of processes. | The district is making improvement in addressing the needs of all disaggregated student groups in each school. Continuous analyses of student achievement and instructional strategies are reinforced within each classroom and across learning levels to develop a comprehensive learning continuum for students and to prevent student failure. | The district is making improvement in addressing the needs of all disaggregated student groups in each school. Continuous analyses of student achievement and instructional strategies are reinforced within each classroom and across learning levels to develop a comprehensive learning continuum for students and to prevent student failure. |

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| Outcome | <p>Individuals struggle with system failure.</p> <p>Finger pointing and blaming others for failure occur.</p> <p>The effectiveness of strategies is not known.</p> <p>Mistakes are repeated.</p> | <p>Problems are solved only temporarily and few positive changes result. Additionally, unintended and undesirable consequences often appear in other parts of the system.</p> <p>Many aspects of the school district are incongruent, keeping the district from reaching its vision.</p> | <p>All district staff are able to articulate evidence of effective improvement strategies.</p> <p>Positive changes are made and maintained due to comprehensive analyses and evaluation.</p> | <p>Sustainable improvements in student achievement are evident at all grade levels due to continuous improvement supported by the district.</p> <p>Teachers become astute at assessing and predicting the impact of their instructional strategies on individual student achievement.</p> | <p>The district becomes a congruent and effective learning community.</p> <p>A true continuum of learning results for all students and staff.</p> <p>Only instruction and assessment strategies that produce quality student achievement are used.</p> <p>The impact of improvements is consistently measured for growth.</p> |
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Summary: Continuous Improvement and Evaluation

Next Steps: Continuous Improvement and Evaluation

State Board of Education

2005-06 Goals and Objectives

Ensure that all students meet or exceed high academic standards by:

- **redesigning the delivery system to meet our state's changing needs,**
 - identify, replicate, and promote best practice
 - study and clarify regulations and identify challenges
 - develop and implement policy on academic/vocational integration
 - examine the definition of a classroom in a redesigned system

- **providing a caring, competent teacher in every classroom,**
 - identify obstacles
 - assess the effectiveness of current professional development practices
 - identify, replicate, and promote best practice in teacher preparation and professional development
 - develop policy on alternative compensation
 - improve the support system for teachers
 - develop recruitment strategies for future teachers
 - assess and improve the alternate licensure program
 - promote loving, safe, supportive and nurturing environments

- **ensuring a visionary leader in every school**
 - identify, replicate, and promote best practices in preparation and performance
 - identify and grow visionary leaders focused on learning
 - study the impact of current leadership programs

- **improving communication with all constituent groups**
 - develop a structure for regularly communicating about education with the legislative leadership of both parties with a focus on areas of common interest
 - keep the public informed on key policy areas
 - resume focus group meetings in each board member district and periodic meetings with the media
 - improve communication of relevant information with school faculty