

School Improvement Planning

Process Guide



Dr. Terry Bergeson
State Superintendent of
Public Instruction

January 2005

Feedback Wanted!

This document will continue to be updated and expanded as new processes, activities, and resources are identified.

Thus, we would appreciate hearing from you if you have any recommended additions, changes, or comments about the usefulness of the processes, activities, and resources that we have included.

If you have questions about this document and its contents, please contact Robert MacGregor, Assistant Superintendent, School Improvement at 360.725.6313 or email rmacgregor@ospi.wednet.edu.

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3rd Edition, 1st Printing: January 2005

School Improvement Planning

Process Guide

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January 2005

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Special thanks to **Lisa Cadero-Smith** for coordinating the 3rd Edition.

Thanks also to **Thelma Jackson, Beth Kelly, Sue Paro, Adam Fletcher, Dorothy Woods, Linda Cufley, Rob Beem, and Mike Fitzpatrick** for their contributions around cultural competence, parent and family involvement, and student engagement.

About the Revision

Much has changed since the first publication of the School Improvement Planning Process Guide in 2002. Rapidly changing demographics and access to timely research have inspired new understandings in the on-going effort to reach all students and engage all stakeholders. This revision sought to look more deeply at three critical issues integral to the school improvement process: cultural competence, student engagement, and parent and family involvement. Intensifying these elements in our work reflects not only sound research but also the beliefs and values we embrace in Washington State.

Since the implementation of high academic standards in Washington, the academic achievement of all ethnic groups of students has improved. And, importantly, the achievement difference between white students and students of color has been reduced. To continue closing the Achievement Gap, it is imperative that educators examine the policies and practices that impact stakeholders and students from all backgrounds.

Effective, sustainable school improvement requires many stakeholders in the school community to become active, engaged, and empowered. Stakeholders include students, teachers, parents, and families, as well as members of the community. Each stakeholder should be recognized as a valuable contributor to the continuous improvement process. While their roles include a variety of activities and outcomes, the purpose is always the same: to deliver high-quality education to all of our students.

The revision of this guide is intended to provide new tools that will assist educators in collecting and analyzing data that focuses on issues of cultural competence within the broader context of educational equity. In addition, it provides tools and resources to enable schools and school leaders to engage their stakeholders in authentic, meaningful ways.

School System Improvement Resource Guide

In addition to the revision of this guide, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA) have produced a companion guide for school districts. The School System Improvement Resource Guide (SSIRG) was the result of OSPI and WASA working with a team of superintendents and central office administrators, to develop a publication to:

- Support districts as they analyze existing systems and look at additional district-wide structures they may need to create a culture in which the importance of student achievement is reflected in an ongoing, data-driven process.
- Provide a model planning process that fits the parameters defined by the federal government for those districts that must develop a district improvement plan as a result of not meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in one or more areas over a two-year period.
- Highlight research findings from state and national experiences that provide examples of best practices with proven track records of success in improving student learning. The SSIRG can be found at: <http://www.k12.wa.us/SchoolImprovement/SSIRG.aspx>.

School Improvement Planning

PROCESS GUIDE

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School Improvement Planning PROCESS GUIDE Introduction

What is School Improvement anyway, and who needs to do it?

School Improvement is a **continuous process** schools use to ensure that all students are achieving at high levels. All schools, in collaboration with families, students, and communities, can create better environments so that all students are successful. Continuous improvement of public schools is essential to providing increased student performance and quality results. Innovative, exemplary, and research-based programs, coupled with staff development, focused and aligned resources, and public participation in planning are critical factors in improving schools.

All schools should engage in school improvement planning. The Washington State Board of Education in WAC 180-16-220 requires that each school district receiving state basic education funds **MUST** develop a school improvement plan or process based on a self-review of the school's program for the purpose of annual building approval by the district. The self-review required by the state shall include active participation and meaningful input by building staff, students, parents, and community members. The school improvement process described in this guide can fulfill this requirement.

Will this process work if we need more than one plan?

This process is generic and provides a framework that can be adapted to Title I Schoolwide Planning, District School Improvement Planning, Technology plans, Reading Excellence Grants, Comprehensive School Reform and other types of school improvement planning the school may be engaged in. Be sure to check Appendix D3 for required components of some federal funding sources.

What are the Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools and how do they fit?

High performing schools with varied demographic conditions have shown they share common characteristics (see page iv). These Nine Characteristics are highly correlated to high performing schools. As school teams go through the process of school improvement planning, they will look for the presence of characteristics such as clear and shared focus, if curriculum and instruction are aligned with state standards, and if parent and community involvement supports learning. See a listing of the nine characteristics on page iv and a detailed listing of resources related to the Nine Characteristics in Appendix D17.

Will this process help us sustain second order changes?

In the past, school improvement plans often centered on innovations such as new programs or changes in schedules. These types of changes, called "first" order change, may be positive but do not necessarily make sustained change to student outcomes. "Second" order changes are those that alter the school

culture or the ways people work together. See Appendix D15 for a more detailed description of first and second order change. This process encourages second order change through activities that help staff to reflect on their beliefs and gain focus and ownership that leads to lasting benefits for students.

How do principals and school improvement teams use this guide?

A variety of processes, graphic tools and resources are provided in this guide along with specific linkages to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) web-based *School Improvement Planning Tool (SIPT)*. Following this guide provides an explanation of the eight stages of school improvement planning and recommends activities within each stage. This is a cyclical, fluid process that may require going back and forth between the stages.

Eight Stages of School Improvement Planning Process:

1. Assess Readiness to Benefit
2. Collect, Sort, and Select Data
3. Build and Analyze the School Portfolio
4. Set and Prioritize Goals
5. Research and Select Effective Practices
6. Craft Action Plan
7. Monitor Implementation of the Plan
8. Evaluate Impact on Student Achievement

Linkages to the OSPI School Improvement Planning Tool (SIPT)

The web-based *School Improvement Planning Tool (SIPT)* provides educators a way to access achievement and demographic data for their school on-line. It gives easy access to research databases on best practices, and provides a way to create an on-line portfolio. *The SIP Tool* complements the *School Improvement Planning Process Guide*, which provides a hard-copy version of agendas, surveys, forms, and other resources. The combination of both resources helps schools make data-driven, research-based decisions. The SIPT can be found at: <http://www.k12.wa.us/SchoolImprovement/>.

Guiding Principles of School Improvement Planning

The following key principles form the basis for the School Improvement Process Planning Guide.

- The principal must be at the helm of this process—without support and leadership of the principal, the planning process lacks the leverage that is needed for change to occur in a school environment.
- Students and parents have an important perspective on how schools can improve. Their meaningful participation in the process should be considered from the onset.
- All members of a school staff should participate and/or be aware of the planning process. The more stakeholders that are “in the loop,” the better the chances the school will achieve 100 percent buy-in by staff for change efforts. A representative group of stakeholders can do the bulk of the work, if results and updates are reported back on a regular basis to the full faculty and other stakeholders.

- Decisions about school improvement goals and solutions must be based on careful consideration of multiple sources of data and research.
- School improvement planning is a journey of continuous improvement that demands ongoing monitoring and adjustment of programs and processes at the school.
- Improvements in student outcomes are directly related to what happens in the classroom. Teachers must be willing to be reflective about their practice and relentless in attempts to meet the needs of every student.
- The written plan document is only as good as the quality of thought, effort, and the degree of “buy-in” by staff.

This guide is written as a planning process that directs the principal and school community through a cycle of continuous improvement. It provides resources and tools to engage all stakeholders in the process and to develop deeper, sustainable second order change in each school. The goal is always to support students in higher academic achievement by improving the teaching and learning environment of their school.

Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools

Research has shown that there is no silver bullet – no single thing that schools can do to ensure high student performance. Rather, high performing schools tend to show evidence of the following nine characteristics:

1. **Clear and Shared Focus**

Everybody knows where they are going and why. The vision is shared—everybody is involved and all understand their role in achieving the vision. The vision is developed from common beliefs and values, creating a consistent focus.

2. **High Standards and Expectations**

Teachers and staff believe that all students can learn and that they can teach all students. There is recognition of barriers for some students to overcome, but the barriers are not insurmountable. Students become engaged in an ambitious and rigorous course of study.

3. **Effective School Leadership**

Effective leadership is required to implement change processes within the school. This leadership takes many forms. Principals often play this role, but so do teachers and other staff, including those in the district office. Effective leaders advocate, nurture, and sustain a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

4. **High Levels of Collaboration and Communication**

There is constant collaboration and communication between and among teachers of all grades. Everybody is involved and connected, including parents and members of the community, to solve problems and create solutions.

5. **Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Aligned with Standards**

Curriculum is aligned with the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs). Research-based materials and teaching and learning strategies are implemented. There is a clear understanding of the assessment system, what is measured in various assessments and how it is measured.

6. **Frequent Monitoring of Teaching and Learning**

Teaching and Learning are continually adjusted based on frequent monitoring of student progress and needs. A variety of assessment procedures are used. The results of the assessment are used to improve student performances and also to improve the instructional program.

7. **Focused Professional Development**

Professional development for all educators is aligned with the school's and district's common focus, objectives, and high expectations. It is ongoing and based on high need areas.

8. **Supportive Learning Environment**

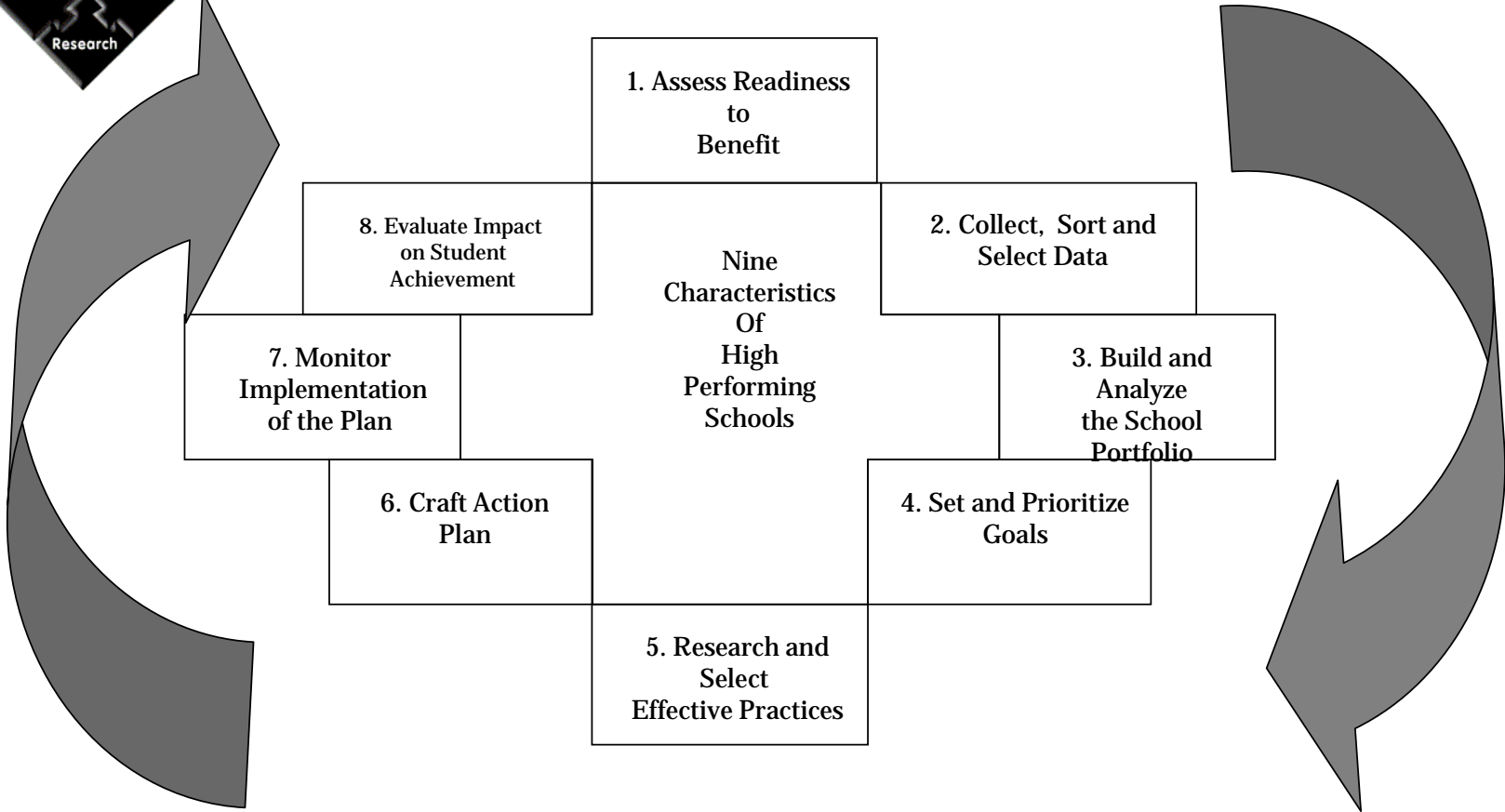
The school has a safe, civil, healthy and intellectually stimulating learning environment. Students feel respected and connected with the staff, and are engaged in learning. Instruction is personalized and small learning environments increase student contact with teachers.

9. **High Levels of Community and Parent Involvement**

There is a sense that all educational stakeholders have a responsibility to educate students, not just the teachers and staff in schools. Parents, as well as businesses, social service agencies, and community colleges/universities all play a vital role in this effort.



School Improvement Planning Process Stages



Continuous Improvement

1. Assess Readiness to Benefit

Overview of the Initial Readiness Stage

Staff members have varying levels of capacity or “readiness” to engage in school improvement planning. Most likely, some staff are ready and willing and some staff members are much less willing and able. This disparity can affect the quality of the entire planning process.

Determining readiness to benefit is not a onetime event because readiness levels can change depending on the task at hand. The Leadership Team must be vigilant in their understanding of stakeholder readiness and adjust strategies and activities based on the abilities and willingness of the constituents at each stage and for each activity. *Some first steps that promote the abilities and willingness of staff are:*

- Effective processes for conducting meetings
- Clear understanding of how decisions are made
- Decision-making strategies for working toward consensus
- Time to meet and resources for supporting this work
- Open communication and trust among staff
- District support and understanding of school improvement planning

Readiness

Is there a need and agreement among stakeholders that school improvement planning should take place? Has the principal initiated conversations with staff to let them know that a significant process must occur? Is the principal going to facilitate the process with the help of the leadership team, or has an outside facilitator such as an ESD staff person been identified to help get the process going? These are all factors that set the stage for creating a plan for school improvement. See Readiness Assessment—General Readiness, Appendix C14.

Outcomes

The entire school staff, in collaboration with students, parents, and community stakeholders, will have a clearer picture of what it will take to go through the eight stages of the school improvement process. The appropriate foundation for school improvement planning will be in place (e.g., leadership team, district buy-in, accepted mission statement).

Who Should Be Involved?

Principal, district staff, a leadership team that reflects the diversity of student population, the full staff, ESD or other assistance provider, parent(s), students, and community members as appropriate.

How Much Time is Needed for This Stage?

Two-to-four weeks for the initial stage (see on-going readiness activities at each stage).

Process

1. **Make contact with district and ESD staff.** The principal discusses the school improvement process with district staff to ensure the district supports the effort, time, and resources that will be spent on the process. The principal contacts the ESD, or other appropriate source, to provide support and guidance.
2. **Increase staff awareness.** In a staff meeting, let them know: 1) reasons for embarking on a school improvement effort; 2) it is a guided eight-stage process; 3) the input of all staff will be needed; 4) there will be a representative leadership team in place that will meet, plan, and share information back with full staff; and 5) they should expect to be challenged.
3. **Put together a leadership team.** The team should include a representative cross-section of the teaching staff (not the entire English department, or just the primary teachers), a paraprofessional, and a parent and/or community member. Both genders and the diversity of the students and community must be taken into consideration. If it is a secondary school, students can also be incorporated into the leadership team.
4. **Have a leadership team meeting.** See *Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 1*, Appendix A1. The first meeting is an important time to set the tone and expectations for the leadership team. Like the first days of teaching, it's best to be very explicit and intentional about expectations and processes right away!
5. **Leadership team conducts General Readiness Assessment.** See *General Readiness Assessment*, Appendix C14. The Leadership team will spend about 30–60 minutes discussing the readiness of staff to engage in the process of school improvement planning. Other activities at this meeting include planning for the next full staff meeting.
6. **Have a full staff meeting.** Take 30–60 minutes to acquaint staff with the eight stages of school improvement and lay the groundwork for their involvement, do the *Jigsaw activity*, B1 and/or the *School Improvement Process Puzzle*, Appendix B3.
7. **Have second leadership team meeting.** Bring the leadership team together again to plan for the next faculty meeting. See *Sample Leadership Team Meeting Agenda 2*, Appendix A2. The focus of this meeting is to explore common understandings regarding beliefs, vision, and mission of the school and to begin looking at the use of data in preparation of the next stage.
8. **Reconvene full faculty.** Some activities for building common understanding are suggested. See *Telling Our Story*, Appendix B10, and the two activities related to beliefs, vision, and mission statements, Appendix B11 and B12-14.

Caution

Readiness Assessment is not a one time event! The Leadership Team must constantly assess the readiness levels of constituents to engage in each stage of the planning process and adjust leadership strategies accordingly. You may be tempted to skip the “fun” stuff and get right to work. Don't! It's the conversation and thinking that build the readiness and capacity for staff to make the kind of changes in practice that truly affect student outcomes.

Resources

- *Readiness Assessments---General Readiness, Appendix C14-C21*
- *Sample First Leadership Team Meeting Agenda 1, Appendix A1*
- *Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 2, Appendix A2*
- *Planning Calendar for SIP Stages, Appendix B7*
- *Jigsaw Procedure for School Improvement Process Appendix B1*
- *School Improvement Process Puzzle, Appendix B3*
- *Telling Our Story, Appendix B10*
- *Beliefs, Vision, Mission - Creating a Clear and Shared Focus, Appendix B11*
- *Unpacking the Mission Statement - Appendix B12*

2. Collect, Sort, and Select Data

Overview of This Stage

Data can tell a school's story. Collecting and using information about the school and the school's community moves the message from feelings to facts. What are the school's strengths? Which programs and services have the greatest potential for growth based on current data? Gathering the right data from a variety of sources can:

- Create a baseline on student skills and stakeholders' attitudes and beliefs
- Provide an accurate picture of current school processes and programs
- Guide actions taken to change outcomes
- Allow school staff to measure progress over time
- Develop an understanding of the school's demographic profile, including the racial, ethnic, and socio-economic factors

Readiness

Do leadership team members understand that school improvement is a multiple-step process? Does the faculty understand how to read charts and graphs of WASL, ITBS, and other local data? The steps highlighted in the previous section help set the tone for this stage. The Collect, Sort, and Select Data Readiness Tool, Appendix C15 will help determine staff readiness for this stage.

Outcomes

By the end of this stage in the school improvement process, the leadership team will gather current data on achievement, demographics, staff/student/parent perceptions, and school programs. The sources of information that help "tell the story" of the school will be prepared so the full faculty can carefully consider the data in the next stage.

Who Should Be Involved?

The school leadership team first, and then the full faculty. Ideally, the school's leadership team will decide what data is needed for each category of measurement. Then the full faculty will have an opportunity to look at a list of what is being gathered—so they can add their thoughts on sources.

How Much Time is Needed for This Stage?

This varies depending on how readily available the data is, how many people are working on it, and how short the timeline is. This stage takes four-to-six weeks.

Process

1. **Schedule a leadership team meeting to discuss data.** See Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 3, Appendix A3-4. During this meeting, the staff will assign tasks for collection of data that tells the current state of your school in four main categories using the *What to Collect Worksheets*, Appendix C23-26:
 1. Achievement
 2. Demographic information
 3. Programs
 4. Perceptions
2. **Ask what does this data tell us? What more do we need to know?** Collecting data about the school and community can be like an archeological dig—sifting through a lot of debris to find the artifacts that tell the story.
3. **Consider what additional data needs to be collected.** The leadership team considers the types of data, where to find it, and whether additional data needs to be found (for instance, you may need a more recent parent survey). Team members will complete data collection worksheets that can be shared at a full staff meeting.
4. **Plan for and schedule a full staff meeting.** This will take about 45 minutes and is a way to continually build buy-in for the school improvement process. There are two segments of this meeting:
 - Full group of staff does *Why Use Data* activity, Appendix B15, (15 minutes)
 - Staff in small groups of 4–5 staff members consider data and sources. Staff looks at completed data collection worksheets *What to Collect Worksheets*, Appendix C23-26 (prepared by the leadership team at their first meeting for this stage) and adds their ideas on additional sources, if needed.
5. **Meet with leadership team again to review staff input and plan for the data carousel activity.** See *Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 4*, Appendix A5. This meeting gives the leadership team an opportunity to go over staff input for additional data collection, check in on what data was collected, and plan for Data Carousel activity with full staff—the first activity in the “Build and Analyze Portfolio” stage of School Improvement Planning Process.

Cautions

Allow enough time to collect a wide variety of data--it can't be a last minute job! Also, it's very tempting to jump into analyzing data as soon as it's collected. There's nothing wrong with this, but it can bog a team down and add a lot of extra time. Urge staff to hold off on problem solving for now, this comes later.

Resources

- *Collect, Sort and Select Data Readiness Tool*, Appendix C15
- *Leadership Team Meeting Agenda 3*, Appendix A3-A4
- *Leadership Team Meeting Agenda 4*, Appendix A5
- *Why Use Data? Activity*, Appendix B15
- “*What to Collect?*” Worksheets, Appendix C23-26
- *The OSPI Report Card* (on main website: www.k12.wa.us)
- *The SIPT web-based tool facilitates data collection and analysis, greatly expediting the process.*
- *Other resources: Query, Just For Kids Website: www.spu.edu/wsrc*

3. Build and Analyze the School Portfolio

Overview of This Stage

This stage of school improvement planning is about helping all stakeholders understand the school's story. Displaying achievement and other data types in ways that are understandable to all audiences stimulates shared responsibility for education among teachers, parents, community members, and the students themselves. Readers of the school portfolio should be able to find the answers to these questions:

- What is the demographic makeup of our school?
- How are the students at our school performing on various measures?
- What school programs are in place here?
- How are the parents, community, and students involved in the school?
- What is important to the staff, students, and parent community?
- Do we provide equitable education for all students?

Readiness

The leadership team has:

- collected data from multiple indicator areas (demographics, perception, achievement, programs).
- determined the appropriate degree of detail so that the staff will focus on high level themes that later become goals, rather than strategies that support goals.
- created displays of the data that enhance staff understanding.

The *Build and Analyze the School Portfolio Readiness Tool*, Appendix C16, will help determine if staff and/or leadership team is ready for this stage.

Outcomes

All staff will analyze data showing the current status of the school. It will become clear where there are areas of concern, what the strengths are, and what to celebrate. A prioritized list of challenges will be generated and used in the next stages to develop goals and an action plan. Optionally, narrative statements may be put into the Build and Analyze the School Portfolio section of the OSPI web-based SIP Tool.

Who Should Be Involved?

The whole faculty, with non-staff members of the leadership team, (e.g., parents, community members, and/or students) participates in the Data Carousel activity. The leadership team meets to process the information gathered from that meeting.

How Much Time is Needed for This Stage?

2 1/2 to 3 hours for staff to review data and write narrative statements.

Process

1. **Schedule a full staff meeting to do the Data Carousel Activity.** See Data Carousel Activity, Appendix B16-17 and the *Full Staff Meeting: Agenda 5*, Appendix A6-A7 for a description of how this two-step process works. It can be done all at once or divided into two meetings with staff. This is a hands-on opportunity for staff to look at the data and work in small groups to figure out what the data contributes to the school's story. Prepare to be energized!
2. **Craft narrative statements.**
During the Data Carousel Activity, the small groups considering the data will write descriptive non-evaluative statements about each data source. See *Three Tips for Writing Powerful Narrative Statements*, Appendix B18.
3. **Decide which of the narrative statements are strengths, and which are challenges.**
Some will be both strengths and challenges! Statements such as "English Language Learners have increased by 25 percent between 1998 and 2001" and can be a challenge because instruction must accommodate these student's needs, but it can also be a strength because this population brings a broader world view to the school.
4. **Prioritize challenges.**
Using the *Prioritize Challenges Worksheet*, Appendix B19, compile narrative statements that are designated as challenges. The worksheet gives three ways of prioritizing the challenges—by level of dissatisfaction, by severity, and by how much control the school has over this particular challenge. Each participant prioritizes the challenges and these ratings can be tallied to determine an overall ranking.
5. **Create the school portfolio on the OSPI Web-based School Improvement Tool.**
(Optional) After the narrative statements are created in each of the four areas: achievement, demographics, perceptions and contextual data (under custom data tab in SIP Tool), they can be entered and connected with the data sets you have selected. The narratives will also be entered as strengths, challenges, or both in the tool. See SIP Tool, Portfolio.

Find a way to make the portfolio visual and understandable to all stakeholders. The leadership team discusses ways to make the information accessible such as wall displays, Power Point presentations, brochures, notebooks, or folders.

Cautions

Some have learned the hard way that raw data can cause confusion and be misinterpreted. Data should always be clearly labeled and displayed so that all stakeholders can read and understand it.

Resources

- *Build and Analyze the School Portfolio Readiness Tool*, Appendix C16
- *Data Carousel Activity*, Appendix B16
- *Full Staff Meeting Agenda 5*, Appendix A6-A7
- *Three Tips for Writing Powerful Narrative Statements*, Appendix B18
- *Prioritize Challenges Worksheet*, Appendix B19
- *Victoria Bernhardt and Edie Holcomb books in Appendix D9-10 and D12-13*

4. Set and Prioritize Goals

Overview of This Stage

The team and larger community now have a clearer picture of how the school functions along a number of dimensions, from teaching and administration to relationships and other resources. The ultimate goal is improving student achievement. Goal-setting involves questions such as:

- What goals are already required by the state?
- What are the areas of greatest need?
- Which of these have the highest potential for impact?

To prioritize the goals, the team must work back from the end point to consider what has to happen first, next, and continuously.

The team will follow a systematic process to develop focused, student-centered, measurable, realistic, and time bound goals to improve student achievement.

Readiness

Staff and other members of the leadership team have worked together to collect data and create narrative statements about the data. Strengths and challenges have been identified prior to this stage. The *Set and Prioritize Goals Readiness Tool*, Appendix C17, will help determine if there is readiness to move on to this stage.

Outcomes

Challenges/concerns will be grouped into themes. Goal statements that are student-centered, clear, measurable, and time bound are written and prioritized.

Who Should Be Involved?

The leadership team will be involved in writing the goal statements. Full faculty will have an opportunity to read through and comment on goal statements created by the leadership team.

How Much Time is Needed for This Stage?

2-3 hours.

Process

1. **Schedule a leadership team meeting to review narratives and write goals.**

The OSPI SIP Tool has a specific format for inputting narratives, indicating if they are strengths or challenges and then for writing goals. As a leadership team, your group can review what was done after the Data Carousel activity to decide on strengths and challenges. See *Set and Prioritize Goals—Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 7*, Appendix A9.

2. **Challenges are grouped into themes.**

Regarding challenges, what are the themes that emerge repeatedly in the different data categories? These might be reading, the process strands of math, thinking skills and behaviors, cultural competence or achievement gap issues. The *Emerging Themes Worksheet*, Appendix B21, may be useful for grouping prioritized challenges.

3. **Write goal statements.**

Using the *Goal Writing Worksheet*, Appendix B23, staff members write SMART goals—those that are specific, student-centered, measurable, attainable, related to achievement, and time bound. Encourage conversations about the goals. Regarding measurable goals, it's important to use formative (ongoing school or classroom based assessment) and summative measures (WASL) to determine if goals are met.

4. **Review goal statements.**

Once the goals are written they should be reviewed by any staff not involved in writing them to gain their insight and support.

5. **Prioritize goals.**

Based on the conversations among staff members in leadership and full staff meetings, staff comes to consensus on the school's most pressing needs and priorities, see *Working Toward Consensus Methods*, Appendix B8. It is important for all staff to, in some way, participate in the decision on priorities, but how to do this will vary by school.

Cautions

It has been said that having clear goals is indispensable to accomplishing what is desired and that “it is better to aim high and miss than to aim low and hit.” To set appropriate goals, leadership teams must be aware of what is possible by looking at high performing schools with similar demographic conditions. Also, leadership teams must be careful to make the distinction between goals and strategies. A strategy is a way to get to your goal.

Resources

- *OSPI SIP Tool*
- *Set and Prioritize Goals Readiness Tool*, Appendix C17
- *Set and Prioritize Goals—Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 7*, Appendix A9
- *Emerging Themes Worksheet*, Appendix B21
- *Goal Writing Worksheet*, Appendix B23
- *Working Toward Consensus Methods*, Appendix B8
- *Research on Nine Characteristics*, Appendix D17-18

5. Research and Select Effective Practices

Overview of This Stage

Just as we expect doctors to draw on a body of scientific knowledge before making a decision, educators are obligated to base instructional practices on reliable research. A significant amount of evidence exists to guide schools in creating classrooms where deep learning occurs. This includes lessons from similar schools that have achieved these goals.

Readiness

Make sure there are structures in place to support the research process, such as release time resources, and clearly stated support from the principal. The *Research and Select Effective Practices Readiness Tool* Appendix C18, will help determine if staff and/or leadership team is ready for this stage.

Outcomes

Staff members will conduct research on school practices related to their school improvement goals. They will thoroughly investigate what other schools with similar demographics have done to deal with the same types of issues the school faces. This will be accomplished by contacting other schools, and by reading and discussing scientifically based research and articles related to the school's improvement goals. School teams will look deeper into the data and will select strategies for each of the goals.

Who Should Be Involved?

The entire school faculty and representative stakeholders should be involved, though the leadership team can provide extra assistance in locating, gathering materials, and facilitating study groups. Additionally, district staff, and ESD school improvement staff, can provide assistance in this stage (see Appendix D2 for *Statewide School Improvement Contacts*).

How Much Time is Needed for This Stage?

The amount of time varies, but can take 3-to-5 days over the course of 1-2 months. Time spent searching for, reading about, and discussing effective practices is a form of professional development.

Process

1. **Schedule a leadership team meeting.** Decide which method of study you will use; 1) engage full staff and representative stakeholders in studying and selecting best practices through study groups or, 2) use the leadership team to do the majority of the work, involving full staff less extensively, and report back to staff on findings. In either case, the leadership team is involved. See *Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 8—Research and Select Effective Practices*, Appendix A10.
2. **Access various sources for information on your goal areas.** The OSPI SIP Tool allows you to type in the goal area and search for related articles and research in major databases such as ERIC and the Regional Educational Laboratories.
3. **Dig deeper into your data.** What does it tell you about content area instruction? Be sure to track down information on areas of weakness.
4. **Access information about schools with similar demographics.** This can be a great way to see how other schools with the same ages and mix of students are performing. If this is a school that has dealt with challenges your school is currently facing, you may want to schedule a visit there.
5. **Decide which studies and other resources speak to your school’s goals.** For example, if reading achievement is a goal area, you may find that larger blocks of time for instruction in reading is a research-based strategy for improvement. As you look at the amount of time your schedule allows for reading instruction, articles and research on use for time and strategies for reading instruction should be addressed in your research. The *Resource List: Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools*, Appendix D17-18, provides a listing of websites and publications.
6. **After staff has been involved in the study process, the full faculty meets to discuss the best practices.** Some creative ways to provide staff with hands-on reading and discussion about strategies that may be linked to your goals include using a jigsaw approach or rotating staff to several table presentations of the research and information on best practices.

Cautions

Don’t skip this step! Involve the full faculty as much as possible. Using professional development days and budgets for staff research possibilities will be money well spent. Taking enough time for staff to seek information, see other schools, and to discuss options builds excitement and buy-in for changes.

Resources

- *Statewide School Improvement Contacts*, Appendix D2
- *Research and Select Effective Practices Readiness Tool*, Appendix C18
- *Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 8--Research and Select Effective Practices*, Appendix A10
- *Resources Available Through OSPI SIP Tool*, Appendix D8
- *Study Group Report Form*, Appendix B25
- *Study Group Report Sample* Appendix B26
- *School Visitation Questions Guide*, Appendix B27
- *Study Process Planning Grid*, Appendix C37
- *Just for Kids Website*: www.spu.edu/wsrc
- *Resource List: Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools*, Appendix D17

6. Craft Action Plan

Overview of This Stage

The action plan pulls together the team's findings into a commitment to act. Organized around the 3-5 school improvement goals that were identified based on data, the action plan outlines:

- What the goal is
- What the activities/steps are for achieving the goal
- Who is responsible
- What the timeline is
- What resources are needed, including professional development
- What the impact will be
- How it will be evaluated

Introducing change into the busy, complicated enterprise of a school requires carefully thought-out and well articulated plans. Time spent in detailed planning at this stage will save time down the road making up for plans not carefully thought through!

Readiness

The major school improvement goals have been identified. The *Craft Action Plan Readiness* Tool Appendix C19, will help determine if staff and/or the leadership team is ready for this stage.

Outcomes

Creation of specific action plans, focused on each goal area that describe the specific activities, timelines, persons responsible, and outcome measures for each strategy.

Who Should Be Involved?

The leadership team can create the action plan. The whole faculty and representative stakeholders should have an opportunity to provide input.

How Much Time is Needed for This Stage?

Approximately 3-6 hours.

Process

1. **Schedule a leadership team meeting.** See *Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 9—Craft Action Plan*, Appendix A11-12. During this meeting the leadership team should take each of the goals and break them into all the possible steps it will take for them to be accomplished. Next the team will discuss who is responsible, the timeline, resources, and how the activity will be evaluated. See *Action Plan Outline*, Appendix C38.
2. **Consider Resources.** Take stock of what resources and other grants are available. You may have existing resources that can be restructured or options to obtain additional resources through grants or other sources.
3. **Use best thinking about how the action steps will affect the existing program and people.** You've done the hard work coming up with the goals and thinking through what the baby steps are to achieve the goals. Now is the time to carefully consider the impact the action step will have on staff and programs. Use the *Thinking it Through Worksheet*, Appendix C40, to address these issues.
4. **Plan to share the action plan and “Thinking It Through Worksheet” with whole faculty.** This can be done by the leadership team first and then with the full staff. A strategy that can save time is to have the leadership team go through the *Action Plan Outline*, Appendix C38 and the *Thinking it Through Worksheet*, Appendix C40 first and then share the work back with the full staff during a staff meeting.
5. **Keep the action plan public and alive.** One way to do this is to create a large chart in the staff lounge, the office, or some place staff are likely to see it. A large red arrow can be put next to the activities as they are implemented. The reason for this is that we pay attention to what we see. In addition, plan to communicate plan to parents, community, and students on a regular basis.

Caution

Action planning gives your team and full staff a chance to really think through how to bring the research-based strategies you have selected to life. New plans will displace what is currently in place and may alter the workload or type of work some staff members do. Now is a good time to acknowledge that this is an “ending” and to check in with staff that will be affected.

Resources

- *Craft Action Plans Readiness Tool*, Appendix C19
- *Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 9—Craft Action Plan*, Appendix A11–A12
- *Action Plan Outline*, Appendix C38
- *Action Plan Outline Sample*, Appendix C39
- *Thinking it Through Worksheet*, Appendix C40
- *Annotated Bibliography*, Appendix D9
- *Transitions*, a book by William Bridges, can be helpful in assisting staff members to move on to new programs and processes. See *Annotated Bibliography*, Appendix D10

7. Monitor Implementation of the Plan

Overview of This Stage

During this stage of your plan, your leadership team should monitor the progression of the action plan **and its impact on student achievement** and make sure the activities and tasks in each goal are moving forward under the identified timelines. Attention to the adopted schedule and “Start - Completion” dates will help your school continuously move forward to accomplish the overall learning improvement goals which shall systemically increase student achievement in your school.

Readiness

Before you get started, make sure that...

- Resources are secured for implementation (money, people, etc.)
- Realistic timelines are established
- Staff development plan developed
- School Improvement Plan published and approved
- Stakeholders review and refine the plan

The *Monitor Implementation of the Plan Readiness Tool* Appendix C20, will help determine if staff and/or leadership team is ready for this stage.

Outcomes

Formative measures such as classroom based assessments and analysis of student work will be used to see if progress has occurred in each of the goal areas. The key outcomes of this stage are to:

1. Demonstrate progress
2. Focus attention on the plan
3. Provide basis for making necessary changes
4. Give reasons to celebrate efforts of staff, students, and parents

Who Should Be Involved?

The leadership team can be responsible for actual monitoring of progress. The entire school community should remain informed about implementation progress.

How Much Time is Needed for This Stage?

Monitoring the plan should continue until the activities outlined are completed AND they become part of the school’s culture. Embedding the activities and plan into the natural practices of the school may take several years.

Process

1. **Use formative measures to check on implementation.** The *Action Plan Outline*, Appendix C38, will indicate which measures will be used to determine if efforts are on track. **Your team should not wait until WASL scores return to see if what you are implementing is working!** The *Monitoring the Activity Timeline*, Appendix C42, is a useful tool for checking on implementation and making adjustments for unanticipated events or barriers.

It is critical that staff understand that interim assessments are used as formative measures to monitor student progress toward meeting each goal. Some formative techniques that are used to monitor implementation include:

- Classroom assessments and pre- post- achievement measures
 - Surveys of Staff
 - Observations of students
 - Student work analysis
 - Oral/written work
 - Checklists of student behavior
 - Student interviews
 - External review teams
2. **Schedule a regular check-in time at leadership and/or staff meetings.** Schools are such busy places that it is easy to make assumptions that things are in place because we planned them to be!
 3. **Designate staff members, and representative stakeholders to monitor what’s happening and be cheerleaders for progress.** These may be people who were on the original leadership planning team. Their task is to check on progress on a regular basis throughout the school year. They must also be charged with keeping up communication on progress and planning any celebrations (how about treats at a meeting or a sparkling cider toast to the efforts of folks most affected by changes?).

Caution

This stage is very important to the continuous progress at your school. It must be kept up throughout the school year—this is not an end of the year event, it’s a constant gentle process of paying attention and making adjustments when necessary.

Resources

- *Monitor Implementation of the Plan Readiness Tool*, Appendix C20
- *Action Plan Outline*, Appendix C38
- *Monitoring the Activity Timeline*, Appendix C42
- *Rubric for Implementing the School’s Action Plan*, Appendix C43
- *OSPI SIP Tool*, *Monitoring the Plan*

8. Evaluate Impact on Student Achievement

Overview of This Stage

Evaluating the impact of the action plan brings the process full circle. This is not the end of school improvement planning, it's a chance to measure effectiveness, determine if practices are institutionalized, and to start the process again. The team collects and analyzes data from the state assessments and other measures to determine if school improvement goals were met and if the action plans were successful in improving student achievement.

The leadership team's role shifts from driving the process to helping staff assimilate key strategies and actions into the school culture—including the improvement process itself. Celebrating successes reinforces valued performance and reminds the community that however challenging, school improvement means students are successful.

Readiness

Methods for determining if school improvement efforts had any impact were identified in the action plan, so the designated evaluative measures must be administered and compiled. The *Evaluate Impact on Student Achievement Readiness Tool*, Appendix C21, will help determine if staff and/or leadership team is ready for this stage.

Outcomes

The WASL, ITBS, and other summative measures specified in the action plans will be analyzed. By doing this, stakeholders will determine how much progress has been made toward improving student achievement.

Who Should Be Involved?

Leadership team members and the full faculty.

How Much Time is Needed for This Stage?

2.5 to 3 hours. This is an annual event that will lead to a new process of self-reflection and action.

Process

1. **Review action plan.** What measures were designated to measure effectiveness? Have these measures been administered?
2. **Determine if additional measures are needed.** This may be a great time to conduct focus groups or to re-administer the survey(s) to staff, parents, and students.
3. **Measure progress on achievement measures.** Look at the goals and what was to be used to measure effectiveness—most often school-based assessments using pre- and post- benchmarking and standardized and criterion referenced assessments (ITBS, ITED, WASL) are used. How close did the school come to the targets that were set? Is student achievement improving? How did your students do on disaggregated measures?
4. **Determine how effective the implementation of the school improvement plan has been.** Look through the action planning sheets. Did people follow through? Perception data from focus groups, conversations with staff, and additional surveys will also give important information about implementation and its high and low points.
5. **Celebrate successes and acknowledge the need to redouble efforts.** Even the best plans meet with unpredictable obstacles and distractions. If everything didn't get implemented or measured ask why and determine if this is something that should be started in the next year/period of implementation. There are bound to be successes and things to be proud of—exploit these successes!
6. **Begin again.** Continuous improvement means there are always new ways to improve. The team can move on to new goals when original goals are achieved, regroup, revise the action plan, and start the cycle over again.

Caution

The school's improvement plan should be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. The ultimate goal is to have your school learning improvement strategies become part of the school culture. Sometimes changes become internalized and it may not be readily apparent just how different things are, be sure not to miss these things.

Celebrate your successes and set new goals!

Resources

- *Evaluate Impact on Student Achievement Readiness Tool, Appendix C21*
- *Evaluation Worksheet, Appendix C45*
- *The OSPI SIP Tool, Assessing and Evaluating the Plan*
- *Moving Toward Second Order Change, Appendix D15*

Appendix A

Sample Agendas

Appendix A

Sample Agendas

1. Assess Readiness to Benefit	
Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 1.....	A1
Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 2.....	A2
2. Collect, Sort and Select Data	
Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 3.....	A3
Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 4.....	A5
3. Build and Analyze the School Portfolio	
Full Staff Meeting: Agenda 5—Data Carousel Activity	A6
Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 6.....	A8
4. Set and Prioritize Goals	
Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 7	A9
5. Research and Select Effective Practices	
Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 8	A10
6. Craft Action Plan	
Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 9.....	A11
7. Monitor Implementation of the Plan	
Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 10	A13
8. Evaluate Impact on Student Achievement	
Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 11	A14
Leadership Team Meeting Template.....	A16
Meeting Notes Template.....	A17

Assess Readiness to Benefit Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 1

Meeting Goals: Establish the need for having a school improvement team
Acquaint team with the eight-stage process
Streamline meetings and enhance group functioning
Gauge staff willingness and ability
Plan for the next full faculty meeting(s)

Time Needed: 1.5–2 Hours

Meeting Tasks:

Review reasons the school is embarking on the school improvement process (20 minutes)

- Use current achievement data
- Discuss district/state requirements

Review the Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools

Acquaint team with the big-picture view of the eight-stage planning process (15–20 min.)

Play *School Improvement Process Puzzle* (see Appendix B3)

Decide process for using the *School Improvement Process Puzzle* with the full staff

Develop group agreements or norms for meetings (20 minutes)

Decide: When will meetings be?

Must members be on time?

How can the group stay on topic?

Will team members share role, i.e.

- facilitator/agenda preparer
- timekeeper
- process checker
- recorder

How will decisions be made? See suggestions in *Working Toward Consensus Methods*, Appendix B8.

What is the expectation for completing tasks?

Review and Discuss General Readiness Assessment (see Appendix C14) (20–30 minutes)

- Based on the team's knowledge of staff, how many "yeses are there?"
- What obstacles need to be overcome? What are the strengths that are apparent in the survey(s)?
- What is the level of staff willingness and ability?

Set Dates/Assign Tasks: (10 minutes)

- Determine best times for staff meetings/professional development days to work with staff
- Determine when leadership team meetings will take place, appoint roles

Evaluate Meeting Effectiveness: (5 minutes)

Ask "How did we do?" and "How could we make the next meeting better?"

Assess Readiness to Benefit Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 2

Meeting Goals: To prepare for activities at the next full faculty meeting
To prepare for next stage “Collect, Sort, and Select Data”

Time Needed: 1–1.5 Hours

Meeting Tasks:

Recap and debrief last meeting and go over group agreements (20 minutes)

Plan activities that will build full staff support for careful examination of data (40 minutes)

- Review *Telling Our Story*, Appendix B10.
- Decide who will facilitate activity with staff, what materials or props are needed?
- *Discuss Beliefs, Vision, Mission—Creating a Clear and Shared Focus*, Appendix B11, *Unpacking the Mission Statement*, Appendix B12–14.
- Do you have a mission statement? How real is it?

Plan next full faculty meeting(s)

- Which of the activities would work well with the full staff?
- What will follow-up be, i.e., looking at new mission statements created by staff and creating a new statement?

Set Dates/Assign Tasks:

Prepare materials for doing the activities with full staff and decide who is doing what. Schedule next meeting to begin work on the next stage “Collect, Sort, and Select Data!” Decide what the steps are in beginning to gather data.

- Hint:
- 1) Go to the OSPI website for your school and start printing out what is available for your school.
 - 2) Bring this data and any other available data such as survey results, etc. to the next meeting.

Evaluate Meeting Effectiveness:

Ask “How did we do?” and “How could we make the next meeting better?”
Use this information when planning the next meeting.

Celebrate progress! Keep staff and leadership team informed about progress by displaying the Eight-Stage School Improvement Planning Process Diagram. Color in the stage your school is currently working on. Post it in a prominent spot.

Collect, Sort, and Select Data

Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 3

Meeting Goals: To decide which data is accessible and necessary to tell the school's story
To plan for full staff meeting to gather additional input on data collection selection

Time Needed: 1–1.5 Hours for the meeting. Seven–21 additional hours collecting and keeping data organized.

Meeting Tasks:

Share existing data/determine what else you need (60 minutes)

You probably already have data on achievement and other indicators. Use the *What to Collect? Worksheets*, Appendix C23-26, to look at what data you have and can easily locate. Assign data collection to 1–2 leadership team members in each of the following areas:

- Achievement data
- Perceptions data
- Contextual data
- Demographics data

Logistics for data collection and storage

Use the OSPI website. Use your school's code to access this extensive resource that allows you to print the WASL and ITBS data that the state collects. The report on trends allows comparison over the past three years. Demographic data is also available.

Use district resources if available. Check out what's available to you.

Decide ahead of time how/where the data will be stored. One way is to have a separate notebook or folder for data types. Another strategy is to use a crate with hanging folders for each data type.

Do you need additional information that isn't already available?

Decide as you work through the four *What to Collect? Worksheets*, Appendix C23–26, if you need to create and/or administer surveys that will be given to staff, parents, and students. If this is the case, you will need to discuss logistics of creating and distributing surveys and compilation of the data.

Note: Don't go into depth about what any of these data sources have to say, that happens later—this is the time to collect and sort.

Do “Why Use Data?” Activity. See Appendix B15 (20 minutes)

This activity can be used with the full faculty to increase staff awareness about data and the purposes for data collection. It can also be a lot of fun! Decide who will facilitate activity with staff, where people holding the cards will stand, etc.

Plan next full staff meeting

The goal for this full staff meeting is to:

1. Give staff a chance to provide input on sources and types of data
2. Keep staff informed and build buy-in leading to support for creating the portfolio and further stages in the planning process

Set Dates/Assign Tasks:

1. Go over staff input for additional data collection
2. Check in on what data was collected
3. Plan for Carousel activity with full staff
4. Use *Next Steps Planning Sheet*, Appendix C22, to track tasks and who is responsible

Evaluate Meeting Effectiveness:

Ask “How did we do?” and “How could we make the next meeting better?”

Use this information when planning the next meeting.

Caution: Schedule this meeting right away. Because the full faculty won’t actually be looking at the data at this meeting, leadership team members can begin data collection immediately following the leadership team meeting—this can be a time-consuming process. If possible, provide release time for staff to gather data or offer some type of incentive so that this doesn’t drag on causing a loss of momentum.

Collect, Sort, and Select Data

Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 4

Meeting Goals: To prepare data to share with staff
To plan next full staff meeting

Time Needed: 1–2 Hours

Meeting Tasks:

Start with a warm-up (10 minutes)

Ask leadership team members to finish the following sentence:

“When I think about data, charts, and graphs I feel like _____
because _____.”

People come up with statements like:

“When I think about data, charts, and graphs I feel like a private investigator because it’s like looking for clues to a mystery.”

Team members share back what they collected (60 minutes)

In the four main areas:

- Achievement data
- Perceptions data
- Contextual data
- Demographics data

Either as a full team or in small groups have team members consider the Strengths and Concerns for each type of data. See “*What to Collect?*” *Worksheets*, Appendix C23-26.

Plan for data carousel at next full staff meeting (30 minutes)

First, see *Data Carousel Activity*, Appendix B16-17.

- Decide as a team if you will create data displays for the wall or in computerized graphic displays on paper or both. If you don’t plan to present data in large displays on the wall, decide how the data will appear in individual packets.
- Plan who will explain the Data Carousel and if leadership team members will divide up among the staff groups as they look at the data.
- Determine how information on strengths and concerns will be compiled and shared with staff.

Note: Your ESD may have highly informed and capable staff who can assist your leadership team with the Data Carousel and other aspects of data collection. Contact them for help or as a sounding board.

Set Dates/Assign Tasks: Assign Tasks and Completion Dates.

Schedule Data Carousel for Full Faculty Meeting.

Evaluate Meeting Effectiveness:

Ask “How did we do?” and “How could we make the next meeting better?”

Use this information when planning the next leadership team meeting.

Data Carousel Activity

Full Staff Meeting: Agenda 5

Meeting Goals: To familiarize staff with the school's data
To involve all staff in creating narrative statements

Time Needed: 2–3 Hours

Meeting Tasks:

Preparation

- Data in the four categories is prepared for staff member groups to review at four different stations.
- Staff members are divided into groups of no more than eight people. For a faculty of more than about thirty-two the data “stations” should be duplicated, i.e., two stations for each of the four types of data. Mix staff up in groups so they have the benefit of various staff perspectives as they consider the data.
- Make copies of the *Narrative Tally Sheets*, Appendix C31–34 (you will need enough for each small group to write statements for each category of data).

Build Team Spirit/Establish Roles (10 minutes)

Data teams will be working together throughout the Data Carousel, start with a team-building activity.

1. Ask the group to give names of objects—write these on chart paper. (They'll say things like: notebook, purse, laptop, pencils, coffee.)
2. Assign one of these words to each table. Tell them their first task is to come up with a statement for how this object is like or not like their group as they look at data, charts, and graphs. Give them paper and markers to create a sign. Have them post their sign and share with entire group.
3. Tell the groups that their next task is to select someone with the most legible handwriting to be the recorder, a facilitator to keep team members on task, and a timekeeper to help them use time effectively.

Explaining the Activity (65 minutes)

1. Each group will consider all the data and information that's been collected for each category. The group gets to look at a different type of data at each table.
2. The group's task is to individually look at all the data sets at your table. This may take about 5-7 minutes.
3. As a whole group generate a brief narrative statement about each piece of data on the *Narrative Tally Sheets*, Appendix C31–34. Narrative statements should: be simple, communicate a single idea about student performance, and be non-evaluative. See *Three Tips for Writing Powerful Narrative Statements*, Appendix B18.
4. After 20 minutes, the group moves on to the next set of data. Read what the other group wrote, and create new and/or modified statements that your group agrees on. You will have 15 minutes at the second, third, and fourth tables.

Small groups (15 minutes)

1. Review narrative statements.
 - Are they clearly written?
 - Which ones are redundant?
 - Is anything missing?

Full group (45-60 minutes)

2. Consider statements on projected screen and eliminate/add statements.
3. Decide as a group if the statement is a strength, a challenge, or both.

Next Steps

Leadership team will input the narrative statements into the OSPI SIP Tool. Challenges will be grouped into themes prior to writing goals.

Evaluate Meeting Effectiveness

Ask groups how the activity worked for them.

- Did they learn something?
- Was it fun?
- How could it have been better?
- Do they want to do something like this again?

Build and Analyze the School Portfolio

Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 6

Meeting Goals: To debrief Data Carousel Activity
To review narrative statements and group into SIP Tool
To decide how the portfolio will be shared

Time Needed: 1–1.5 Hours

Meeting Tasks:

Debrief the Data Carousel Activity (10 minutes)

- How did people do with this group activity? Were the rules clear?
- Is this a process that could be used annually to review data? How would it work better?

Review narrative statements and group by themes (30-45 minutes)

Referring to the narrative statements created in the Data Carousel Activity,

- Look to see if pertinent information is missing from the narratives.
- Note the strengths and discuss how these can be acknowledged and celebrated.

Add Narratives to the OSPI SIP Tool (Time varies)

- Go to the Portfolio page of the SIP Tool and select Add/Edit Narratives. Write narrative statements for each data display you previously selected in the achievement, demographics, and perceptions categories.
- After narrative statements are input, go to Review Narratives and label each narrative as a strength, a challenge, or both.

Prioritize Challenges (This can be done with the whole group and/or with the leadership team)

Using the *Prioritize Challenges Worksheet*, Appendix B19,

- Compile narrative statements that are designated as challenges.
- Individually prioritize challenges by level of dissatisfaction, by severity, and by how much control the school has over this particular challenge.
- Staff member prioritizes challenges and tallies ratings to determine an overall ranking.

Discuss and decide how your school's portfolio will be available to stakeholders not present in the Data Carousel activity (15 minutes)

Your group should consider multiple ways of keeping the portfolio visible and accessible:

1. Use the OSPI SIP Tool as a repository for your data. Leadership team members can be responsible for creating the portfolio in the web-based tool.
2. Post large displays of data in teachers' lounge or in a hallway. Attach narrative statements captions that indicate what the school should celebrate and the areas that are challenges.
3. Keep a current notebook with all the types of data and as the school improvement process proceeds, add goal statements, action plans, pertinent research, and plans for evaluation.

Set Dates/Assign Tasks

The next stage is to set and prioritize goals. When will you meet to do this? What will you need?

Evaluate Meeting Effectiveness

What worked? What still needs to be addressed?

Set and Prioritize Goals

Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 7

Meeting Goals: To group narratives into themes
To write goals
To prioritize goals

Time Needed: 1.5 Hours

Meeting Tasks:

Review the narratives and the strengths/challenges designation worksheets and group narratives by themes (10 minutes)

Regarding challenges, what are the themes that emerge repeatedly in the different data categories? These might be the process strands of math, thinking skills and behaviors, or ethnicity gap issues.

- Create a list of themes that will be used in the goal setting stage. Check to see if themes adequately describe the area (math vs. math problem solving)

Categorize themes in the SIP Tool (Time varies)

Follow directions in the SIP Tool under Goals for grouping narratives by themes. Goal statements will be entered in the theme area.

Write 3-5 student-centered goals (60 minutes)

- Review the *Is it a STRATEGY or is it a GOAL?* worksheet in Appendix B22.
- Using the *Goal Writing Worksheet* in Appendix B23, divide into pairs and write a draft goal.
- Rotate goals to the next group to review using the rating matrix.
- As a whole group, discuss each of the goals—are they ambitious enough? Are they goals for what students will do?

Prioritize the goals (10 minutes)

- The group decides which of the goals will receive priority status. Because the state requires two goals—reading and math, these may take top billing, depending on achievement in these areas.

Set Dates/Assign Tasks:

Schedule time at a staff meeting for staff to consider the goals and prioritize them

(20-30 min.)

- The staff should see and agree (or not) on the goal statements.
- With goals in hand, the group can begin to research how the goals will be achieved. The next staff meeting may be a great time to divide people up into research teams based on the goals. Who will do what?

Evaluate meeting effectiveness:

Ask “How did we do?” and “How could we make the next meeting better?”

Research and Select Effective Practices Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 8

Meeting Goal: To discuss process for investigating best practices related to the goals

Time Needed: 1–2 Hours

Meeting Tasks:

Decide which method you will use for studying and selecting effective practices.

Two options for involving staff include:

1. **Engage full staff in studying and selecting effective practices.** If you do this option it helps to have leadership team staff (or someone else) track down several resources for each goal. A way to do this is to have staff sign up for study groups that will research effective practices for each individual goal. The advantage of this approach is that it increases staff awareness and helps build buy-in. A downside is that it takes a big commitment of staff time. Team members can use the *Study Process Planning Grid*, Appendix C37, *Study Group Report Form*, Appendix B25 to guide the process and the *School Visitation Question Guide*, Appendix B27-28 for investigating other schools.

-OR-

2. **The leadership team tracks down the research and brings it back to staff to reflect upon.**

This takes less staff time but makes “buy-in” more difficult. If your school is tackling persistently low gains, this strategy may not be the best way to build support for change in the school.

In either case, the leadership team is heavily involved!

Decide if teams will make visitations to other classrooms or schools

Use the *School Visitation Question Guide* in Appendix B27-28 for interviewing other schools on their improvement processes.

Set Dates/Assign Tasks:

The next stage is to create an action plan. How long will the research stage take? Will you need a check-in meeting? *Resources Available through the OSPI SIP Tool*, Appendix D6 points team members to education research links on the OSPI web site. *The Study Group Report*, Appendix B25 is a tool for reporting research findings for each goal.

Evaluate Meeting Effectiveness:

What worked? What still needs to be addressed?

Craft Action Plan

Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 9

Meeting Goal: To create a plan for implementing strategies related to each of the school improvement goals.

Time Needed: 2.5 Hours

Meeting Tasks:

Decide how to get to the “Preferred Future” (30 minutes)

Use the *Preferred Future Action Planning Activity*, Appendix B29, to work through potential activities that will lead to the attainment of each goal.

Action Planning (45-60 minutes)

Sometimes a first draft is what it takes to get the creative juices flowing!

- Break into pairs and have each duo fill out the *Action Plan Outline*, Appendix C38, for one or two of the goals (each team will work on different goals). Spend about 15-20 minutes.
- Pass Action Plan Draft to the next pair to edit, review, and discuss. Repeat process if you have enough groups.
- The original group gets their work and discusses proposed changes and rationale.

Think through the action steps (30 minutes)

The leadership team as a whole works through the *Thinking it Through Worksheet*, Appendix C40. The following questions will be considered:

- What are the potential downsides to this action?
- Who will be affected?
- Is there a chance this may be a negative or positive?
- What can occur to ease the potential negative outcomes of this activity?

Note any particular staff members who will be heavily impacted and plan how to acknowledge the prospective change in their routines or duties.

Revisit the Action Plan Outline

After “thinking it through” you may decide to make final changes to your draft action plan.

Set Dates/Assign Tasks:

Plan any necessary training to implement the action steps.

Decide when and how to share the Draft Action Plan Outline with whole staff

(30-45 minutes at a staff meeting)

- Break staff members into groups of three and have them use the *Action Plan Rubric*, Appendix C41, to review the draft action plan.
- Carefully review staff comments and ratings on the rubric.
- Plan any necessary training to implement the action steps.

Evaluate Meeting Effectiveness:

Action planning is crucial to the effective implementation of the school improvement plan. Ask, “Did we put enough time and effort into this stage?” and “Are we really clear on where we want to go and what it will take to implement these goals?” before you move on. Back up and take more time if necessary.

Caution! Leadership team members should be prepared for potential negative reactions of staff members and be open to their suggestions for improved action steps. Because action planning may affect staff actions, use of time, and in some cases touches programs that people are attached to, it’s very important to allow and encourage input. It may be necessary to go backward to remind staff members how you got to these conclusions and action steps.

Monitor Implementation of the Plan

Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 10

Meeting Goal: To make sure activities and tasks in the plan are moving forward on specified timelines

Time Needed: 1 Hour

Meeting Tasks:

Review action plan outline

Your leadership team reviews the *Action Plan Outline*, Appendix C38, for each goal, asking the following questions for each individual step or activity within the goal.

- Are those involved with the activity meeting the timeline?
- What evidence of implementation exists?
- Are the indicated resources available and being utilized?
- Have any unanticipated barriers or challenges occurred since the plan was written?
- Does the Action Plan need to be adjusted to reflect any of the above information?

Monitoring, Adjusting the Plan and Addressing Issues and Challenges

Use *Monitoring Implementation Checklist*, Appendix C44, to review progress on each goal and activity. Seek additional information as necessary.

Make a plan for acknowledging and celebrating successes in progress toward goals

Reinforcing changes in practices related to school improvement goals is the best way to ensure that these practices are embraced by staff and become part of the school culture. Your team should anticipate important milestones and plan extraordinary ways to recognize staff efforts. Some ideas include:

- Staff bowling party
- District recognition through administrator visit (with treats)
- Displaying information for community to see
- Lapel buttons that say “We’re getting there”
- Bulletin board with individual acknowledgment for student work and highlighting staff contributions
- Newsletter articles honoring staff efforts

Set Dates/Assign Tasks:

Determine when your team needs to meet again to monitor implementation. There may be new tasks as a result of the monitoring process—assign roles as necessary.

Evaluate Meeting Effectiveness:

What worked? What still needs to be addressed?

Evaluate Impact on Student Achievement

Leadership Team Meeting: Agenda 11

Meeting Goals: To determine if goals and activities have increased academic achievement
To determine if the plan has been successfully implemented
To determine if the school made progress toward the Nine Characteristics

Time Needed: 1–2 Hours

Meeting Tasks:

Evaluate progress in meeting School Improvement goals

Review the data collected on student achievement and other school improvement goals to determine how closely the school came to the targets that were set.

- Where did the school meet or exceed its goals?
- How did students within specific subgroups meet or exceed goals?
- Which goals were not fully met?
- Are new trends emerging?

Use the baseline data to recognize successes.

Evaluate effectiveness of the Action Plan

Measures for evaluating the effectiveness of the Initial Action Plan are specified in the *Action Plan Outline, Appendix C38*, for each goal. Examine the information collected, along with what was recorded in the *Monitoring Implementation Checklist* and *Monitoring the Activity Timeline, Appendix C44 and C42*, to determine how effective the plan was. Using the *Evaluation Worksheet, Appendix C45*, review each goal and summarize results. Then ask:

- Were the activities for specific goals reasonable?
- Were there sufficient resources, including time?
- Did people follow through?
- If the plan was not sufficiently implemented to achieve the goals, what needs to be changed to create a workable plan?

Review progress on the Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools

Administer *Nine Characteristics Surveys* again to determine which characteristics the school has become stronger in? Where does more attention need to occur?

Revise and update the Action Plan

Plan for updating information in the School Profile. Discuss and make changes in a revised action plan for continuing efforts. If goals have been met and the actions to maintain are institutionalized, move on to the next goal.

Celebrate and recognize efforts

Wow! After several months of implementation your school has shown progress!

- Have a party
- Publicize results
- Recognize heroes (the teachers, the kids, the parents)

Set Dates/Assign Tasks:

Look again at any goals that aren't being met. Do team members need to investigate and report back at the next meeting?

Evaluate process effectiveness:

Overall, what worked?

How could the entire school improvement process be more inclusive, affect more change, and/or work better?

Meeting Date _____

Leadership Team Meeting Template

Meeting Goals:

Time Needed:

Meeting Tasks:

Set Dates/Assign Tasks:

Evaluate Meeting Effectiveness:

Meeting Date _____

Meeting Notes Template

Meeting Goals:

Who Attended Meeting:

Task Accomplished/Decisions Made:

Who is responsible?

By when?

Task Accomplished/Decisions Made :

Who is responsible?

By when?

Task Accomplished/Decisions Made:

Who is responsible?

By when?

Task Accomplished/Decisions Made:

Who is responsible?

By when?

Task Accomplished/Decisions Made:

Who is responsible?

By when?

Next Meeting Date:

Was this meeting effective? How can we make it better next time?

Appendix B

People Processes

Appendix B

People Processes

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Jigsaw Procedure Stages in the School Improvement Process

**“One way to structure positive interdependence among group members is to use the jigsaw method of creating resource interdependence.”
(Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 1991)**

The jigsaw procedure was developed in the early 1970’s by Elliot Aronson and his students at the University of Texas and the University of California.

The activity is used extensively as a cooperative learning strategy. The procedures engage each member as a learner (becoming an expert on their material) and as a teacher (sharing the material with others in their group).

A jigsaw procedure can be used in a variety of classroom and professional development circumstances:

- When there is a large amount of information, and/or
- When there is complex information
- As a preview or review of the information
- When you want/need to combine intellectually complex information with team building
- To enhance motivation and enjoyment of the learning process
- When you want/need to use multiple modalities
- Want to encourage listening, engagement and empathy

Jigsaw Procedure for Stages in the School Improvement Process

Purpose of this activity:

- To familiarize yourself with the jigsaw process
- To familiarize yourself with the SIP Process document
- To consider how you will use this process and document with your team

1. Divide into groups of four (based on response to line up). This will be your “base group.”
2. Number off 1 through 4 in your base group.
 - Number 1—“Introduction” and “Assess Readiness to Benefit” (pages i and 1–2).
 - Number 2—“Collect, Sort and Select Data,” “Build and Analyze the School Portfolio” and “Set and Prioritize Goals” (pages 3–8).
 - Number 3—“Research and Select Effective Practices” and “Craft Action Plans” (pages 9–12).
 - Number 4—“Monitor Implementation of the Plan” and “Evaluate Impact on Student Achievement” (pages 13–16).

3. Say “Later” to your base group and create a new group of no more than four members with others having the same number as you. This is your “learning group.”

1-1-1-1 2-2-2-2 3-3-3-3 4-4-4-4

4. Read your section of the information. Decide on the key points. Make sure to take a look at the information that appears in the appendices.
5. Review with others in your learning group. See if there is a common understanding of the information.
6. Develop a visual means for presenting/teaching this information to the others in your base group. Every person has to develop a visual. There are chart paper and markers available to you.
7. Say “Good-bye” to your learning group and return to your base group with visual in hand.
8. Starting with Number 1, teach and learn the different information from each other. Each person in the group has approximately three minutes to share his/her section.

School Improvement Process Puzzle

Purpose:

- To provide a clear understanding of the school improvement process and the activities involved with each step
- To understand the connection between steps in the process
- To be aware that the school improvement process is not a one-time event, but cyclical and recursive
- To develop a common understanding of terms

Directions:

1. Enlarge *School Improvement Planning Process Stages*, Appendix B4.
2. In small groups or leadership team, match step with definition—place cards side by side in front of your group.

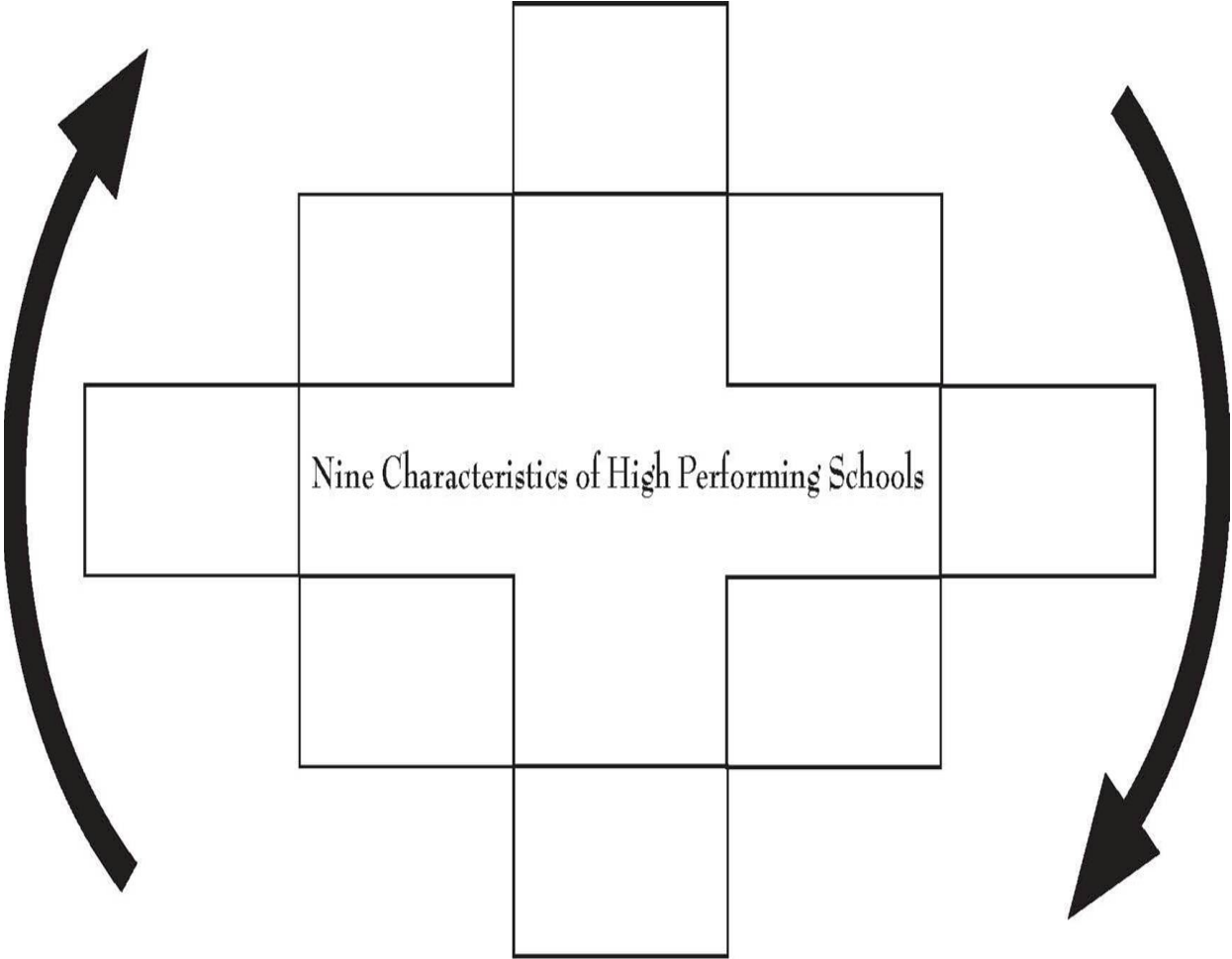
Group recorder makes note:

- Which steps had most discussion?
- Which steps need more clarity?

Show group eight-step process on overhead or handout.

1. The large group explores which steps had the most discussion or needed more clarity. Check overhead for correct match and glue definition on back of each step card.
2. Small groups proceed to arrange steps in order on enlarged *School Improvement Planning Process Stages* template.
Group recorder makes note:
 - Which steps had most discussion in relationship to order?
3. Large group discussion on sequence and outcomes of each step.
 - Discuss cyclical nature of process and nonlinear nature of process.
 - Incorporate readiness at each step.
 - Discuss suggested timeline and who might be involved at each step.

School Improvement Planning Process Stages



Continuous Improvement

Directions: Enlarge on photo copier 200%. Print onto 11x17 inch paper.

School Improvement Planning Process Puzzle

Assess Readiness to Benefit	Assess a combination of willingness (attitude) and ability (skills) for each step in the school improvement process.
Build and Analyze School Portfolio	Review collected data, write narrative statements about data, begin to define potential growth areas.
Research and Select Effective Practices	Conduct extensive research to find strategies and rationale to improve learning in the goal area.
Monitor Implementation of the Plan	Track progress of action plan so activities and tasks are being completed according to timeline.

School Improvement Planning Process Puzzle

Collect, Sort, and Select Data

Collect data from multiple indicators (achievement, demographic, perception and school process and programs) and decide what pertinent data will be included in the school portfolio. Baselines established.

Set and Prioritize Goals

Make decisions about what areas to focus on to achieve a desired and preferred future.

Craft Action Plan

Select strategies, design action steps, establish timelines, identify resources, set progress and monitoring benchmarks, and determine staff development to accomplish goals.

Evaluate Impact on Student Achievement

Determine the success and effectiveness of your identified improvement plan.

Planning Calendar for SIP Stages

Projected Dates	Time-Frame	Stage	Product/Outcomes
	2–4 weeks	Assess Readiness to Benefit	By the end of this stage, the entire school faculty will have a clearer picture of what it will take to go through the eight stages of the school improvement process. The appropriate structures and supports for this to happen will be in place (e.g., leadership team, district buy-in, shared vision).
	4–6 weeks	Collect, Sort, and Select Data	Current data or indicators will be collected in four major categories: achievement, demographics, staff/student/parent perceptions, and school programs. Data is prepared to enable full faculty and leadership team to engage in a data carousel activity.
	3 hours	Build and Analyze the School Portfolio	The result of this stage is an analysis of data by all staff and leadership team based on narratives, charts, and graphs displaying the current status of the school. A prioritized list of challenges will be generated and used in the next stages to develop goals and an action plan.
	3 hours	Set and Prioritize Goals	Challenges/concerns are grouped into themes. Goal statements that are student-centered, clear, measurable, and time-bound are written and prioritized.
	4–8 weeks	Research and Select Effective Practices	Further analyze data, locate best practices, interview consultants, conduct site-visits, and engage in research to identify strategies that will address the identified goals and provide the basis of action plans.
	3–6 hours	Craft Action Plan	Creation of specific action plans focused on each goal area that describe the specific activities, timelines, persons responsible, and outcome measures for each strategy.
	Ongoing	Monitor Implementation of the Plan	Formative measures such as classroom based assessments, and analysis of student work are used to see if progress is occurring in each of the goal areas. Based on this information, plans are modified as necessary.
	2.5–3 hours	Evaluate Impact on Student Achievement	The WASL, ITBS, and other summative measures specified in the action plans are analyzed to determine if activities in action plans have met student needs.

Working Toward Consensus Methods

Fist to Five

This process helps staff come to consensus when choosing a topic to pursue further or in choosing a collective course of action to take:

After a list has been generated of possible actions or ideas to pursue, number each item. It is ideal to have a list of no more than five or six. Allow time for each item to be explained. Ask that the explanation be stated by a single person and that the explanation provide any necessary background information for others to understand. Explanations cannot be more than one minute in length. After each item has been explained, ask if anyone would like to participate as an advocate for any of the listed items. As an advocate, your time is limited to two minutes. The advocate must state why this action or idea is important. Do not worry if not all items have an advocate. The group process will support individual opinions.

When all advocates have had their time to share, a collective vote is taken. The facilitator asks the group to look at and consider each item and vote with their hand. Participants will hold up:

5 fingers if they totally agree

4 fingers if they think it's a good idea and will support it

3 fingers if they are neutral but will support

2 fingers if they don't agree, but will support

1 finger if they won't support

Fist, if they will resist—BUT WILL HELP FIND ANOTHER SOLUTION

Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down

Use this method in small groups to get a quick reading on group consensus. Be sure to take the time for neutral and thumbs down explanations.

Thumbs up if they agree

Thumb sideways if they are neutral—explain why

Thumb down if they disagree—explain reasons for disagreement

Group Agreement Scale

Use this method two or three times to gauge group support. Make the following voting indicators for each member of the group:

3 = total agreement



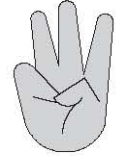
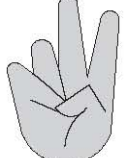
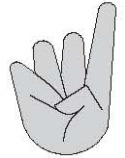

2 = support idea with reservations

1 = can't support

? = need to have more questions answered

Write statement, concept, or action so all group members can see it and ask everyone to hold up one of their numbers or a question mark. Tally the numbers and fully discuss the questions. Poll again and continue cycle of discussion and voting until highest level of agreement is achieved.

Fist to Five

	<p>Total Agreement Best Solution Complete Support</p>
	<p>Agreement Support Good Solution</p>
	<p>Neutral, but will support</p>
	<p>Don't Agree Willing to Support</p>
	<p>Don't Agree Will Not Support</p>
	<p>Cannot Go Along Will Openly Resist</p>

Telling Our Story

- 1. This activity can help break the ice with staff. Select 3 staff members to read the following stories. Encourage staff to be dramatic as they read.**

The bright side of collegiality can be found at Puget View Elementary School in Pugetside, WA. Students realized substantial gains from 1998 through 2001 when teachers began working together in weekly staff meetings. In reading, 3rd grade scores on the state assessment rose from 23% perform to 87% meeting standards and the 5th grade scores rose from 24% to 88% meeting or exceeding standards. In math, 3rd grade scores rose from 48% to 93% and at 5th grade from 22% to 85%. What did they do? It all started with teams of teachers meeting regularly to analyze student work, identify strengths and weaknesses, and develop ways to address them.

Five years ago Turning Tide High School in Chillyton, IL, was not a destination teaching spot. In addition to high student dropout rates and staff absences, requests for transfer were astronomical. Prior to 1997, in spite of the schools affluent demographic status the school was in the lowest 25% on achievement in the state. Yet scores from the 2000–2001 have shown a steady increase, dropout rates are the lowest they've ever been and it's the school teachers want to call home! At the root of the turnaround was the establishment of goals, common planning time, and the designation of a "school spirit" committee of students and staff members.

Another middle school receives a Governor's Award for Exceptional Achievement. During the mid-90s, staff at Johnson Creek Middle School in Havenview Acres, MN were repeatedly disillusioned by annual state test scores showing too many students not achieving. But average reading, math, and writing scores finally made a big jump in 1998 and have continued to climb each year. This year, over 72% of students met state proficiency standards, a jump of 50% since 1997. What happened? Principal John Antly recounted that during the 1996–1997 school year, the school's high percentage of students on free and reduced lunch allowed staff to create a school-wide plan. What started out as a way for isolated staff to work together more turned into a successful strategy. Regular study groups and peer coaching have made a big difference in outcomes for students. Algebra teacher Mick Cowan sums it up: "We used to each do our own thing, now we are helping each other out, trying new things and really communicating about student work and progress—it seems to have made a difference."

- 2. Ask what role data played in the success stories. What were the key factors for the gains?**
- 3. Ask small groups to create their own ideal news stories about your school. What would the data be? What would the key factors be? Have volunteers read their responses.**

Adapted from "Swapping Stories." Holcomb, E.L. (2004) Getting Excited About Data (2nd Ed.): Combining People, Passion and Proof to Maximize Student Achievement. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Beliefs, Vision, and Mission— Creating a Clear and Shared Focus

In high performing schools, staff members find ways to address the underlying reasons and motivations for the work that is done in their schools. Schools and districts vary in the approaches for doing this.

At a minimum, school staff and members of the leadership team must have the opportunity to discuss and create a common understanding of the school's role to help students become productive, educated members of society. Use the following questions as a guide for staff discussion:

Belief Statements

What do we believe is true about the conditions that support learning? How have we seen our students learn best? What is the role of parents and community in maximizing student learning? How do we go about incorporating new knowledge into our practice?

Vision

Staff members respond to the following question in writing or by creating a group picture on chart paper, “What do we want this school to be for students, their families, and our community?” Urge staff to move beyond current limitations and look at the ideal situation. Other questions that can prompt a vision include “The kind of school I would like my own child to attend would...” or, “I want this school to be a place where...”

Mission

What are we going to do to assure that the vision is actualized? This should be a general statement that encompasses all curricular areas and speaks to the “whole child”. A mission statement usually incorporates an action verb such as “provide”, “pursue”, or “create.”

Unpacking the Mission Statement

Look at the difference in the two mission statements below. Which one is able to provide evidence to measure the mission? Which one has a chance of unifying the school community with a shared mission related to student achievement?

Mission A—Found in a file cabinet drawer.
To boldly go where no school has gone before.

Mission B—Written on school letterhead, on walls in hallways, in staff lounge.
Our school provides a caring and supportive environment where staff is driven to help every student meet academic and social success.

What We Say	Evidence to Measure It	Evidence We Need
Mission A boldly go	staff try new things average years teaching=22 (we persevere)	list of what we've implemented since 1998
Mission B caring and supportive environment	attendance high parental attendance at conferences and curriculum nights teachers in hallways between classes	what do students think—do we need a survey for parents and students? teacher attendance data?
Mission A where no school has gone before	we don't think there are other schools like ours—we have kids from very impoverished homes and our parents are not supportive we have a new superintendent every other year unstable funding	need to look at demographics for our school and compare with some other schools in towns like ours
Mission B staff is driven to help every student	ESL program home visits after-school tutors weekly conferences with students student goal setting after school enrichment classes	disaggregated data that shows how our ELL and SpEd kids are doing
Mission A nothing else here	average and higher function students show gains in reading math scores do not support consistent success	other ways to measure academic success
Mission B academic success	peer mediation program not many referrals for fights	referral data
Mission B social success	students are happy here	student satisfaction survey

Adapted from "Monitoring our Mission," Holcomb, E. C. (2004) Getting Excited About Data (2nd Ed.): Combining People, Passion and Proof to Maximize Student Achievement. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Unpacking OUR Mission Statement

1. Write your mission statement below.
2. Write each individual part of your mission statement and put it in the “what we say” column.
3. Write what evidence that can measure what is said in the mission statement. For example, “WASL data shows third graders are making steady gains in reading,” or “Average daily attendance is 97%.”
4. You may find that you need to gather more evidence to show whether what is said is actually happening at your school.
5. You may also find that your mission statement doesn’t adequately represent what is happening/what should happen now at your school. If this is the case, create a new one (see *Invent A New Mission Statement*, Appendix B14).

What We Say	Evidence to Measure It	Evidence We Need

Adapted from “Monitoring our Mission, Holcomb, E.C. (2004) Getting Excited About Data (2nd Ed.): Combining People, Passion and Proof to Maximize Student Achievement. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Invent a New Mission Statement

The true spirit of a mission statement is that it inspires stakeholders and provides a touchstone for efforts. It can be modified to reflect current stakeholders' viewpoints and understanding. In other words, this year's school mission statement may subtly change in subsequent years.

Here's a guide for creating a current mission statement:

What is the ideal outcome of the school's efforts? What, in general terms, do you want for students academically and socially?

What staff, students, and parents do to make it happen. What is the role of staff, students, and parents in making this happen?

Pull it together. Put these two things together into one statement. (Don't spend a lot of time "wordsmithing;" you will pass this on to the leadership team to create a simple statement.):

Self-evaluate your product. How does your statement measure up on the rating criteria below?

Suggested Criteria for an Effective Mission Statement (5 is tops)

The mission statement:	1	2	3	4	5
Is short and sharply focused					
Is clear and easily understood					
Defines why we do what we do					
Defines why the organization exists					
Is sufficiently broad and general					
Provides direction for doing the right things					
Inspires our commitment					
Says what we want to be remembered for					

Why Use Data? Activity (20 Minutes)

This activity can be used as an opening exercise that helps staff create a personal context for why achievement and other data is useful. Print the following statements in large bold letters on strips of chart paper. Also print the words “Extrinsic and Intrinsic.”*

Tell staff their job in this activity is to tell others “where to go.” Here’s how it works:

1. Ask for two staff members who are willing to accept completely menial tasks and leave more tasks for others—give these two people the “extrinsic” or “intrinsic” signs and have them stand across the room from each other.
2. Copy the following statements on large strips of paper and pass them out randomly to staff members. Be sure to tell them that these statements come from other teachers.
3. Ask each statement holder to stand up and read the statement.
4. Ask the full staff to decide if this reason for using data is an intrinsic or extrinsic motivation for using data.
5. Tell staff to yell out where the statement holder should go and have them stand by the people holding “intrinsic” and” “extrinsic” signs. Encourage rowdiness!
6. After all statements are placed along the continuum, have the remaining staff use applause to tell how much personal motivation each of the items provides. In other words, if “To prove we’re not afraid of feedback,” provides no personal motivation for most people there would be very little clapping (booing and hissing is okay though).
7. Conclude by briefly commenting on the importance of the statements that were validated by applause. Ask the group members to get a mental picture of their colleagues holding these words and remember that these are the real reasons they will be working with data.

To reward and strengthen teachers’ own feelings of success/efficacy

To satisfy our own drive for excellence

To demonstrate our belief that we can do a better job helping kids succeed

To test the assumptions we make about students and their performance

To be more focused and less fragmented

To be more objective in decision-making

To be able to incorporate authentic/performance assessments, not just standardized tests

To keep us from wasting time and money on things that don’t work or don’t matter

To present a more complete picture of the school to our community

To help us get the “big picture” of our school

To be proactive in reporting to stakeholders

To prove we’re not afraid of feedback

To counter negative/inaccurate media coverage

To answer community questions related to comparison with other schools

To give the community a “big picture” view of our school

*Extrinsic=externally motivated. Intrinsic=internally motivated.”

Adapted from “The “Live” Motivation Continuum.” Holcomb, E.L. (2004) Getting Excited About Data (2nd Ed.): Combining People, Passion and Proof to Maximize Student Achievement. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Data Carousel Activity

How much time is needed? 2–3 Hours

There are many ways to do this! The essence of the activity is that all staff have a chance to see the same data and formulate what they believe are strengths and concerns.

How the activity works:

- Data in four categories is prepared for staff member groups to review at four different stations.
- Staff members are divided into groups of no more than eight people. For a faculty of more than about 32 the data “stations” should be duplicated, i.e., two stations for each of the four types of data.
- Each group considers the data and writes narrative statements. After approximately 15 minutes, the group looks at a new type of data.

Important: Divide staff members up into mixed groups so they have the benefit of various perspectives as they consider the data.

How to present the data:

The packet method—1 packet per data type placed at each table. Direct staff members to review the data individually in their small groups. After each person has considered all data, the group discusses strengths and concerns and the recorder writes these key points on two different sheets. At the end of the rotation, the sheets are collected and the group rotates to the next data station (or the data is rotated). This process continues so that each group looks at all types of data.

The large chart method—data displayed on walls and tables
All data is enlarged so that it is easier to digest and understand. An advantage of this method is that it makes it easier to have conversations about the data.

Explaining the Activity:

1. Each group will consider all the data and information that’s been collected for each area. The group gets to look at a different type of data.
2. Each group should choose a recorder and a facilitator who will keep you on track.
3. The task is to look at all the data sets at the table.
4. As a whole group, generate a brief narrative statement about each piece of data on the *Narrative Tally Sheets*, see Appendix C31–34. Narrative statements should: be simple, communicate a single idea about student performance, and be non-evaluative. See *Three Tips for Writing Powerful Narrative Statements*, Appendix B18.
5. After 20 minutes, each group moves on to the next set of data, first reading what the other group wrote, then creating new and/or modified statements the group agrees on. Groups will have 15 minutes at the second, third, and fourth tables.

Very important! The group should not spend time during this exercise generating solutions or having conversations about how to fix the concerns—this comes later.

Two ways to determine if narratives are strengths, challenges, or both:

6. When the last rotation is finished, leadership team members collect narrative statements for each data category, type into the narrative tally sheet forms (keeping the redundancies) and print them out. When staff returns each group will read through the entire list and mark off redundant statements. (For example, each group should have written a statement about a three year trend in WASL reading scores—the small group decides which statement is most accurate and clear. Next, the leadership team presents the statements on the overhead projector and the whole group agrees on the most accurate statements and then decides if the statement is a strength or a challenge (it may be both!).

-or-

7. If the technology is available, the narrative statements can be typed directly into the OSPI SIP Tool and then projected for the entire group to read, discuss, and determine if the statement is a strength or a challenge.

Adapted from “Figuring Out What it Means.” Holcomb, E.L. (2004) Getting Excited About Data (2nd Ed.): Combining People, Passion and Proof to Maximize Student Achievement. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Three Tips for Writing Powerful Narrative Statements

- 1. Keep it simple—communicate a single idea about student performance.**

“7th grade reading achievement on the WASL increased 34% between 1999 and 2001.”

- 2. Make the narrative statement short and easy to read.**

“The number of English Language Learners at our school increased from 25 to 45 between 1997 and 2001.”

- 3. Avoid evaluative statements—just describe what you see in the data, not why or what to do about it.**

“38% of parents state they do not receive information about ways to help their children learn at home.”

Prioritize Challenges Worksheet

After challenges are identified, engage staff and leadership team members by having them individually prioritize challenges by how severe, how crucial, and how responsive, or within the power of the school to change. Your team can tally individual ratings for each challenge for all staff members first and then compile all ratings to come up with an overall rating. The highest numbers indicate the highest need.

Challenges Identified in Data Carousel Activity	How Severe? Rate each item 1–5. 5=greatest dissatisfaction with results, i.e., lowest test scores, worst problem	How Crucial? Rate each item 1–5. 5=most important issue, needing most attention	How Responsive? Rate each item 1–5. 5=most important issue, needing most attention	Individual Ratings Tally responses in each box. Totals will range from 3 to 15. The highest totals indicate highest priorities.	Group Ratings Tally responses from all staff or group members. Divide by the total number of participants.

Adapted from “Goal Setting Matrix,” Holcomb, E.L. (2004) Getting Excited About Data (2nd Ed.): Combining People, Passion and Proof to Maximize Student Achievement. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Going Public with the Portfolio

The intent of the matrix below is to help your leadership team decide:

- who you want to view the data
- what you want them to know about the data
- what message you want to give when communicating the results of the data
- what strategies should be used to best deliver the data results, and
- who will be ultimately responsible for delivering the results of the data

This matrix will help guide your team toward the answers to these questions.

Type of Data	Who do you want to inform about your results?	How will you get the message to them?	Who will be responsible for getting the message out?

Emerging Themes Worksheet

What themes are emerging from the data results? What are the strengths in your school? What areas does your school need to work on? What are the most critical areas? Which areas will you target for learning improvement?

Themes	Is it a strength?	Is it a Challenge?	Most Critical	Target Areas

Use the answers to these questions to develop goals for your school.

Is it a STRATEGY or is it a GOAL?

It's easy to confuse goals and strategies! Goals should be SMART:

- S—Specific and clearly stated
- M—Measurable and based on data
- A—Attainable and realistic
- R—Related to student achievement and performance
- T—Time bound

In other words, they are written in terms of student outcomes and should tell what you want to accomplish, by when, and how progress will be measured.

Here are some examples of goal statements that are SMART.

“Fifth grade students will increase math scores on the WASL by 25% by spring 2005.”

“To increase by 10% the number of the students who score 6 or above on the COS strand of the WASL 7th grade writing assessment by 2003.”

“To increase reading fluency by 15% each quarter as measured by the 2nd Grade fluency assessment.”

Strategies are action statements and say what you will do to achieve the goal. Strategies identify how you will get to the goal.

“Purchase full sets of math manipulatives and provide professional development for staff on their use.”

“All teachers will have training on the administration of the fluency assessment.”

“Have writer’s workshop on a weekly basis in all language arts classroom.”

Goal Writing Worksheet

Goals should be SMART in order to be meaningful and achievable. This worksheet is designed to help your leadership team be smart about developing goals. Write your goals in the goal statement section of the worksheet and review the quality of your goals by evaluating them against the reflective questions provided on the worksheet. If your leadership team answers “no” to any of the questions, revise your goal to fit the criteria of a well written goal.

Smart Goal Criteria

- S—Specific and clearly stated
- M—Measurable and based on data
- A—Attainable and realistic
- R—Related to student achievement and performance
- T—Time bound

Sample Goals

“To increase by 10 percent the number of students meeting standards on the district Grade 5 math assessments by spring of 2003.”

“Reading achievement as measured by the ITBS will increase by an average of 12% NPR a year between 2001 and 2004.”

Now, write your goals in the boxes below. Answer the questions below to determine if you’ve written a goal that measures up.

Goal statement:			
Goal Review:			
	Yes	No	Comment
Is the goal specific and clearly stated?			
Is the goal measurable and based on formative and/or summative data?			
Is the goal attainable and realistic?			
Is the goal related to student achievement and performance?			
Is the goal time bound?			
Make revisions to your goal if you answered no to any questions.			

Goal Writing Worksheet

Goal statement:			
Goal Review:	Yes	No	Comment
Is the goal specific and clearly stated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the goal measurable and based on formative and/or summative data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the goal attainable and realistic?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the goal related to student achievement and performance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the goal time bound?			
Make revisions to your goal if you answered no to any questions.			

Goal statement:			
Goal Review:	Yes	No	Comment
Is the goal specific and clearly stated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the goal measurable and based on formative and/or summative data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the goal attainable and realistic?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the goal related to student achievement and performance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the goal time bound?			
Make revisions to your goal if you answered no to any questions.			

Study Group Report Form

Study Group Members _____

Date _____

Goal:

Topic: (i.e. poverty, instruction, grouping, ESL, information test)

Learning: (what we learned)

Rationale: (why would you use it?)

Application: (considerations for putting into practice)

Publication Base:

_____ Literature Review	_____ Journal Article
_____ Research Synthesis/Meta Analysis	_____ Position Paper
_____ Anecdotal/Opinion	_____ Other _____
_____ Model/Theoretical	

Level of Change:

_____ First Order (specific practice, organization, efficiency) Examples:

_____ Second Order (ownership, focus, philosophy, systemic) Examples:

School Visitation Question Guide

Use this form to gather information on the phone or in person from a school with similar characteristics.

School Name: _____ Website: _____

Contact person: _____ e-mail: _____ Phone: _____

1. What approaches do you think are making the biggest difference in improving student achievement? In what way? Why did you select those approaches?
2. How have you included staff in decision-making around the approaches you've put in place? What about students and parents?
3. How is success or progress measured at the school level? At the classroom level?
4. How has moving to this approach made a difference in teaching practices in your building?
5. What is the system the school uses to make transitions for students entering and leaving the school?
6. What kind of professional development does the school provide for staff and families?
7. How has the school involved parents in strategies that improve student achievement?

8. How have you budgeted your resources to provide for this approach?

9. What surprises did you encounter in your first year of implementation?

10. How does the staff use assessment to make program and instructional decisions?

11. What role has trust played between staff members and other stakeholders?
How do you build on that trust?

12. What is the school's system for re-evaluating and updating your plan annually?

13. How would you describe the relationship between staff members?

14. What do you see as the greatest opportunities this approach has provided for your staff and students?

Specific Observations You Want to Share:

Preferred Future Action Planning Activity

The preferred future chart can be used as a tool to help the decision-making processes as the school moves toward establishing learning improvement goals.

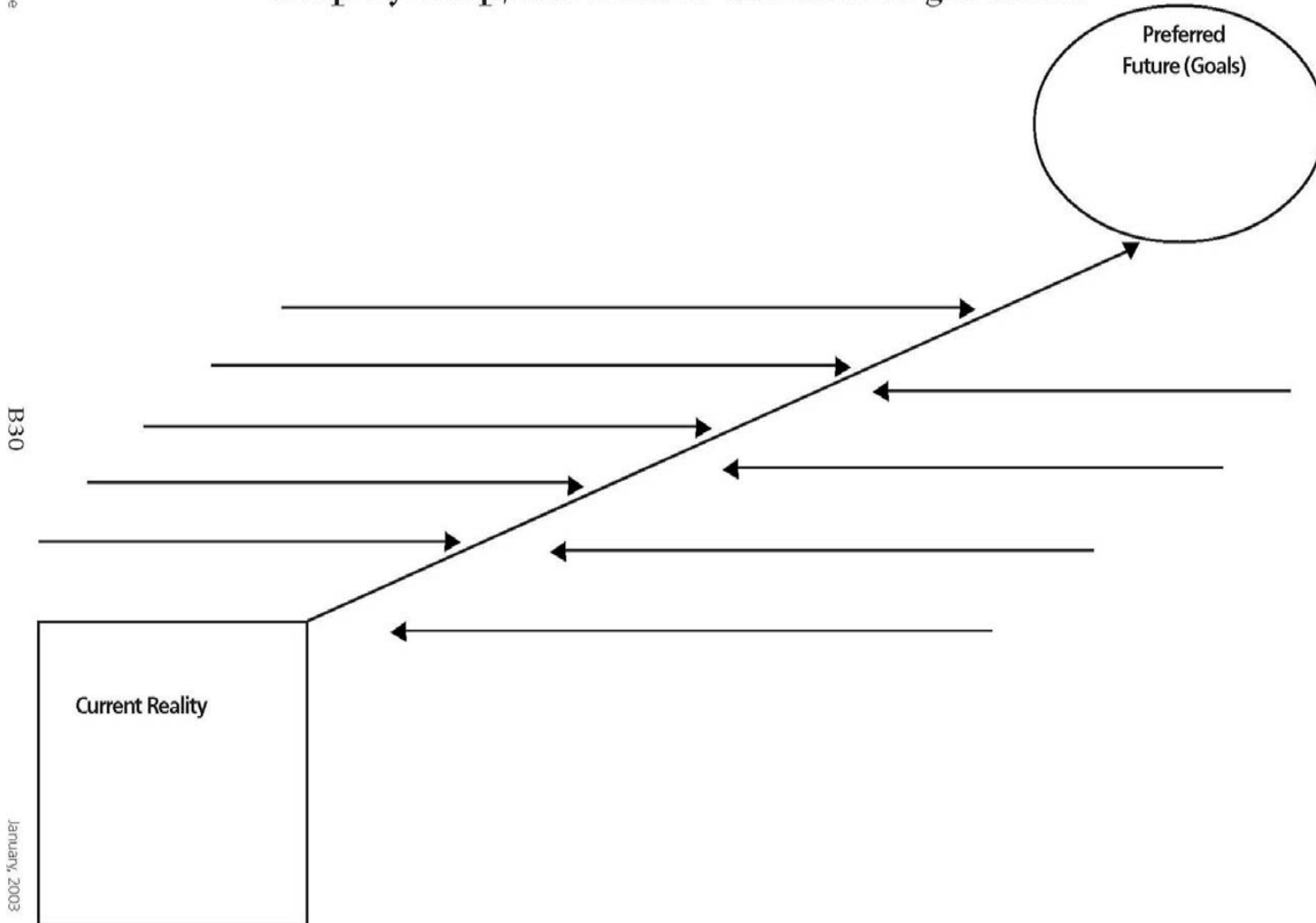
By beginning with the end in mind, schools can design a future that includes systemic improvement that impacts every student in the school, bridging the gap between what is actually happening and what they want to happen in the future.

Action Steps to Support Goals

Either do this in small groups or use as a transparency with full staff. Directions for the chart:

1. Write an abbreviated version of your goal in the preferred future circle, such as “increase math scores by 25% by 2005.”
2. Write the current reality in the square box, such as, “55% not meeting in math.”
3. List as many potential improvement activities as possible, making sure they relate directly to the improvement target.
4. When each line is filled in, evaluate the possibilities by asking the following questions: Is this activity research-based? Is it doable? Do we have the time and resources?
5. Rank the remaining possibilities.
6. Use these activities in the *Action Plan Outline*, Appendix C38.

How will you get to the "Preferred Future?"
Step-by-Step, list what it will take to get there.



Monitoring Implementation Checklist

This form helps leadership teams review progress, adjust the plan, and consider issues and barriers to meeting the goals.

Goal:

Activity:

Are those involved with the activity meeting the timeline? yes no

If not, why?

What evidence of implementation exists?

Are the indicated resources available and being utilized? yes no

If not, why?

What barriers or challenges have occurred since the plan was written?

What steps should be taken to address these barriers or challenges?

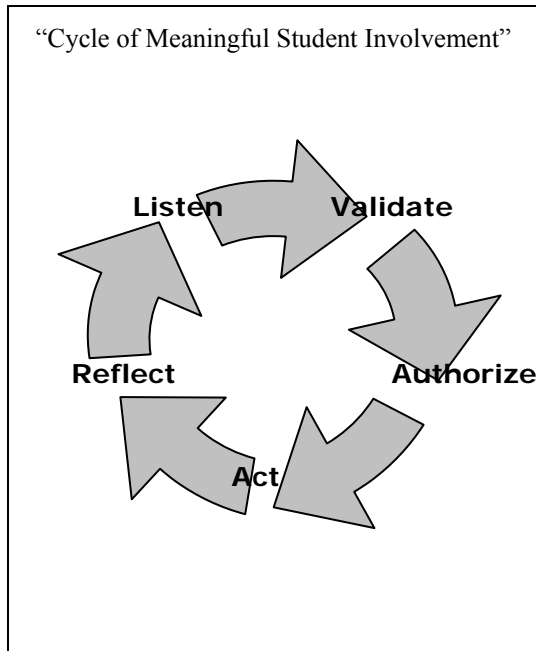
Does the Action Plan need to be adjusted to reflect any of the above information?

Tips on How to Meaningfully Involve Students in School Improvement

Meaningfully involving students in school improvement requires more than just inviting students to sit at the table. There are several important points to consider that can promote student learning and sustainable school improvement. The following tools¹ offer important considerations for the School Improvement Process, and encourage everyone involved to engage students as meaningful partners in the process of improving our schools.

CYCLE OF MEANINGFUL STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

The School Improvement Process is a cycle that requires sustainable partnerships, continuous assessment, and ongoing action. The following “Cycle of Meaningful Student Involvement” calls on educators to engage students as partners in that cycle by recognizing that their involvement goes beyond sitting at the table.



Listen – Educators hear students’ ideas, knowledge, experience, and opinions about learning, teaching, and leadership in schools.

Validate – Educators acknowledge what students have said as being significant and beneficial.

Authorize – Educators empower students to be meaningful contributors to school improvement.

Act – Educators and students become partners in school improvement.

Reflect – Educators and students examine the benefits and challenges of student involvement together, and recreate the process of listening to students accordingly.

KEYS TO MEANINGFUL STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

The following “Keys to Meaningful Student Involvement” highlight the characteristics of many successful activities that engage students in the School Improvement Process. These characteristics encourage educators and students to view participation as a process rather than a one-time activity.

- ⇒ **Committed school-wide approaches.** Students are engaged in education system-wide activities, including education planning, research, teaching, evaluation, decision-making, and advocacy for all students in every grade level.
- ⇒ **High levels of student authority.** Students’ ideas, knowledge, opinions and experience are validated and authorized through adult acknowledgement of students’ authority in schools.
- ⇒ **Interrelated strategies and activities.** Students are incorporated into ongoing, sustainable school improvement activities in the form of learning, teaching, and leadership in schools.
- ⇒ **Sustainable structures of support.** Students, adults, and the school system are called to action through support and encouragement in the form of appropriate skill-building and learning connections, and barriers are readily acknowledged and overcome.
- ⇒ **Personal commitment.** Students and adults acknowledge their mutual investment, dedication, and benefit from meaningful students involvement, visible in the learning, relationships, practices, policies, and culture of schools.

¹ This tip sheet was adapted with permission from Fletcher, A. (2004) *Meaningful student involvement: Guide to students as partners in school change*. Bothell, WA: HumanLinks Foundation. Retrieved 11/20/04 from www.soundout.org/MSIGuide.pdf

- **Connections to learning.** Classroom learning and student involvement are connected by awarding credit for communications, citizenship, critical thinking, and other areas. This ensures relevancy for educators and significance to students.

HOW MEANINGFUL STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT ACTUALLY HAPPENS

There are numerous roles that educators, community partners, parents, and families must assume in the School Improvement Process. The following examples of student involvement are from schools across the United States. They illustrate how students can be meaningfully involved in a variety of activities with an array of purposes and outcomes.

- **Students as education planners.** Educators and students work together to plan, design, and redesign education form and function of schools. Schools have engaged students in curriculum development, school facility redesign, and other activities.
- **Students as school researchers.** Participatory research engages students, the focus of research, as the principal investigators to encourage participation, authenticity, and action-oriented findings on teaching, learning, and leadership in schools.
- **Students as classroom teachers.** Students co-facilitate learning activities for their younger students, their peers, and when appropriate, adults. Lower grade levels tend to focus on immediate skill-development and lessons, while older students share life-skills, community-related information, and more.
- **Students as learning evaluators.** Educators engage students in learning assessments of performance, focusing on the individual, their peers, teachers, and coursework. Students may design evaluations, compile responses, and create recommendations based on results.
- **Students as systemic decision-makers.** Meaningful student involvement happens in local classrooms, school committees, and district and state boardrooms. Policy-making, staff hiring, and budgetary decisions nationwide have all been informed and implemented by students.

LADDER OF STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

The Ladder of Student Involvement in Schools is designed to allow students and educators a way to map situations and activities that involve students in school improvement activities². The higher the rung on the *Ladder*, the more likely that activity is going to be meaningful to students. This tip sheet is designed to help schools reach higher rungs by increasing the amount and improving the quality of student involvement in the School Improvement Planning Process.

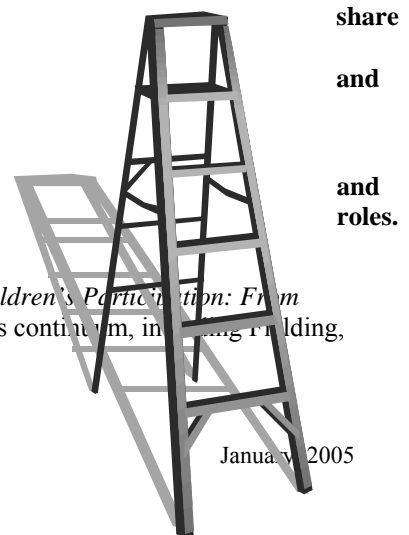
Each rung on the ladder can be applied to a variety of situations in schools. There are important differences for each form of student involvement: acknowledging a particular activity’s current position may be useful for many students and schools. There are three important points to consider about the *Ladder*:

- The *Ladder* is not designed to be applied to a whole school at once; instead, use it to assess *individual* activities.
- The rungs are not a process that happens in order. Activities can go from the second rung directly to the sixth; sometimes, they’ll be on two rungs at different ends of the *Ladder* at once, depending on who is looking.
- Involvement is not meaningful when rungs three through one apply.

Descriptions of Student Involvement

8) Student-Adult Partnerships. **Students are authorized to initiate and decisions with educators throughout the School Improvement Planning Process. Students are empowered with the authority to create change, have access to the experience and expertise of adults.**

7) Student-initiated and directed. **School improvement activities are propelled by students and create opportunities for students to initiate direct projects and activities. Adults are involved only in supportive**



² The “Ladder of Student Involvement” is adapted from Hart, Roger. 1994. *Children’s Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship*. London: Earthscan. Other research substantiates this continuum, including Furlong, Michael. 2001; and Rudduck, J. and Flutter, J. 2004.

6) Adult-initiated, shared decisions with students. **Students are involved in designing projects and activities that are initiated by adults. Many activities, including decision-making, teaching, and evaluation are shared with students.**

5) Consulted and informed. **Students give advice on projects and activities designed and run by adults. The students are informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of the decisions made by adults.**

4) Assigned but taught. **Student involvement is assigned by teachers, who assign specific roles, determine how, and teach students why they are being involved.**

The following rungs are not meaningful.

3) Tokenism – **Students appear to be given a voice, but in fact have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate.**

2) Decoration – **Students are used to help or bolster a cause in a relatively indirect way; adults do not pretend that the cause is inspired by students. Causes are determined by adults, and adults make all decisions.**

1) **Manipulation** – Adults use students to support causes by pretending that those causes are inspired by students.

The *Ladder* is meant to inspire action that validates students by authorizing them to reflect on, share, and work to improve schools. When students and adults partner together, school improvement can flourish and succeed.

RESEARCH-BASED OUTCOMES

While meaningful student involvement in school improvement may require a great deal of investment from educators and students, the rewards may balance out the effort for many people. Rather than relying on the intrinsic feeling that meaningful student involvement is the “right way” to go about things, early research results have illustrated a variety of effects. The following chart summarizes some of those findings and demonstrates the variety of outcomes schools can see from meaningful student involvement³.

Who Does Meaningful Student Involvement Affect?	What Is Affected?	What Are The Outcomes?
Students	Learning: Academic achievement, ethnic/racial/socio-economic/gender gaps, attendance rates, lifelong learning, graduation rates.	Greater interest in academic achievement, gains in test scores, higher graduation rates, increased student engagement.
Students and Adults	Relationships: Purpose, ownership, community, engagement.	Higher levels of ownership, increased belonging and motivation, identification with educational goals.
	Practices and procedures: Education planning, classroom teaching, learning evaluation, school research, and education decision-making.	Adults hear new perspectives about schools; allyship and partnership become norms; greater acceptance of programs and decisions.

³ See Fletcher, A. (2004) *Meaningful student involvement research summary*. Bothell, WA: HumanLinks Foundation. Retrieved 11/20/04 from www.soundout.org/MSIResearch.pdf

Students, Adults, and School Systems	Policies and laws: Regulations that govern participation, funding, etc.	Regular, fully authoritative positions on committees and boards; ongoing funding, development, and support for student involvement.
	Culture: Student and educator attitudes, learning environments, social interactions.	Positive and productive climates; new human resources emerge as students share responsibility; stronger relationships between students and adults.

Resources

For more information on meaningful student involvement in the School Improvement Planning Process, visit www.soundout.org, or contact the Student Engagement Office at OSPI – (360)725-6105.

Appendix C

Surveys, Tools, Rubrics

Appendix C

Surveys, Tools, Rubrics

Nine Characteristics High Performing Schools Perception Surveys	C1
Readiness Assessment—General Readiness	C14
Collect, Sort, and Select Data Readiness Tool	C15
Build and Analyze the School Portfolio Readiness Tool	C16
Set and Prioritize Goals Readiness Tool	C17
Research and Select Effective Practices Readiness Tool	C18
Craft Action Plan Readiness Tool	C19
Monitor Implementation of the Plan Readiness Tool	C20
Evaluate Impact on Student Achievement Readiness Tool	C21
Next Steps Planning Sheet	C22
“What to Collect?” Worksheets	C23
Strengths and Challenges Worksheets	C27
Narrative Tally Sheets	C31
School Portfolio Rating Form	C35
Evaluating Goals Rubric	C36
Study Process Planning Grid	C37
Action Plan Outline	C38
Action Plan Sample Outline.....	C39
Thinking It Through Worksheet	C40
Action Plan Rubric	C41
Monitoring the Activity Timeline	C42
Rubric for Implementing the School’s Action Plan	C43
Monitoring Implementation Checklist	C44
Evaluation Worksheet	C45

**Nine Characteristics of
High Performing Schools**
Perception Surveys

SCHOOL STAFF SURVEY OF SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

To improve school quality and help students learn, school personnel need to identify their strengths and areas needing improvement. Obtaining your views about your school is an important part of this process.

The survey on the following pages was developed to generate discussion that can help your school improvement efforts. Each of the statements in the survey relate to one or more of the nine characteristics of high-performing schools. (*For more information on these types of schools, see <http://www.k12.wa.us/research/pubdocs/pdf/9charactfor%20SIP.pdf>*)

It will take you about 10 minutes to complete the survey. To ensure your responses remain confidential, your ratings will be combined with other staff and reported as a group. Completing the survey is voluntary, although we encourage you to respond honestly to help your school get a complete understanding of staff views. To help keep survey responses confidential, consider using an independent party (ESDs, universities, consultants, etc.) to give the survey and analyze the results.

Survey Scale The survey on the following pages uses a 5-point scale, from 1 meaning you “do not agree at all” to 5 meaning you “agree completely.” Indicate the number that best describes your level of agreement about each statement. If you have no knowledge to make an accurate selection, mark 0 in the first column (“no basis to judge”).

Before taking the survey, please complete the bottom half of this page. This information will be used for analysis purposes only, and results will not be reported for categories that have fewer than five (5) responses.

District: _____ School: _____ Date (month/year): _____

1. Level/Type of School (check all that apply):

- Elementary
- Middle/Junior High
- High School
- Other (specify: _____)

2. Grades Served by this School (e.g., K–6): _____

3. Your primary role (*check one*): Teacher Building administrator Other certificated staff
 Para-educator Other classified staff

4. Years working in your current role: 0–3 4–7 8–15 16 or more
(include work in other locations)

5. Years working in this school (*check one*): 0–3 4–7 8–15 16 or more

6. Grade(s) taught (*circle all that apply*): K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 Not applicable

7. [Optional: For individual school use]:

Think about your school as you read each of the statements below. Then **circle** the number that best describes how much you agree with that statement.

1. Vision	No basis to judge	Don't agree at all	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree mostly	Agree completely
a) The school has a clear sense of purpose.	0	1	2	3	4	5
b) I have a clear understanding of what the school is trying to achieve.	0	1	2	3	4	5
c) The staff shares a common understanding of what the school wants to achieve.	0	1	2	3	4	5
d) All staff are committed to achieving the school's goals.	0	1	2	3	4	5
e) The staff keeps the school's goals in mind when making important decisions.	0	1	2	3	4	5
f) The school's primary emphasis is improving student learning.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. Standards/Expectations	No basis to judge	Don't agree at all	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree mostly	Agree completely
a) All students are expected to achieve high standards.	0	1	2	3	4	5
b) Teachers do whatever it takes to help all students meet high academic standards.	0	1	2	3	4	5
c) I believe all students can learn complex concepts.	0	1	2	3	4	5
d) All students are consistently challenged by a rigorous curriculum.	0	1	2	3	4	5
e) Teachers use effective strategies to help low-performing students meet high academic standards.	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. Leadership	No basis to judge	Don't agree at all	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree mostly	Agree completely
a) Many staff provide leadership in some way.	0	1	2	3	4	5
b) Leaders advocate for effective instruction for all students.	0	1	2	3	4	5
c) People in leadership roles act with integrity.	0	1	2	3	4	5
d) School administrators consider various viewpoints when making decisions.	0	1	2	3	4	5
e) Leaders hold staff accountable for improving student learning.	0	1	2	3	4	5
f) I feel like the school leadership cares about me.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. Collaboration/Communications	No basis to judge	Don't agree at all	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree mostly	Agree completely
a) The school uses a system to obtain a variety of perspectives when making decisions.	0	1	2	3	4	5
b) Teachers discuss teaching issues on a regular basis.	0	1	2	3	4	5
c) Staff members work together to solve problems related to school issues.	0	1	2	3	4	5
d) The staff works in teams across grade levels to help increase student learning.	0	1	2	3	4	5

	No basis to judge	Don't agree at all	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree mostly	Agree completely
e) Staff routinely work together to plan what will be taught.	0	1	2	3	4	5
f) Teachers have frequent communication with the families of their students.	0	1	2	3	4	5
g) Staff members trust one another.	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. Alignment to Standards	No basis to judge	Don't agree at all	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree mostly	Agree completely
a) The school's curriculum is aligned with state standards (EALRs).	0	1	2	3	4	5
b) Instructional staff have a good understanding of the state standards in the areas they teach.	0	1	2	3	4	5
c) Instructional materials that are aligned with the EALRs are available to staff.	0	1	2	3	4	5
d) Instruction builds on what students already know.	0	1	2	3	4	5
e) Schoolwork is meaningful to students.	0	1	2	3	4	5
f) Teachers use a variety of approaches and activities to help students learn.	0	1	2	3	4	5
g) Classroom activities are intellectually stimulating.	0	1	2	3	4	5
h) I know the research basis for the instructional strategies being used.	0	1	2	3	4	5
i) The staff uses WASL results to help plan instructional activities.	0	1	2	3	4	5
6. Monitoring of Teaching and Learning	No basis to judge	Don't agree at all	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree mostly	Agree completely
a) Students receive regular feedback about what they need to do to improve.	0	1	2	3	4	5
b) Students receive extra help when they need it.	0	1	2	3	4	5
c) Teachers modify their instructional practices based on classroom assessment information.	0	1	2	3	4	5
d) Teachers receive regular feedback on how they are doing.	0	1	2	3	4	5
e) Teaching and learning are the focus of staff observations and evaluations.	0	1	2	3	4	5
f) Teachers provide feedback to each other to help improve instructional practices.	0	1	2	3	4	5
g) High quality work is expected of all the adults who work at the school.	0	1	2	3	4	5

Continue to the last page →

7. Professional Development	No basis to judge	Don't agree at all	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree mostly	Agree completely
a) Assessment results are used to determine professional learning activities.	0	1	2	3	4	5
b) Staff members get help in areas they need to improve.	0	1	2	3	4	5
c) Professional development activities are consistent with school goals.	0	1	2	3	4	5
d) I have enough opportunities to grow professionally.	0	1	2	3	4	5
e) Different staff members periodically lead professional development activities for other staff.	0	1	2	3	4	5
f) Instructional staff view themselves as learners as well as teachers.	0	1	2	3	4	5
8. Learning Environment	No basis to judge	Don't agree at all	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree mostly	Agree completely
a) Students feel safe on school property during school hours.	0	1	2	3	4	5
b) The school environment is conducive to learning.	0	1	2	3	4	5
c) Teachers show they care about <u>all</u> of their students.	0	1	2	3	4	5
d) The staff respects the cultural heritage of students.	0	1	2	3	4	5
e) Students respect those who are different from them.	0	1	2	3	4	5
f) Instruction is adjusted to meet individual student needs.	0	1	2	3	4	5
g) Student discipline problems are managed well.	0	1	2	3	4	5
h) The staff feels free to express their ideas and opinions with one another.	0	1	2	3	4	5
9. Family & Community Involvement	No basis to judge	Don't agree at all	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree mostly	Agree completely
a) The staff believes students learn more through effective family support.	0	1	2	3	4	5
b) The school works with many community organizations to support its students.	0	1	2	3	4	5
c) The school makes a special effort to contact the families of students who are struggling academically.	0	1	2	3	4	5
d) Teachers have frequent contact with their student's parents.	0	1	2	3	4	5
e) The school provides ample information to families about how to help students succeed in school.	0	1	2	3	4	5
f) Many parents are involved as volunteers at the school.	0	1	2	3	4	5

Comments or Response to Optional Question(s):

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SURVEY — FAMILY PERSPECTIVES

Certain characteristics of a school can affect student learning. This survey asks for your views about our school so we can improve and provide the best possible education for your child.

It will take you 5–10 minutes to respond to the 30 statements about the school. The survey uses a 5-point scale, with **1** meaning you “don’t agree at all” with the statement, and **5** meaning you “agree completely.” (Mark the **X** when you don’t know or the statement does not apply.) Mark one number for each statement.

Please respond honestly to each statement. *All responses will be anonymous and remain confidential.* Participation is voluntary, and not responding to the survey will not affect your child in any way. If you do not want to take the survey, please check the box below and return the blank survey to the school.

I choose not to respond to this survey:

School District _____ Date _____

School Name _____

Use the following scale to guide your responses:

	Don't Know/ Does Not Apply	Don't agree at all	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree mostly	Agree completely
5 Agree Completely						
4 Agree Mostly						
3 Agree Moderately						
2 Agree Slightly						
1 Don't Agree at All						
X Don't Know/Does Not Apply						
1. The school has a clearly defined purpose and mission.	X	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have a clear understanding of what the school is trying to accomplish.	X	1	2	3	4	5
3. I support the goals of the school.	X	1	2	3	4	5
4. The school's primary emphasis is improving student learning.	X	1	2	3	4	5
5. The school communicates its goals effectively to families and the community.	X	1	2	3	4	5
6. All students in the school are expected to meet high standards.	X	1	2	3	4	5
7. My child understands what needs to be learned.	X	1	2	3	4	5
8. School work is meaningful and made relevant.	X	1	2	3	4	5
9. Teachers do whatever it takes to help my child meet high academic standards.	X	1	2	3	4	5
10. Teachers make adjustments to meet individual student's needs.	X	1	2	3	4	5
11. Classes challenge students to think and solve problems.	X	1	2	3	4	5
12. Students receive detailed information about the quality of the work they do.	X	1	2	3	4	5
13. Teachers give students extra help if it is needed.	X	1	2	3	4	5
14. Grades are given in a fair manner.	X	1	2	3	4	5
15. Students respect those who are different from them.	X	1	2	3	4	5



	5 Agree Completely	4 Agree Mostly	3 Agree Moderately	2 Agree Slightly	1 Don't Agree at All	X Don't Know/Does Not Apply
	Don't Know/Does Not Apply	Don't agree at all	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree mostly	Agree completely
16. The adults in the school show respect for all students.	X	1	2	3	4	5
17. Discipline problems are handled fairly.	X	1	2	3	4	5
18. School leaders act fairly and with integrity.	X	1	2	3	4	5
19. My child feels safe at school.	X	1	2	3	4	5
20. The school environment helps the learning process.	X	1	2	3	4	5
21. School staff listen carefully when I express my opinions and concerns.	X	1	2	3	4	5
22. Teachers are constantly trying to become better teachers.	X	1	2	3	4	5
23. The teachers and other adults in my school show respect for each other.	X	1	2	3	4	5
24. School leaders show they care about all students.	X	1	2	3	4	5
25. The adults in the school work well together.	X	1	2	3	4	5
26. The school contacts the families of students who are struggling academically.	X	1	2	3	4	5
27. There is frequent, two-way communication between school staff and families.	X	1	2	3	4	5
28. I feel welcome when I visit the school.	X	1	2	3	4	5
29. The school works with many community organizations to support its students.	X	1	2	3	4	5
30. Many parents and adults from the community come and help at the school.	X	1	2	3	4	5

Please provide some background information about yourself (mark one box for each).

A. Gender: # Male # Female

B. Your race/ethnicity: #American Indian / Native Amer. #African American / Black
 #Asian / Pacific Islander #Hispanic / Latino
 #White / Caucasian #Multi-racial #Other

C. Number of children in this school: #0 #1 #2 #3 #4 or more

D. Number of children under 18 living in your home: #0 #1 #2 #3 #4 #5 or more

E. Relationship to children in the school: #Parent #Relative #Guardian #Other

F. Main language spoken at home: #English #Spanish #Cambodian #Chinese #Korean
 #Russian #Ukrainian #Tagalog #Vietnamese #Another language

G. Frequency of visits to the school: #Never #Rarely #Sometimes #Often #Very Often

Provide any comments below or attach them to this survey. Thank you for sharing your views with us

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT SURVEY

This survey asks for your views about different qualities of your school. It will take you about 5-10 minutes to respond to the 30 statements. The survey uses a 5-point scale, with **1** meaning you “don’t agree at all” with the statement, and **5** meaning you “agree completely.” (Use the **X** when you don’t know or the statement does not apply.) Mark one number for each statement.

Please respond honestly to each statement. *Your responses will be anonymous and remain confidential.* Participation is voluntary – if you do not want to take the survey, check the box below and return the blank survey.

I choose not to respond to this survey:

School District _____ Date _____

School Name _____

Think about your school as you read each statement below. Then circle the number that best describes how much you agree with that statement.

Use the following scale to guide your responses:

5 Agree Completely

4 Agree Mostly

3 Agree Moderately

2 Agree Slightly

1 Don't Agree at All

X Don't Know/Does Not Apply

	Don't Know/ Does Not Apply	Don't agree at all	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree mostly	Agree completely
1. My school has specific goals that I understand.	X	1	2	3	4	5
2. The main purpose of my school is to help students learn.	X	1	2	3	4	5
3. Teachers make it clear what I am supposed to learn.	X	1	2	3	4	5
4. I know why it is important for me to learn what is being taught.	X	1	2	3	4	5
5. My classes challenge me to think and solve problems.	X	1	2	3	4	5
6. Teachers expect all students to work hard.	X	1	2	3	4	5
7. Teachers expect all students to succeed, no matter who they are.	X	1	2	3	4	5
8. My classes are usually interesting.	X	1	2	3	4	5
9. Teachers give me challenging work.	X	1	2	3	4	5
10. My teachers make learning interesting by teaching in different ways.	X	1	2	3	4	5
11. Students feel free to express their ideas and opinions.	X	1	2	3	4	5
12. My teachers help me when I don't understand something.	X	1	2	3	4	5
13. Teachers give students extra help if it is needed.	X	1	2	3	4	5
14. My teachers encourage me.	X	1	2	3	4	5
15. Students are given many chances to show what we have learned.	X	1	2	3	4	5
16. Tests and quizzes are related to the material and ideas we are supposed to learn.	X	1	2	3	4	5
17. Grades are given in a fair manner.	X	1	2	3	4	5
18. Discipline problems are handled fairly <i>Continue to back side</i> →	X	1	2	3	4	5

STUDENT SURVEY — MIDDLE GRADES

This survey asks for your views about different qualities of your school. It will take you about 5-10 minutes to respond to the 30 statements. The survey uses a 5-point scale, with **1** meaning you “don’t agree at all” with the statement, and **5** meaning you “agree completely.” (Use the **X** when you don’t know or the statement does not apply.) Mark one number for each statement.

Please respond honestly to each statement. *Your responses will be anonymous and remain confidential.* Participation is voluntary – if you do not want to take the survey, check the box below and return the blank survey.

I choose not to respond to this survey:

School District _____ Date _____

School Name _____

Think about your school as you read each statement below. Then circle the number that best describes how much you agree with that statement.

Use the following scale to guide your responses:

- 5 *Agree Completely*
- 4 *Agree Mostly*
- 3 *Agree Moderately*
- 2 *Agree Slightly*
- 1 *Don't Agree at All*
- X *Don't Know/Does Not Apply*

		Don't Know/ Does Not Apply	Don't agree at all	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree mostly	Agree completely
1. My school has specific goals that I understand.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
2. The main purpose of my school is to help students learn.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
3. Teachers make it clear what I am supposed to learn.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
4. I know why it is important for me to learn what is being taught.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
5. My classes challenge me to think and solve problems.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
6. Teachers expect all students to work hard.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
7. Teachers expect all students to succeed, no matter who they are.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
8. My classes are usually interesting.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
9. Teachers give me challenging work.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
10. My teachers make learning interesting by teaching in different ways.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
11. Students feel free to express their ideas and opinions.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
12. My teachers help me when I don't understand something.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
13. Teachers give students extra help if it is needed.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
14. My teachers encourage me.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
15. Students are given many chances to show what we have learned.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
16. Tests and quizzes are related to the material and ideas we are supposed to learn.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
17. Grades are given in a fair manner.	X	1	2	3	4	5	
18. Discipline problems are handled fairly.	X	1	2	3	4	5	

Continue to back side →

PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENT SURVEY

This survey asks for your opinions about your school. It will take about 5-10 minutes to finish. It uses faces with “smiles” and “frowns” so you can tell us if you agree or disagree with the sentence. Circle one set of faces for each sentence. (Circle the **X** if you don’t know or have no opinion.)

There is no right answer. Please respond honestly. *Your marks will be kept private.*

If you do not want to take the survey, check this box and return the blank survey.

School District _____ Date _____

School Name _____

Think about your school as you read each sentence. Then circle the face that best describes how much you agree with that sentence.

Use these faces when deciding how to respond:

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

X Don't Know / No Opinion

	Don't Know/ No Opinion	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. My teacher makes it clear what I am supposed to learn.	X					
2. My teacher expects all students to work hard.	X					
3. My teacher believes that I <u>can</u> learn.	X					
4. My teacher thinks I <u>will</u> be successful.	X					
5. I know that I can do good work.	X					
6. My teacher uses different ways to help me learn.	X					
7. My teacher listens to my ideas and opinions.	X					
8. The school work I am asked to do is challenging.	X					
9. My teacher helps me when I don't understand something.	X					
10. I get extra help when I need it.	X					
11. I know how to get help from an adult at school if I need it.	X					
12. My teacher encourages me to do my best.	X					
13. My teacher cares about me.	X					
14. Teachers in my school show respect for students.	X					
15. Most students respect those who are different from them.	X					

- ☺☺ Strongly agree
- ☺ Agree
- ☹ Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)
- ☹ Disagree
- ☹☹ Strongly Disagree
- X Don't Know / No Opinion

	Don't Know/ No Opinion	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
16. I feel safe when I am at school.	X	☹☹	☹	☹	☺	☺☺
17. I feel safe when I am outside during recess.	X	☹☹	☹	☹	☺	☺☺
18. It is easy to learn at this school.	X	☹☹	☹	☹	☺	☺☺
19. I have fun learning at school.	X	☹☹	☹	☹	☺	☺☺
20. Sometimes students work together in class.	X	☹☹	☹	☹	☺	☺☺
21. The school has fair rules.	X	☹☹	☹	☹	☺	☺☺
22. Students are treated fairly if they get in trouble.	X	☹☹	☹	☹	☺	☺☺
23. The school is clean.	X	☹☹	☹	☹	☺	☺☺
24. I like the food the schools serves.	X	☹☹	☹	☹	☺	☺☺
25. My teacher talks to my family if I am having problems learning.	X	☹☹	☹	☹	☺	☺☺
26. If I am doing a good job in school, my teacher tells my family.	X	☹☹	☹	☹	☺	☺☺
27. Parents and adults often come and help at school.	X	☹☹	☹	☹	☺	☺☺
28. I get help on my school work at home.	X	☹☹	☹	☹	☺	☺☺
29. I like my teacher.	X	☹☹	☹	☹	☺	☺☺
30. I like this school.	X	☹☹	☹	☹	☺	☺☺

What is your grade? #1st #2nd #3rd #4th #5th #6th #Ungraded #Not sure

I am a #Boy #Girl

Comments or Response to Another Question:

Assess Readiness to Benefit—General Readiness

Issue/Challenge: Engage school stakeholders in a continuous improvement process focused on improving student achievement

Abilities (Able)		
	Yes	No
Stakeholders understand that the continuous improvement process is a process, not an event, and that the first “round” will take a number of months to complete.		
Leadership Team includes a person knowledgeable about the continuous improvement process or technical assistance for the process is available.		
Leadership Team includes student and parent representatives.		
2–3 hour blocks of time are available for whole staff involvement in the process (LID, early release, extended time, etc.).		
Resources are available to provide Leadership Team meetings.		
Relationship of School Improvement Leadership team with district office has been clarified and support exists at the district level.		
Communication and decision-making processes are established in the school.		
Relationship between the Leadership Team and Site Council has been clarified.		
Site Specific Factors:		

Attitude (Willing/Secure)		
	Yes	No
Staff are ready to focus on actions that will improve student achievement.		
Staff value the use of data for decision-making.		
Staff value giving input during decision-making.		
Staff are receptive to the idea that change may be necessary.		
Site Specific Factors:		

CONCLUSION: Relative to this issue/challenge, the constituents impacted are:

Unable and Unwilling (or insecure) Able but Unwilling (or insecure)
 Unable but Willing (or motivated) Able and Willing (or motivated)

ACTION PLAN: Therefore, the proper leader/implementation plan is:

Developed by Northwest Educational Service District 189.

Collect, Sort, and Select Data Readiness Tool

Issue/Challenge: Collect, sort, and select data for whole staff to review.

Abilities (Able)		
	Yes	No
Data about the school is known and readily available.		
Leadership team has a sorting scheme for data based upon multiple indicators (i.e., demographics, perceptions, context, and student achievement).		
Time and support needed for leadership teams to collect, sort and select data are identified and available.		
The staff trusts the leadership team to collect, sort, and select data.		
Leadership team knows how to create quality charts and graphs and how to display data.		
Site Specific Factors:		

Attitude (Willing/Secure)		
	Yes	No
Leadership team values the need to use data to make decisions.		
Leadership team is willing to include data that may be painful to look at.		
Site Specific Factors:		

CONCLUSION: Relative to this issue/challenge, the constituents impacted are:

Unable and Unwilling (or insecure) Able but Unwilling (or insecure)
 Unable but Willing (or motivated) Able and Willing (or motivated)

ACTION PLAN: Therefore, the proper leader/implementation plan is:

Developed by Northwest Educational Service District 189 and 113.

Build and Analyze the School Portfolio Readiness Tool

Issue/Challenge: Facilitate whole staff involvement in building and analyzing the school portfolio.

Abilities (Able)		
	Yes	No
Leadership team has collected data from multiple sources.		
Leadership team has decided what data to share with staff and how it will be displayed.		
Time is available for full faculty to provide input on data that presents a full picture of the school.		
Faculty understands how to read/interpret charts and graphs of WASL, ITBS, and other local data.		
Staff knows how to write a narrative statement based on the data display.		
There is a process for reaching consensus on prioritized concerns (i.e., Rating and Ranking).		
Site Specific Factors:		

Attitude (Willing/Secure)		
	Yes	No
Staff values the use of data in making decisions.		
Staff and representative stakeholders appreciate the need to improve student learning.		
Desire to provide input exists and has been demonstrated by prior actions. Climate fosters open/candid sharing.		
Site Specific Factors:		

CONCLUSION: Relative to this issue/challenge, the constituents impacted are:

Unable and Unwilling (or insecure) Able but Unwilling (or insecure)
 Unable but Willing (or motivated) Able and Willing (or motivated)

ACTION PLAN: Therefore, the proper leader/implementation plan is:

Set and Prioritize Goals Readiness Tool

Issue/Challenge: Facilitate whole staff involvement in setting and prioritizing student-centered achievement goals.

Abilities (Able)		
	Yes	No
Narratives have been identified as strengths or concerns.		
Narratives have been grouped into themes.		
Staff and leadership teams understand the difference between themes, goals, and strategies.		
Leadership Team represents the various stakeholders well.		
Leadership team understands what processes whole staff will want to be part of and which the Leadership Team can conduct.		
Leadership Team understands the attributes of quality goals.		
Leadership Team has considered state or district goals that must be included in the plan.		
Staff understand the difference between first and second order of change.		
Leadership Team can facilitate the drafting of goals that are written in terms of student achievement rather than in terms of adult actions.		
Time has been allocated for whole staff and stakeholder representatives in drafting or review of goals.		
Site Specific Factors:		

Attitude (Willing/Secure)		
	Yes	No
Climate fosters open/candid sharing.		
Staff values the need to set student-centered achievement goals.		
Staff recognizes the value of providing input to contribute to decision-making.		
Staff trusts Leadership Team to draft themes or goals on data received.		
Staff are secure in defining why they believe certain actions will result in demonstrated differences of student achievement.		
Site Specific Factors:		

CONCLUSION: Relative to this issue/challenge, the constituents impacted are:

Unable and Unwilling (or insecure) Able but Unwilling (or insecure)
 Unable but Willing (or motivated) Able and Willing (or motivated)

ACTION PLAN: Therefore, the proper leader/implementation plan is:

Developed by Northwest Educational Service District 189 and Puget Sound.

Research and Select Effective Practices Readiness Tool

Issue/Challenge: Facilitate the study of identified goals and selection of effective practices related to the goals.

Abilities (Able)		
	Yes	No
A structure exists for dividing the staff into study groups in order.		
Staff members understand their roles in the study process.		
Leadership for study groups has been identified.		
Study groups understand the different types of research.		
Study group action plans have been developed.		
Study group members are able to identify the strategies that are most likely to produce “second order change.”		
Time and resources for study groups to conduct their work has been allocated.		
Study groups know how to conduct site visits, book studies, analyze data.		
An agreed-upon system to communicate study group findings is in place.		
The school leadership team has a method for holding teams accountable for completing the study process.		
Site Specific Factors:		

Attitude (Willing/Secure)		
	Yes	No
Staff see research as authentic professional development.		
Staff is diligent about the study process and will continue with it until it is completed.		
Study group members are willing to share responsibility and leadership within study Groups.		
There is trust that teams or staff working in isolation are representative of the whole staff.		
Members of the study groups are willing to participate fully in the study process.		
Site Specific Factors:		

CONCLUSION: Relative to this issue/challenge, the constituents impacted are:

Unable and Unwilling (or insecure) Able but Unwilling (or insecure)
 Unable but Willing (or motivated) Able and Willing (or motivated)

ACTION PLAN: Therefore, the proper leader/implementation plan is:

Developed by Northwest Educational Service District 189.

Craft Action Plan Readiness Tool

Issue/Challenge: Facilitate the drafting of an action plan that focuses on student achievement.

Abilities (Able)		
	Yes	No
Leadership Team has worked with staff to prioritize 3–5 goals.		
Leadership Team understands the components of a quality action plan.		
Time is allotted for the Leadership Team to draft the action plan and present to the whole staff and representative stakeholders for input.		
Leadership Team is able to identify major subtasks needed for strategies or activities.		
Leadership Team and staff understand that the action plan will focus on student achievement, not just adult actions.		
Site Specific Factors:		

Attitude (Willing/Secure)		
	Yes	No
Climate fosters open/candid sharing.		
Staff values an action plan focused on student achievement.		
Staff trusts Leadership Team to draft the action plan.		
Site Specific Factors:		

CONCLUSION: Relative to this issue/challenge, the constituents impacted are:

Unable and Unwilling (or insecure) Able but Unwilling (or insecure)
 Unable but Willing (or motivated) Able and Willing (or motivated)

ACTION PLAN: Therefore, the proper leader/implementation plan is:

Monitor Implementation of the Plan Readiness Tool

Issue/Challenge: Facilitate the monitoring of the action plan implementation.

Abilities (Able)		
	Yes	No
Leadership Team knows how to use indicators in the plan to monitor implementation of improvement strategies and progress toward goals.		
Leadership Team can monitor and adjust the implementation in response to unanticipated events.		
Leadership Team and staff know and agree upon the student achievement targets at the beginning and throughout the implementation of the plan.		
Time is allocated to collect data on the implementation from whole staff. Leadership Team can provide rationale and data to guide adjustments to the plan and further improvement.		
Staff knows how to use classroom-based assessment results to monitor progress and adjust instruction to meet goals.		
Site Specific Factors:		

Attitude (Willing/Secure)		
	Yes	No
Staff members are willing to dialogue during regularly scheduled and planned opportunities about practices and results.		
Staff is willing to provide evidence that the plan is being implemented.		
Staff is willing to use classroom-based assessments and other data to adjust instruction to meet goals.		
Staff trusts the Leadership Team to monitor the action plan implementation.		
The climate fosters open, candid sharing and is evidenced by attendance and participation by all staff members and representative stakeholders.		
Site Specific Factors:		

CONCLUSION: Relative to this issue/challenge, the constituents impacted are:

Unable and Unwilling (or insecure) Able but Unwilling (or insecure)
 Unable but Willing (or motivated) Able and Willing (or motivated)

ACTION PLAN: Therefore, the proper leader/implementation plan is:

Developed by Northwest Educational Service District 189 and 105.

Evaluate Impact on Student Achievement Readiness Tool

Issue/Challenge: Facilitate the evaluation of the action plan based on student achievement results.

Abilities (Able)		
	Yes	No
Leadership Team knows how to use the summative evaluation measures that have been built into the plan focusing on student achievement, e.g., diagnostic, formative, summative assessments.		
Staff understands that evaluation will be based on attainment of the goal-improved student learning—rather than on adult actions.		
Site Specific Factors:		

Attitude (Willing/Secure)		
	Yes	No
Time is scheduled and structured to foster a climate of open, candid sharing about the school improvement process and instructional practices.		
Staff values the need to improve student achievement.		
Staff understands the need to evaluate the plan in terms of student achievement rather than adult actions.		
Site Specific Factors:		

CONCLUSION: Relative to this issue/challenge, the constituents impacted are:

Unable and Unwilling (or insecure) Able but Unwilling (or insecure)
 Unable but Willing (or motivated) Able and Willing (or motivated)

ACTION PLAN: Therefore, the proper leader/implementation plan is:

Developed by Northwest Educational Service District 189 and 105.

Next Steps Planning Sheet

Task to be Accomplished:

Date:

What are the steps?	Who is to do it?	Costs?	By When?	
			Start	Complete
What is the Expected Impact of Activity?				
How Will We Evaluate if the Activity was Successful?				
Team Members Present:				

"What to Collect?" Worksheet

ACHIEVEMENT DATA

Indicator	Who is responsible for getting this data?	What do we want to learn from this data?	What, if any, additional data should we collect for this area?
WASL			
ITBS			
Levels Tests			
Other local assessment data			
GPA's			
Writing Proficiency			
Other			

“What to Collect?” Worksheet

DEMOGRAPHICS DATA

Indicator	Who is responsible for getting this data?	What do we want to learn from this data?	What, if any, additional data should we collect for this area?
School Enrollment Trends			
Free and Reduced Lunch			
Ethnicity, gender, & special populations			
Attendance			
Mobility			
Drop Out Rate			
Language Proficiency			
Other			

“What to Collect?” Worksheet

PERCEPTIONS DATA

Indicator	Who is responsible for getting this data?	What do we want to learn from this data?	What, if any, additional data should we collect for this area?
Climate Surveys			
Title I Survey			
Student Survey			
Other locally administered surveys			
Parent Survey			
Staff Survey			
Technology Survey			
Focus Group Data			

“What to Collect?” Worksheet

CONTEXTUAL DATA

Indicator	Who is responsible for getting this data?	What do we want to learn from this data?	What, if any, additional data should we collect for this area?
Discipline Data			
Community Partners			
Parent Attendance at Conferences and other school events			
Reading/LA Programs			
Math Programs			
Professional Development			
Adolescent Youth Behavioral Survey			
Arts Programs			

Strengths and Challenges Worksheet

ACHIEVEMENT DATA

Indicator	Strengths	Challenges	What, if any, additional data should we collect for this area?
WASL			
ITBS			
ITED/LASS			
Levels Tests			
Other local assessment data			
GPAs			
Writing Proficiency			
Other			

Strengths and Challenges Worksheet

DEMOGRAPHICS DATA

Indicator	Strengths	Challenges	What, if any, additional data should we collect for this area?
School Enrollment Trends			
Free and Reduced Lunch			
Ethnicity, gender, and special populations			
Attendance			
Mobility			
Drop Out Rate			
Language Proficiency			
Other			

Strengths and Challenges Worksheet

PERCEPTIONS DATA

Indicator	Strengths	Challenges	What, if any, additional data should we collect for this area?
Climate Surveys			
Title I Survey			
Student Survey			
Other locally administered surveys			
Parent Survey			
Staff Survey			
Technology Survey			
Focus Group Data			

Strengths and Challenges Worksheet

CONTEXTUAL DATA

Indicator	Strengths	Challenges	What, if any, additional data should we collect for this area?
Discipline Data			
Community Data			
Parent Attendance at Conferences and other school events			
Reading/LA Programs			
Math Programs			
Professional Development			
Adolescent Youth Behavioral Survey			
Arts Programs			

Narrative Tally Sheet—Achievement Data

Data Source	Narrative Statement	Strength	Challenge

Narrative Tally Sheet—Contextual Data

Data Source	Narrative Statement	Strength	Challenge

Narrative Tally Sheet—Demographic Data

Data Source	Narrative Statement	Strength	Challenge

Narrative Tally Sheet—Perception Data

Data Source	Narrative Statement	Strength	Challenge

School Portfolio Rating Form

Please use the following rating form with your school staff to determine your team's effectiveness with the school portfolio process.

Quality Indicators	Yes	No
1. Enough data has been chosen in the data collection step to construct a school portfolio with 5–8 pieces of data per category.		
2. The data collected for our school portfolio tells us how our students performed on WASL, ITBS, ITED, district assessments and classroom-based assessments.		
3. The school portfolio has data from different sources and from four categories: achievement, perception, demographics, and contextual data.		
4. The school portfolio shows emerging trend lines against baseline data.		
5. The school portfolio shows progress toward previously established goals.		
6. The school portfolio adequately disaggregates data to help establish patterns.		
7. Needs for school improvement are emerging from the school portfolio.		
8. We have highlighted positive trends in our school portfolio for celebration.		
9. A method has been established for reporting the school portfolio to our learning community.		
10. All stakeholder representatives have been involved in the school portfolio process.		

Evaluating Goals Rubric

Definition: A goal states the general educational outcome for the school or identified school targets.

Characteristics: Each goal should be SMART:

S—Specific and clearly stated

M—Measurable and based on formative and summative data

A—Attainable and realistic

R—Related to student achievement and performance

T—Time bound

	4	3	2	1
The goals clearly state the direction for school improvement	Goals clearly state the direction for school improvement	Goals state the direction for school improvement in a relatively clear manner	Goals state the direction for school improvement in an unclear manner	Goals do not state the direction for school improvement
The goals are linked to student learning	The goals are clearly linked to student learning	The goals are linked to student learning; however, the link can be improved	The link between the goals and student learning is unclear or weak	Goals are not linked to student learning
The goals accurately reflect the priorities specified in the needs assessment	All top priorities of the school are clearly addressed	Most top priorities are addressed	Few of the top priorities are addressed	The goals do not address the needs, or they follow unspecified needs

Comments:

- All criteria from the evaluating goals rubric should be in the Fours and Threes range to move on in the learning improvement process.

Study Process Planning Grid

Goal: _____

Group Members: _____

Steps to Be Taken Completion	Lead Responsibility	Timeline for
<u>Additional Data Analysis:</u>		
<u>Site Visits:</u>		
<u>Advice of Content Specialists:</u>		
<u>Research/Resources:</u>		

Action Plan Outline (One form for each goal)

School Improvement Goal:

Strategy:

Rationale:

Activities to Achieve this Goal: What actions will occur? What steps will staff take?	Professional Development How will staff acquire the necessary skills and attitudes to implement the activity?	Timeline When will this strategy or action begin and end?	Resources Available What are the existing and new resources that will be used to accomplish the activity?	Who is Responsible? Who is Involved? Who will provide the leadership? Who will do the work?	Monitoring Effectiveness What on-going FORMATIVE evidence will be gathered to show this activity is making a difference in student outcomes?
Procedures for evaluating success in reaching this goal: What SUMMATIVE evidence will be used to show this activity is making a difference in student outcomes?					

SAMPLE Action Plan Outline (One form for each goal)

School Improvement Goal: Improve students' knowledge and skills in mathematics as measured by a 25% increase in students meeting grade-level unit exams and 45.8% of students meeting standard on the 7th grade WASL by the year 2004.

Strategy: Align instruction and curriculum to the math EALRs and grade-level unit exams and increase student engagement/excitement about math.

Rationale: Students will perform better on assessments if the concepts are taught and practiced.

Activities to Achieve this Goal: What actions will occur? What steps will staff take?	Professional Development How will staff acquire the necessary skills and attitudes to implement the activity?	Timeline When will this strategy or action begin and end?	Resources Available What are the existing and new resources that will be used to accomplish the activity?	Who is Responsible? Who is Involved? Who will provide the leadership? Who will do the work?	Monitoring Effectiveness What on-going FORMATIVE evidence will be gathered to show this activity is making a difference in student outcomes?
Curriculum mapping in math at each grade level.	3 half-day trainings on curriculum mapping	March 20 April 16 May 12 early release days	pre-existing early release days ESD 112	J. J. contacts ESD M.J. gets food Math teachers, VP, & Dist. Curriculum staff attend	Performance on grade-level unit exams.
Investigate and purchase class sets of manipulatives – Digiblocks, etc	View video from publisher. Devote math team meetings to discussions.	By June 15	materials budget - \$1500	D.R. gets purchase order, examines other options.	Performance on grade-level unit exams. Observations of students.
Do hands-on project each quarter in each math class.	Meet for one day in August to develop project options and rubric for grading.	Aug. 28	School improvement budget to pay staff	T.W. works with principal to authorize payment. Each math teacher brings resources. M.J. contacts ESD math specialist.	Student performance based on rubric.
Procedures for evaluating success in reaching this goal: What SUMMATIVE evidence will be used to show this activity is making a difference in student outcomes? Analysis of WASL scores in math.					

Thinking It Through Worksheet

Goal Statement:

	Action Plan Step/Activity	Action Plan Step/Activity	Action Plan Step/Activity
What are the potential downsides to this action?			
Who will be affected?			
Is there a chance this may be a negative or positive?			
What can occur to ease the potential negative outcomes of this activity?			

Action Plan Rubric

Action Plan and Timelines

Definition:

An action plan is a detailed sequence of activities that will be performed to implement the identified strategies to accomplish your school goals.

Characteristics: A good action plan:

- Is clearly linked to all identified strategies and goals
- Provides a logical sequence of activities
- Identifies who will be responsible for each activity
- Provides a reasonable time frame for each activity

	4	3	2	1
A clear action plan is specified for effectively implementing all identified strategies	There is a clear action plan for each strategy	There is a clear action plan for most strategies	There is a clear action plan for few strategies	None of the strategies have a clear action plan
The action plan has a logical sequence of events	The sequence of events in the timeline is completely logical	The sequence of most events in the timeline is logical	Many of the events in the timeline are without logical sequence	The events in the plan have no logical sequence, or no timeline is given
The action plan clearly identifies who will be responsible for each activity	All activities clearly state who will be responsible	Most activities clearly state who will be responsible	Few activities clearly state who will be responsible	None of the activities clearly state who will be responsible
The action plan clearly states how each activity will be performed	It is clear how each activity will be performed	It is clear how most activities will be performed	It is clear how a few of the activities will be performed	It is not clear how any of the activities will be performed
A reasonable timeline is assigned to each activity	All activities include reasonable dates	Most activities include reasonable dates	Few activities include reasonable dates	No activities include reasonable dates

Comments: _____

Monitoring the Activity Timeline

Use this implementation guideline worksheet to help you maintain a “watchful eye” over progression toward accomplishing the school learning improvement plan goals

School:				
Goal 1:				
Activity	Schedule		Completed	
	Begin	End	Begin	End
Goal 2:				
Activity	Schedule		Completed	
	Begin	End	Begin	End
Goal 3:				
Activity	Schedule		Completed	
	Begin	End	Begin	End

Rubric for Implementing the School's Action Plan

Use this rubric to define qualitative standards related to implementing the school learning improvement plan. Level three and four responses indicate increased likelihood of successful implementation.

<p>4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school improvement team provides active leadership for implementing the school improvement plan throughout the school. • The work of the school improvement team provides an exemplary model of collaboration and shared decision making. • All staff are actively involved in implementing the school improvement plan. • The need for resources and follow-up support is anticipated by the school improvement team and support is provided promptly. • Parents and students are authentically involved in the implementation of the school improvement plan.
<p>3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school improvement team functions effectively and provides leadership for implementing the school improvement plan. • Most staff are involved in implementing the school improvement plan. • Adequate resources and follow-up support are provided. • Students and parents are aware of the goals of the school improvement plan.
<p>2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school improvement team manages some of the responsibility for coordinating the implementation of the school improvement plan, but with limited effectiveness. • Most staff are aware of the work of the school improvement team, but are not actively implementing the school improvement plan. • Limited support for the implementation of the plan is provided.
<p>1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of the school improvement team is not clear. • Most staff members are not aware of the school improvement plan. • Inadequate support for the implementation of the plan is provided.
<p>0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school improvement team does not function effectively. • There is little or no evidence of the implementation of the school improvement plan. • Plans for supporting the implementation of the school improvement plan have not been developed.

Monitoring Implementation Checklist

This form helps leadership teams review progress, adjust the plan, and consider issues and barriers to meeting the goals.

Goal:

Activity:

Are those involved with the activity meeting the timeline? yes no

If not, why?

What evidence of implementation exists?

Are the indicated resources available and being utilized? yes no

If not, why?

What barriers or challenges have occurred since the plan was written?

What steps should be taken to address these barriers or challenges?

Does the Action Plan need to be adjusted to reflect any of the above information?

Evaluation Worksheet

Goals	Indicator	Results Achieved
Example: 50% of 7 th graders at Proficient Level in Reading	2002 WASL Scores	48% at proficient, this represents 12% increase

Appendix D

Resources

Appendix D

Resources

Statewide School Improvement Technical Assistance Council	D1
Statewide School Improvement Contacts	D2
Federal Program Requirements	
Equity Assurances .Comparison Chart, etc.....	D3
Title II	D4
Principles of Effectiveness for Safe & Drug Free Schools	D5
Cultural Competence.....	D6
Resources Available through the OSPI SIP Tool	D8
School Improvement Annotated Bibliography	D9
Moving Toward Second Order Change	D15
Resource Lists: Characteristics of High Performing Schools	D17
Comments Page	D37

Statewide School Improvement Technical Assistance Council

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<p><u>Ian Grabenhorst</u> ESD 105 33 S. Second Ave. Yakima, WA 98902-3486 Tel 509.575.2885 Fax 509.575.2918</p>	<p><u>Linda Dobbs</u> NW ESD 189 205 Stewart Rd. Mount Vernon, WA 98273-5462 Tel 360.424.9573 Fax 360.424.9180</p>
<p><u>Jon Nelson</u> ESD 112 2500 NE 65th Ave. Vancouver, WA 98662 Tel 360.750.7500 Fax 360.750.9142</p>	<p><u>Andy Bird</u> North Central ESD PO Box 1847 Wenatchee, WA 98807-1847 Tel. 509.665.2610 Fax 509.662.9027</p>
<p><u>Kathy Budge</u> ESD 113 601 McPhee Rd. SW Olympia, WA 98502-5080 Tel 360.586.2942 Fax 360.586.4658</p>	<p><u>Deborah Gonzalez</u> Puget Sound ESD 400 SW 152nd Burien, WA 98166-2209 Tel. 206.439.6912 Fax 206.439.3961</p>
<p><u>Jim Hockstaff</u> Olympic ESD 114 105 National Avenue N Bremerton, WA 98312 Tel 360.405.5824 Fax 360.478.6869</p>	<p><u>Mickey Venn Lahmann</u> OSPI Old Capitol Building PO Box 47200 Olympia, WA 98504-7200 Tel. 360.725.6343 Fax 360.664.0494</p>
<p><u>Rob MacGregor</u> OSPI Old Capitol Building PO Box 47200 Olympia, WA 98504-7200 Tel. 360.725.6313 Fax 360.753.1953</p>	

Statewide School Improvement Contacts

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113	Dana Anderson	360-664-0018	danderson@esd113.k12.wa.us
113	Kathy Budge	360-586-2942	kbudge@esd113.k12.wa.us
113	Sue Feldman	360-586-2239	sfeldman@esd113.k12.wa.us
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Comparison Chart School Improvement Stages, Title I Schoolwide and CSR Program Components

This chart aligns the School Improvement Plan stages with the 10 required Schoolwide and 11 CSR program components.

School Improvement Plan Stages	Schoolwide Program Components	Comprehensive School Reform Components
1. Assess Readiness to Benefit	2. Schoolwide reform strategies	5. Support within the school 8. External technical support and assistance
2. Collect, Sort, and Select Data	1. Comprehensive Needs Assessment 8. Measures to include teachers in assessment decisions	2. Comprehensive design based on needs assessment
3. Build and Analyze the School Portfolio	1. Comprehensive needs assessment 8. Measures to include teachers in assessment decisions	3. Professional Development 8. External technical support and assistance
4. Set and Prioritize Goals	8. Measures to include teachers in assessment decisions	4. Measurable goals and benchmarks
5. Research and Select Effective Practices	2. Schoolwide reform strategies 6. Strategies to increase parental involvement 9. Strategies for providing timely assistance to students experiencing difficulties mastering standards	1. Proven methods and strategies based on scientifically based research 11. Strategies that improve academic achievement
6. Craft Action Plan	3. Instruction by highly-qualified staff 4. High quality and ongoing professional development activities 5. Strategies to attract high quality highly-qualified staff 6. Strategies to increase parental involvement 7. Transition plans for preschool and between grades 8. Measures to include teachers in assessment decisions 10. Coordination and integration of federal, state and local services	3. Professional Development 6. Support for teachers and principals 7. Parental and community involvement 10. Coordination of resources 11. Strategies that improve academic achievement
7. Monitor Implementation of the Plan	8. Measures to include teachers in assessment decisions	8. External technical support and assistance 9. Evaluation
8. Evaluate Plan's Impact on Student Achievement		8. External technical support and assistance 9. Evaluation

Title II—Teacher and Principal Quality and School Improvement Planning Stages

SIP Stages	Title II Part A Teacher and Principal Quality
Assess Readiness to Benefit <i>(Staff understanding about change)</i>	
Collect, Sort and Select Data <i>(Data on achievement, demographics, staff/student parent perceptions/school programs – identify sources to tell school story)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs Assessment completed by teachers and principals with focus on subject matter knowledge, teaching skills, instructional leadership skill needs. • Teacher and paraprofessional data related to Title I (section 1119) staff requirements.
Build and Analyze the School Portfolio <i>(Display data for multifaceted picture of school)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify achievement gaps. • Identify schools with 1) lowest proportion of highly qualified teachers 2) largest average class size 3) identified for school improvement Title I (section 1116b) • Title I (section 1119) staff requirements.
Set and Prioritize Goals <i>(Goals focus on areas of improvement)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities are part of broader strategy to eliminate achievement gap. • Title I (section 1119) staff requirements. • Use of funds developed around student learning needs, teacher and teaching needs to assist students to increase academic learning. • Professional development meets identified needs of teachers and principals. • Professional development to assist teachers to meet diverse learning needs of students. • Teachers, paraprofessionals, principals, parents collaborate in planning of use of funds and construction of plan.
Research and Select Effective Practices <i>(Research on school practices in areas of needed improvement)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities based on review of scientifically based research.
Craft Action Plan <i>(Action plans for school’s goals)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities are part of broader strategy to eliminate achievement gap. • Target funds to schools with 1) lowest proportion of highly qualified teachers 2) largest average class size 3) identified for school improvement Title (section 1116b). • Activities, curriculum and programs aligned with academic content standards, student academic achievement standards and state assessments. • Activities have substantial, measurable, positive impact on student academic achievement. • Coordinate with other federal, state, local resources.
Monitor Implementation of the Plan <i>(Progress, make necessary changes, celebrate)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and paraprofessionals meet Title I (section 1119) staff requirements.
Evaluate Plan’s Impact on Student Achievement <i>(Effectiveness of action plan on student success)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities have substantial, measurable, positive impact on student academic achievement. • Close academic achievement gap.

Principles of Effectiveness for Safe and Drug Free Schools

Infusion into School Improvement Process

SIP STAGES	PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVENESS
STEP 1 Assess Readiness to Benefit	Needs Assessment Principle 1
STEP 2 Collect, Sort and Select Data	Analysis of Risk and Protection Principle 2
STEP 3 Build and Analyze the School Portfolio	Analysis of Risk and Protection Principle 2
STEP 4 Set and Prioritize Goals	Setting Measurable Goals and Objectives Principle 3
STEP 5 Research and Select Effective Best Practices	Programs Based on Scientifically-Based Research Principle 4
STEP 6 Craft Action Plan	Parental Involvement Principle 6
STEP 7 Monitor Implementation of the Plan	Evaluation Principle 5
STEP 8 Evaluate Plan's Impact on Student Achievement	Evaluation Principle 5

Cultural Competence

The increased focus on high academic standards for all students has brought a heightened awareness of how to overcome certain school-related obstacles to improved student learning for students who historically are underachievers. Studies based on the cultural difference concept make the assumption that academic achievement of students from culturally diverse backgrounds will improve as the knowledge, skills and attitudes crucial to the understanding of how culture influences teacher and student behaviors as well as how it affects learning and teaching. Though several factors contribute to the disproportional representation of students from culturally, racial and linguistically diverse backgrounds identified in the achievement gap category, one important factor, “is the need for culturally responsive instructional practices that address their educational, social, and cultural needs.”(Smith, Finn, & Dowdy, 1993)

The following is a sampler list of literature on issues related to cultural competence, culturally responsive teaching, and educational equity. Most are practical and applicable for use in the classroom, among school staff, parents, members of the school community, and for school-wide equity initiatives. The books and articles make excellent starting points for group discussion, dialogue, study circles and action-research. The books provide more in-depth or extensive information and ideas. The articles and books have implications for learning and teaching and for school policies, programs, and practices.

www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/educatrs/leadrshp/le0gay.htm

A Synthesis of Scholarship. Geneva Gay

www.intime.uni.edu/multiculture/curriculum/culture/Teaching.htm

Culturally Responsive Teaching. Geneva Gay.

www.alliance.brown.edu/tidl/

Culturally Responsive Teaching: Teaching Diverse Learners.

www.edchange.org/multicultural/papers.html

Exchange Research. Room. Diversity Is About Change and Leadership. Jose Soto.

www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/educatrs/leadrshp/le4pppme.htm

Promising Program and Practices in Multicultural Education. North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.

www.utoronto.ca/acc/events/peggy1.htm

White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Backpack.

www.alfiekohn.org/teaching/ofmk.htm

Only for My Kid: How Privileged Parents Undermine School Reform. Alfie Kohn

www.ncrel.org/sdrs/pathwayg.htm

Critical Issue: Creating High-Achieving Learning Environments. Click on Leadership.

www.newhorizons.org/strategies/multicultural/front_multicultural.htm

Teaching and Learning Strategies.

www.edchange.org

Edchange Research Room. Hands-on Mathematics + Multicultural Education = Student Success. Patty Adeeb. Click on Education Research Room

www.newhorizons.org/trans/morefield.htm

Transforming Education. John Morefield.

www.clmer.csulb.edu/apaforum/HOME-S.HTM

Asian-American Home-School-Community Partnership.

www.studycircles.com

- Study Circles Resource Center. Facilitator's guides available pdf.
<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/multipub.htm>
- Multicultural Resources.
www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown
- The Children's Literature Web Guide.*
<http://www.stolaf.edu/network/iecc>
- Keypals: Intercultural *E-Mail Classroom Connections*
- Baker, G. (1983). Planning and Organizing for Multicultural Instruction. Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.
- Bellanca, J., Rodriguez, E.R. (1996). What Is It About Me You Can't Teach: An Instructional
- Cole, R.W. (1995). Educating Everybody's Children: Diverse Teaching Strategies for Diverse Learners. What Research and Practice Say about Improving Achievement. Alexandria, VA.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Delpit, L. (1995). Other People's Children: Cultural Conflicts in the Classroom. New York, NY.: The New Press.
- Gay, G. (2003). Becoming Multicultural Educators: Personal Journey Toward Professional Development Agency. San Francisco, CA.: Jossey-Bass.
- Gay, G. (2000). Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research and Practice. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Gilliland, H., Reyhner, J. (1988). Teaching the Native American. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.
- Ginsberg, M.B., Wlodkowski, J.(2000). Creating Highly Motivating Classrooms for all Students: A Schoolwide Approach to Powerful Teaching with Diverse Learners. San Francisco, CA.: Jossey-Bass.
- Grant, C.A., Sleeter, C.E. (1988). Making Choices for Multicultural Education: Five Approaches to Race, Class and Gender. New York: Maxwell Macmillan Publishing Company.
- Henderson, A.T., Mapp, K.L. (2002). A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement. Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. Austin, TX.
- Howard, G. (1999). Can't Teach What You Don't Know: White Teachers, Multiracial Schools. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Kelly, C., Oberg, M. & Shade, B. (2003). Creating Culturally Responsive Classrooms. Washington, D.C: American Psychological Association.
- Kuykendall, C. (1992). From Rage to Hope: Strategies for Reclaiming Black and Hispanic Students. Bloomington, Indiana: National Education Service.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children. San Francisco, CA.: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Thompson, G.L. (2004). Ebony Eyes: What Teachers Need to Know But Are Afraid to Ask About African-American Students. San Francisco, CA.: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Tiffany, J. V. (2003). Uncomfortable Neighbors. Rochester, WA: Gorham Printing.
- Williams, B. & coauthors. (2003). Closing the Achievement Gap: A Vision for Changing Beliefs and Practices. Alexandria, VA. ASCD

Resources Available through the OSPI Web-based SIP Tool

U.S. Department of Education

Comprehensive Regional Assistance Centers

Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

Eisenhower Math/Science Regional Consortia and National Clearinghouse

Equity Assistance Centers

Foreign Language Resource Centers

National Research and Development Centers

Regional Education Laboratories

Regional Resource and Federal Centers Network for Special Education

Regional Technology in Education Consortia

Special Education and Rehabilitation Services

Vocational and Adult Education, and Literacy

Other ED-Supported Sites

Federal Resources for Educational Excellence

School Improvement Annotated Bibliography

Bernhardt, Victoria L. (1998). *Data Analysis For Comprehensive Schoolwide Improvement*. Larchmont, New York: Eye on Education.

This book helps educators at all levels learn how to understand and use data well. Using a “systems approach,” the author clarifies why data are important, what data to gather, how to use and analyze data for comprehensive schoolwide improvement, and how to communicate and report data results.

Readers learn about four categories of data: demographics, perception, learning outcomes, and instructional process. Data categories and types of measurements are carefully laid out and completely explained in lay terms. The author explores the various purposes for analyzing data, from improving instruction, to providing feedback to students, to determining which programs produce the results desired by the school.

The book includes a variety of analysis and interpretation methods, along with criteria for their use. Readers learn how to determine what kinds of data inform specific improvements. Each key understanding is presented with elementary and secondary school scenarios, followed by study questions. The format lends itself to a book-study approach for staff to use if they are trying to figure out how and why they might use data to improve their instruction and inform the school improvement process. While readers are cautioned to always decide what they want from data and why they are analyzing it, this process is not fully described in this book. Once those decisions have been met, this book will be a valuable improvement tool.

Bernhardt, Victoria L. (1999). *The School Portfolio, A Comprehensive Framework for School Improvement*. Larchmont, New York: Eye on Education, Inc.

The author presents a framework for implementing comprehensive school reform, and documenting the improvement process using a portfolio—“a purposeful collection of work telling the story of the school.” The portfolio is a dynamic collection of evidence used for planning, thinking, decision-making, monitoring and evaluating school change. The portfolio framework calls on school communities to rethink their work instead of merely restructuring it. It is a hard process and everyone needs to understand the process up front and be committed in order for the process to be successful.

While student achievement and other performance measures are integral to the process, the portfolio reaches far beyond traditional improvement approaches and attempts to “measure” a wide array of school variables so that improvement efforts produce systemic effects. Sets of “Continuous Improvement Continuums” are used to plan, implement, guide, and monitor the process, products, and progress of school improvement. The continuums are displayed in terms of rubrics to monitor and guide the process so that it becomes continuous.

The process of developing a school portfolio provides multiple opportunities for authentic teacher involvement. Each teacher’s role is important to the school’s overall improvement success, promoting staff commitment. The portfolio approach creates and maintains a shared vision of student learning and the importance of teachers’ professional growth.

The author carefully lays out the process, including illustrations of how to display data and ways to chart progress. The two companion books, *Data Analysis for Comprehensive Schoolwide Improvement* and *The Example School Portfolio*, are good complements to this text.

Bernhardt, Victoria L., von Blanckensee, Leni L., Lauck, Marcia S., Rebello, Frances F., Bonilla, George L. & Tribbey, Mary M. (2000). *The Example School Portfolio: A Companion to the School Portfolio*. Larchmont, N.Y.: Eye on Education.

A companion to *The School Portfolio, A Comprehensive Framework for School Improvement*, this book provides a sample of a finished portfolio product that shows how a vision for improvement was developed and implemented, illustrating how all the parts of the process work together to support a continuous improvement cycle. This book explains important features of portfolio development not readily apparent in the first book, explaining, for example, that within any single improvement component, there are typically multiple goals. The excellent margin notes alert the reader to optional procedures and outcomes. The author takes on provocative issues such as principal leadership, presenting a detailed description of the process whereby a principal's desire to remain the key decision-maker led to various levels of shared responsibility over time.

The Example School Portfolio reinforces the impression that producing a school portfolio of the quality presented requires enormous and skilled facilitation before, during, and after the work is complete, and that the facilitation must continue after the first portfolio draft is complete. There still remain questions about the efficacy of the portfolio model. Neither book provides a research-based verification of the effectiveness of this process for improving schools and improving students' achievement.

Bridges, William. (1991). *Managing Transitions, Making the Most of Change*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Perseus Books.

This is a book for managers of the change process and anyone else going through change on multiple levels ranging from professional to personal. The book opens and closes with excellent and understandable scenarios of impending organizational change. For both scenarios, the author invites the reader to reflect on a series of actions a leader might take that will expedite, support, or torpedo the process. By the end of this little book, the reader will be delighted to find out how expert he or she is at discriminating between more and less powerful actions to support positive improvements. According to Bridges, change occurs in three phases. Change itself is really a "new beginning" that requires an "ending" to happen first, and a "transitional period" to occur between the two.

Bridges points out that non-stop change is increasingly the norm in organizations. That kind of change does not give time to build the kind of trust needed to weather the change process. The author points out that change itself deals with the outer self while much of the transition phase is internal and requires close managerial attention. Managers need to be aware of each stage, to take care of themselves from ending to new beginning, and to take stock of the process as it unfolds.

While this book is philosophical in nature and does not provide hands-on activities or lists of techniques one should use to guide the change process, it has an important personal message for readers. It speaks eloquently to personal perspectives and explains experiences and feelings we have all had if we have been part of an organizational change. The book is valuable in clarifying reasons for the deep personal concerns that surface during important change, and in explaining various stages of the change process with suggestions on how managers can ease the burden for themselves and for the organization as a whole.

Fullan, Michael. (2001). *The New Meaning of Educational Change, Third Edition*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Today, schools are inundated with multiple, fragmented, and burdensome innovations in the name of reform. The result is superficial implementations of programs, one on top of the other, in a disjointed fashion. Real change calls for coherence and deep meaning, which, in turn, requires what Fullan calls “reculturing the teaching profession.” Reculturing means establishing new infrastructures so that teachers can work together in learning communities to learn more about curriculum, instructional approaches, materials, and to institute and maintain ongoing dialogue about their underlying pedagogical beliefs. In addition, educators need deeper understandings of theories about change itself.

Fullan’s three steps of change are initiation, implementation, and institutionalization—a process that is complex, time consuming and difficult. Either internal or external agents can initiate change. It is important to note that initiation and implementation are loosely coupled in practice. The implementation step is critical and requires active professional learning communities at both school and district levels all paying attention to the need for change, the clarity and complexity of purpose, and the quality of performance required to make results effective and meaningful.

The author points out that sometimes needs for change are not fully understood until educators are well into the change process. Clarity requires teachers to understand exactly what they must do differently to make improvements happen, and it is what teachers develop in their minds that counts to produce quality reforms. Effective principals manage change and make it coherent. District administrators affect the quality of innovation according to how much they understand and help. At all levels within the educational organization, interactive learning communities are needed to facilitate the entire change process.

Educational change ultimately depends on teachers and what they think and what they do. “Significant educational change consists of changes in beliefs, teaching styles, and materials which can come about—only through a process of personal development in a social context.” (p.124) Relationships have to improve for change to happen, and all the players have to be part of a learning organization that influences learning and leads to an opportunity for institutionalization.

In Fullan’s view, 25 percent of the work of solving educational problems is knowing what to work on and 75 percent is figuring out how to make it happen within each unique educational context. He points out that while products of reforms do not necessarily have to be replicated, the *conditions* under which they were produced have to be attended to. And, one will only know if changes are deep and lasting if the learning culture has been transformed.

Garmston, Robert & Wellman, Bruce. (1999). *The Adaptive School: A Sourcebook for Developing Collaborative Groups*. Norwood, Massachusetts: Christopher-Gordon Publishers, Inc.

This book is about processes that are useful to guide school reform work. The authors believe that improving a school requires collaboration, new skills, and new organizational structures—much more than the development of facilitation skills. The goals of adaptive schools are to develop organizational and professional capacities so that all members of a staff facilitate one another in the work of the school. Research supports the primary role of staff’s collective efficacy in contributing to school success. The book presents a historical perspective of restructuring schools, references private sector organizational theory past and present, and devotes a chapter to emerging organizational science and systems science perspectives.

Facilitators who guide the process are urged to focus as intently on developing dynamic groups as upon the outcomes of reform. These norms and skills enable groups to move from conversation to decision-making throughout their improvement efforts. An extensive tool kit provides skills and strategies to produce facilitative behaviors within school staffs, preparing them to: 1) get the work of the school done, 2) focus on doing the right kind of work to accomplish their goals, 3) work collaboratively, 4) manage school systems, 5) continuously develop their group skills, and 6) successfully adapt to change. One chapter deals extensively with conflict, its uses and the traps it poses, and details strategies to avoid or escape conflict traps.

The book can be read in its entirety to convey the universe of facilitation required to develop powerful groups that produce adaptive schools. Alternately, readers can selectively focus on certain problem areas or issues, which are extensively cross-referenced throughout the text. The authors carefully define and completely explain a vast repertoire of facilitation skills and activities to produce those skills within school staff. The Adaptive School makes its case for “training group members in facilitative behaviors, not training leaders to facilitate groups.”

Guskey, Thomas R. (2000). *Who’s Afraid of the Big Bad Evaluation? Evaluating Professional Development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Evaluation is a task many think is necessary but in addition to being time consuming and costly, is beyond the abilities of mere mortals like teachers and principals. This book demystifies evaluation by explaining that at its most basic level, evaluation is asking good questions prior to implementation and gathering valid information to document efforts and describe the effects. Though the focus is on evaluation of professional development, Thomas Guskey’s five level evaluation model might be adapted to implementation of education programs and efforts in addition to professional development activities.

The five-level evaluation model includes:

1. Gauge reaction to the approach
2. Determine if participants learned anything
3. Assess organizational support
4. Measure use of new knowledge and skills
5. Measure student learning outcomes

A particularly useful tool in the book identifies content, process, and context questions for each evaluation level.

Sample evaluation forms, inventories, and questionnaires are included in the book. Additionally, the author suggests ways to use qualitative data sources such as interviews, learning logs, and video case studies. This can be a useful resource for thinking about evaluation in new ways.

Holcomb, Edie L. (2001). *Asking the Right Questions, Techniques for Collaboration and School Change*. 2nd Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

This is a friendly review of many techniques for comprehensive school organizational change, told through anecdotes from the field. Based on the School-Based Instructional Leadership Training Program developed by the author, this book builds on that project and synthesizes information about facilitation skills and processes that are presented elsewhere in the educational reform literature.

The synthesis is guided by five “right” questions: 1) Where are we now? 2) Where do we want to go? 3) How will we get there? 4) How will we know we are (getting) there? 5) How will we sustain focus and momentum? Readers address each question through a series of group process activities. Over two dozen techniques to enhance communication, guide data collection and analysis, and facilitate planning are described.

School change is an all-inclusive process; there are roles and skills for facilitators to learn, for teachers to practice, for administrators to take on. The author shows how to build and maintain a culture of inquiry that keeps the mission and goals in focus. Leadership structures of schools are addressed with options for restructuring to support reform for the short and long term.

The last chapter outlines various ways to use the book to meet situation-specific needs. The author sets out a number of scenarios with an exercise to apply selection criteria to each strategy. This chapter is a good way to start thinking about how to proceed in using the book for your school context.

Holcomb, Edie L. (2004). *Getting Excited About Data (2nd ed.): Combining People, Passion, and Proof to Maximize Student Achievement*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

This book is a “how to” guide on fun and practical ways to help staff and other stakeholders consider, appropriately display, and utilize data to make decisions about their schools. Edie Holcomb presents innovative and down-to-earth strategies to develop common understandings, articulate mission and beliefs, and use data to challenge assumptions.

This book is not about charts, graphs, and statistics, though it certainly references these things in reader-friendly, practitioner-oriented ways. But, it is really about building excitement and commitment to the processes of change in school.

The book highlights ways to use data to create alignment among and between mission, goals, strategies and evidence of implementation and impact. It provides activities for helping engage in the use of data, overcome resistance to data, and stir up passion for using data through linkages to personal hopes and dreams. In this second edition, Holcomb adds new content instructional improvement, connecting school and district improvement processes, and developing reflection and resilience in leaders. Application of data to address achievement gap issues is also explored.

Holcomb’s work is cited frequently in the SIP Guide, contributing activities such as the Data Carousel which involves all staff in looking carefully at the school’s data in various categories. This and many other ways to engage staff with data are explained and detailed in this entertaining and easy-to-read book.

Tool Time, Choosing and Implementing Quality Improvement Tools. (2001). Molt, Mt: Langford International, Inc.

Tool Time presents fifty resource tools that can be used to guide an array of activities within the school improvement process. The publisher recommends that the tools be used in conjunction with training in the *Langford 4-Day Seminar* as using the materials “Without knowledge of Quality Learning, Brain Research, and Systems Theory may negatively impact the organization or system in need of improvement.”

The tools in the guide are presented in alphabetical order in the book and they are clearly and uniformly displayed with friendly graphics that provide answers to guiding questions that ask of each tool: What is it? When is it Used? Where is it Used? Why is it Used? The questions are followed by clear answers, sample uses for each tool, a process for implementation, and a note of caution regarding possible problems that might arise during improvement activities. The format includes easy-on-the-eyes white space with ample room for reflective note taking. The book is brief enough so that readers will be encouraged to return to it again and again to choose from the wide variety of tools and find the one that best meets specific improvement needs.

This book would be particularly useful at the outset of a planning process for school improvement, when an array of activities might be singled out for consideration. The book is very accessible to all change stakeholders.

To reach Langford call 406.628.2227 or go to their website at www.langfordlearning.com.

Woods, Deanna (2002). *Moving Forward: From Where You Are to School Improvement That Lasts, A Research-Based Guide*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Education Laboratory.

This handbook is for anyone involved in improving schools. *Moving Forward* provides an overview, useful resources and a research base for making informed decisions in the school change process. As the author states, “School improvement is a labor intensive complex process of interdependent and interrelated components that involve alterations in the use of time; changes in behaviors; social structures; school and district cultures; and the use of many different tools and strategies.”

This is a resource for school staff to use for information and as a basis for dialogue about why changes are needed, what changes are needed, and how changes should be implemented. The book covers the following key areas of school improvement:

1. Collaborative roles between school and community;
2. Enabling shared decision-making;
3. Getting focused building coherency;
4. Finding time for planning and growing leaders.

A current list of significant readings related to school change, and a collection of checklists, matrices and rubrics provide helpful resources in the toolbox. Overall, school teams may find this is a useful resource for school improvement planning.

Zemelman, Steven, Harvey Daniels, and Arthur Hyde. (1998). *Best Practice: New Standards for Teaching and Learning in America’s Schools*. Portsmouth, NH: Heineman.

This resource for research-based best practices is a “one-stop shopping center” for school improvement team members seeking an overview of what works. It can be an excellent springboard to more current research and resources available in the SIP Tool. The book is divided into the major subject-area headings of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies.

The distinctive features of the book are that it is written in a positive format for teachers and others involved in education, it focuses on the classroom, it is authoritative and research-based, and the examples are concrete and practical. Each chapter is laid out to describe what the best practices are in this subject area, an example of an exemplary program, and a chart highlighting which practices to increase and which to decrease.

Moving Toward Second Order Change

Schools have implemented changes and devoted resources to put effective practices into place. Some changes are more likely to have deeper and more lasting effects, however, than do others. These two kinds of changes have been labeled “first” and “second” order changes (Cuban, 1988).

In the past, planned educational change was frequently “innovation focused” and centered on single changes in a classroom or school. Current processes of effective change, which are required to substantially improve learning for all students, emphasize process and its context and as a result affect the culture of schools. First order changes address the more superficial elements of the classroom and school and did not stress the changes to the deep organization or culture of schools. Second order changes, according to Cuban, are changes that go deep into the structure of organizations and the ways in which people work together. Second order change is multifaceted, occurs more slowly, and requires changes in attitudes, perceptions, behaviors, relationships, and the way people think and work together.

First Order Change—Specific Classroom and Schoolwide practices: Changes in efficiency, organization, specific practices, “change without difference” Characterized by:

- Adjustments within the existing structure
- Doing more or less of something
- Reversible
- New learning not required
- Old story can still be told

Second Order Change—Philosophy, focus and ownership: systemic change, fundamental ethos, philosophy, beliefs driving practice, “restructuring” (corporate culture) Characterized by:

- New way of seeing things
- Irreversible
- Transformation to something quite different
- Requires new learning
- New story is told

(Cuban, L. 1988). “A fundamental puzzle of school reform.” *Phi Delta Kappan*, 70(5), 341-344. cited in *Systemic Reform: Perspectives on Personalizing Education*, September 1994

Stiegelbauer, S. M. (1994, September) Change has Changed: Implications for Implementation of Assessments from Organizational Change Literature.”

www.ed.gov/pubs/EdReformStudies/SysReforms/stiegel1.html

<http://www.thenationalacademy.org/Ready/change.html>

Examples of First Order and Second Order Change

First Order Change

Second Order Change

Smaller classes

Changing relationships and teaching strategies

Site-based councils

Collaborative Ownership

Ninety-minute teaching blocks

Extended teaching and learning opportunities; hands on and field-based learning; altered teaching strategies

Schools within schools

New interactions/attention to Relationship-building within a smaller environment

Teaching teams common planning times

Coordinated, articulated, and focused curriculum, instruction & assessment

Parent nights three times a year

Teachers see parents as critical partners continually building their capacity to support learning.

Characteristics of High Performing Schools

Resource List

Becoming a high-performing school takes years of sustained commitment. There is no silver bullet – no single thing a school can do to ensure high student performance. Researchers have found that high-performing schools have a number of common characteristics. The professional and research literature has identified various characteristics of improving and effective schools. Educational reformers and theorists have developed programs and processes for assisting school practitioners in creating and maintaining those conditions to help increase student learning.

Through a review of more than 20 studies, Washington school improvement specialists and researchers identified nine characteristics of high performing schools. Some of the studies were reviews of other research that has taken place over many years on the same topic, while others examined high performing schools in specific settings and locations with specific student demographics. This body of research represents findings from both Washington state and around the nation.

The content of each study was analyzed to determine what characteristics were found most often among high performing schools. Performance was usually measured in terms of high or dramatically improving scores on standardized tests, often in spite of difficult circumstances such as high levels of poverty. In every case, there was no single factor that accounted for the success or improvement. Instead, the research found that high performing schools tend to have a combination of common characteristics. Some reports found as few as five characteristics, while others found many more. OSPI's analysis of these characteristics narrowed these lists into nine areas. These schools have:

1. A clear and shared focus.
2. High standards and expectations for all students.
3. Effective school leadership.
4. High levels of collaboration and communication.
5. Curriculum, instruction and assessments aligned with state standards.
6. Frequent monitoring of learning and teaching.
7. Focused professional development.
8. A supportive learning environment.
9. High levels of family and community involvement.

Effectively addressing the nine characteristics leads to “second order” change as philosophy, values, attitudes and beliefs are fundamentally changed. cursory attention to the nine characteristics, however, may lead only to “first order” change that may have little impact on student learning.

As educators are asked to use “scientifically-based research,” particularly in relation to new federal laws (e.g., No Child Left Behind), they must examine the quality of research studies. Very few studies meet the Federal government’s “gold standard” of experimental design. However, many of the cited studies meet the “silver standard.” The consistency of the results which occurs across these studies provides sufficient evidence to have great confidence in their results.

The **nine characteristics are integral to School Improvement Planning** and should be embedded in all stages of the planning and implementation processes.

This resource list provides the names of key websites, books, reports, and articles that can be used to help schools improve in each of the characteristics of high-performing schools. Information about other characteristics is often embedded throughout these resources. After assessing the areas that need the most attention, review and then discuss the materials mentioned in this resource list in order to focus your school improvement efforts. Good luck!

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SELECTED RESOURCES AS STARTING POINTS

1. CLEAR AND SHARED FOCUS

Everybody knows where they are going and why. The focus is on achieving a shared vision, and all understand their role in achieving the vision. The focus and vision are developed from common beliefs and values, creating a consistent direction for all involved.

<http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/re-engineering/keyissues/leadership.shtml>

"Leadership and Organizational Vitality"

<http://www.effectiveschools.com>

http://www.prrac.org/pubs_au.php

Add It Up: Using Research to Improve Education for Low-Income and Minority Students.

Barth, R. S. (1990). Improving Schools from Within: Teachers, Parents, and Principals Can Make the Difference. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers. See chapter 11, Visions of Good Schools.

Calhoun, E. F. (1994). How to Use Action Research in the Self-Renewing School. Alexandria, VA: ASCD

Conzemius, A. and O'Neill, J. (2001). Building Shared Responsibility for Student Learning. Alexandria, VA: ASCD. See chapter 2, Focus.

Cunningham, W. G. and Gresso, D. W. (1993). Cultural Leadership: The Culture of Excellence in Education. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. See chapter 4, Vision, Not Criticism, Supports Excellence.

DuFour, R. and Eaker, R. (1998). Professional Learning Communities at Work. Best Practices for Enhancing Student Achievement. Bloomington, Id.: National Educational Service and Alexandria, VA: ASCD. See chapter 4-5 on Mission and Vision/Values and Goals.

Glickman, C. D. (1993). Renewing America's Schools. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers. See chapter 2, The Covenant: Establishing Common Principles of Teaching and Learning.

Holcomb, E. L. (2001). Asking the Right Questions. Techniques for Collaboration and School Change. (2nd ed.) Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.

Louis, K. S. and Miles, M. B. (1990). Improving the Urban High School. What Works and Why. New York: Teachers College Press. See chapter 9, Vision Building in School Reform

Newmann, F. M & Associates. (1996). Authentic Achievement. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Newmann, F.M., Smith, B. A., Allensworth, E. & Bryk, A. S. (2001, January), School Instructional Program Coherence: Benefits and Challenges. Chicago, IL: Consortium on Chicago School Research.

Peters, T. J. & Waterman, Jr., R. H. (1982). In Search of Excellence. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Rosenholtz, S. J. (1989). Teachers' Workplace. The Social Organization of Schools. Longman.

Sagor, R. (1996). Local Control and Accountability. How to Get It, Keep It and Improve School Performance. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. See chapter 3, The Three Building Blocks of Accountability: Vision Setting, Action Research, and Performance Assessment.

Schlechty, P. C. (2001). Shaking Up the School House. How to Support and Sustain Educational Innovation. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. See chapters 2, and 8.

Schmoker, M. (1999). Results: The Key to Continuous School Improvement (2nd ed.).

Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. See chapter 2, Goals, and the website at www.ascd.org/framebooks.html

Senge, P. M. (1990). The Fifth Discipline. The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization. New York: Doubleday Currency. See Part III, The Core Disciplines: Building the Learning Organization.

- Senge, P., Cambron-McCabe, N., Lucas, T., Smith, B., Dutton, J., and Kleiner, A. (2000). Schools That Learn: A Fifth Discipline Fieldbook for Educators, Parents, and Everyone Who Cares about Education. New York: Doubleday Currency. See Part IX, School Vision.
- Wood, D. (2002). Moving Forward: From Where You are to School Improvement that Lasts. A Research-based Guide. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

2. HIGH STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS

Teachers and staff believe that all students can learn and meet high standards. While recognizing that some students must overcome significant barriers, these obstacles are not seen as insurmountable. Students are offered an ambitious and rigorous course of study.

www.rand.org/multi/achievementforall/

Research Areas-Education

www.mcrel.org/products/learning/raising.html

Raising the Achievement of Low Performing Students

www.goodschools.gwu.edu/

NCCSR Publications. Issue Briefs. April 2001. A Brief on Turning Around Low-Performing Schools

<http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/archives/completed/cors/default.htm>

ISSUES_NO_8_SPRING_1995.pdf

Issue Reports. No. 8 Spring 1995 "Issues in Restructuring Schools"

www.edtrust.org/edtrust/html

Dispelling the Myth: High Poverty Schools Exceeding Expectations

<http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v5n10.html>

Cultural Differences and the Construction of Meaning: Implications for the Leadership and Organizational Context of Schools Robert A. Pena, Arizona State University.

<http://www.nwrel.org/cnorse/booklets/achieve/2.html>

Improving Black Student Achievement. See chapter 2: School-Related Factors and Teacher Behavior that Contribute to Low Self-Image in Students and worksheet B: Teacher Behaviors That Support a Positive Self-Concept Among Minority Students.

Bamburg, J. D. (1994). Raising Expectations to Improve Student Learning. NCREL Monograph.

www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/educatrs/leadershp/leObam.htm

Cole, R. W. (Ed.) (1995) Educating Everybody's Children, Diverse Teaching Strategies for Diverse Learners. What Research and Practice Say About Improving Achievement. Alexandria, VA: ASCD Improving Student Achievement Research Panel.

Cotton, K. (1995). Research You Can Use to Improve Results. Alexandria, VA: ASCD and Portland, OR: NWREL. See chapter 4, Interactions.

Ferguson, R. (1998) "Teachers' Perceptions and Expectations and the Black-White Test Score Gap". in Jencks, C. & Phillips, M. (eds.) The Black-White Test Score Gap. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute Press.

Good, T. L. & Brophy, J.E. (2000). Looking in Classrooms. 8th edition. New York: Longman.

Haycock, K., Jerald, C. & Huang, S. (2001, Spring). Closing the Gap: Done in a Decade. Thinking K-16. The Education Trust. 5(2).

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- National Commission on the High School Senior Year. (2001, October). Raising Our Sights. No High School Senior Left Behind. The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, Princeton, NJ.
- Payne, R.K. (1998). A Framework for Understanding Poverty. Baytown, TX: RFT Publishing Co.
- Renzulli, J.S. & Reis, S.M. (1985). The Schoolwide Enrichment Model. A Comprehensive Plan for Educational Excellence. Mansfield Center, CT: Creative Learning Press, Inc.
- Williams, B. (Ed.) (2003) Closing the Achievement Gap. A Vision for Changing Beliefs and Practices. 2nd Edition Alexandria, VA. ASCD.
www.ascd.org/cms/index.cfm?TheViewID=650#w

3. EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Effective instructional and administrative leadership is required to implement change processes. Effective leaders are proactive and seek help that is needed. They also nurture an instructional program and school culture conducive to learning and professional growth. Effective leaders can have different styles and roles—teachers and other staff, including those in the district office, often have a leadership role.

www.Contentload.do?contentID=B86

www.mcrel.org/toolkit/systems

Leadership and Change Process, “Asking the Right Questions.”

www.nwrel.org/scpd/re-engineering/keyissues/leadership.shtml

Leadership and organizational vitality

- | | |
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| www.aasa.org/ | American Association of School Administrators |
| www.naesp.org/ | National Association of Elementary School Principals |
| www.nassp.org/ | National Association of Secondary School Principals |
| www.nhsa.net/ | National High School Association |
| www.nmsa.org/ | National Middle School Association |
| www.pdkintl.org/ | Phi Delta Kappa International |
| www.nea.org/ | National Education Association |
| www.aft.org/ | American Federation of Teachers |

- Barth, R.S. (1990). Improving Schools from Within: Teachers, Parents, and Principals Can Make the Difference. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers
- Blase, J. & Kirby, P.C. (1992). Bringing Out the Best in Teachers: What Effective Principals Do. Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press Inc.
- Bolman, L. G. & Deal, T. E. (1995). Leading with Soul: An Uncommon Journey of Spirit. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers
- Burns, J.M. (1978). Leadership. New York: Harper Row Publishers.
- Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. (1998). Turing Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century. Report of Task Force on Education of Young Adolescents. New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York.

- Conley, D. T. & Goldman, P. (1994). Facilitative Leadership. How Principals Lead without Dominating. Oregon School Study Council. 37(9).
- Cunningham, W. G. & Gresso, D.W. (1993). Cultural Leadership. The Culture of Excellence in Education. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Elmore, R.F. (2000, Winter). Building a New Structure for School Leadership. The Albert Shanker Institute.
- Fullan, M. (2001). Leading in a Culture of Change. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Irvin, J. L. (Ed.) (1997). What Current Research Says to the Middle Level Practitioners. Columbus, OH. National Middle School Association. See section VII, Leadership.
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- Louis, K. S. and Miles, M. B. (1990). Improving the Urban High School: What Works and Why. New York: Teachers College Press. See chapter 2, Making Change Happen: Leading and Managing.
- National Association of Secondary School Principals. (1996). Breaking Ranks: Changing an American Institution. Report of NASSP in partnership with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching on the High School of the 21st Century. Alexandria, VA: NASSP.
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- Schlechty, P. C. (2001). Shaking Up the School House: How to Support and Sustain Educational Innovation. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, Inc. See Part Three, Transformational Leadership.
- Senge, P. et al. (2000). Schools that Learn: A Fifth Discipline Fieldbook for Educators, Parents, and Everyone Who Cares about Education. New York: Currency/Doubleday. See chapter XII, Leadership.
- Sergiovanni, T. J. (1990). Value-Added Leadership: How to Get Extraordinary Performance in Schools. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers.

4. HIGH LEVELS OF COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION

There is strong teamwork among teachers across all grades and with other staff. Everybody is involved and connected to each other, including parents and members of the community, to identify problems and work on solutions.

www.sedl.org/change/issues/issues61.html

Professional Learning Communities, "Constructing communities of cooperation."

www.sedl.org/change/issues/issues91/4.html

Addressing the Challenges. What are we learning?"

www.prrac.org/pubs_aiu.php

Add It Up: Using Research to Improve Education for Low-Income and Minority Students.

Barott, J. E. & Raybould, R. (1998). "Changing Schools into Collaborative Organizations." in D. G. Ponder (Ed.). Restructuring Schools for Collaboration,

Promises and Pitfalls. New York: State University of New York and chapter 4, Building a Community of Learners.

- Bryk, A. S. & Schneider, B. (2002). Trust in Schools. A Core Resource for Improvement. New York: Barth, R. S. (1990). Improving Schools from Within: Teachers, Parents, and Principals Can Make the Difference. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers. See chapter 3, Becoming Colleagues; Russell Sage Foundation.
- Conzemius, A. and O'Neill, J. (2001). Building Shared Responsibility for Student Learning. Alexandria, VA: ASCD. See chapter 4, Collaboration.
- Cunningham, W. G. and Gresso, D. W. (1993). Cultural Leadership: The Culture of Excellence in Education. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. See chapter 5, Collegiality is the Catalyst.
- DuFour, R. and Eaker, R. (1998). Professional Learning Communities at Work: Best Practices for Enhancing Student Achievement. Bloomington, IN. National Educational Service. See chapter 2, A New Model: The Professional Learning Community.
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- Glickman, C. D. (1993). Renewing America's Schools: A Guide for School-Based Action. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers. See chapter 6, Becoming an Educative Community.
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- Jensen, J. L. (2002). "Creating Time for Professional Learning Teams." Implementing Professional Learning Teams Process Guide. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.
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- Murphy, C. (1997, Summer). "Finding Time for Faculties to Study Together." Journal of Staff Development. National Staff Development Council.
<http://www.nsd.org/library/jds/jsdsm97murp.html>
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5. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT ALIGNED WITH STANDARDS

The planned and actual curriculum are aligned with the essential academic learning requirements (EALRs). Research-based teaching strategies and materials are used. Staff understand the role of classroom and state assessments, what the assessments measure, and how student work is evaluated.

www.nwrel.org/scpd/re-engineering/rycu/index.shtml

research you can use.

www.mcrel.org/products/diversity/ www.mcrel.org/topics/topics.asp?topicsid=6

A report from McREL's diversity roundtable. Including at-risk students in standards-based reform.

www.wested.org/

www.goodschools.gwu.edu/pubs/issue/ibapril01.pdf

Brief for Practitioners: Turning Around Low Performing Schools --Implications at the School, District, and State Levels.

www.middleweb.com/ www.MWLresources/reinventing.html

Reinventing the Middle School, Middle School Journal, Sept. 2001

www.wcer.wisc.edu/archives/completed/cors/issues_in_Restructuring_Schools/

Authentic Pedagogy: Standards that Boost Student Performance

www.wcer.wisc.edu/archives/completed/cors/Issues_in_Restructuring_Schools

Another look at high school restructuring

www.cse.ucla.edu/CRESST/pages/newsletters.htm

Newsletters. Policy Brief 4 Assessment and accommodation for English language learners

www.nap.edu/openbook/0309069955/html/

Adding It Up: Helping Children Learn Mathematics (2001)

www.ascd.org Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

www.aera.net/ American Educational Research Association

www.ncss.org/ National Council of Social Studies

www.ncte.org/ National Council of Teachers of English

www.reading.org/ International Reading Association

www.nctm.org/ National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

www.nsta.org/ National Science Teachers Association

www.tesol.org/ Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

www.naeyc.org/ National Association of Education of Young Children

www.cec.sped.org/ Council for Exceptional Children

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6. FREQUENT MONITORING OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

A steady cycle of different assessments identify students who need help. More support and instructional time is provided, either during the school day or outside normal school hours, to students who need more help. Teaching is adjusted based on frequent monitoring of student progress and needs. Assessment results are used to focus and improve instructional programs.

<http://www.mcrel.org/topics/topics.asp?topicsid=1>

Designing a Sustainable Standards-Based Assessment System

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- Schmoker, M. (2001). The Results Fieldbook: Practical Strategies from Dramatically Improved Schools. Alexandria, VA: ASCD. <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books2001/schmoker>
- Stiggins, R. J. (1997). Student-Centered Classroom Assessment. (2nd ed.). Columbus, OH: Merrill.

7. FOCUSED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A strong emphasis is placed on training staff in areas of most need. Feedback from learning and teaching focuses extensive and ongoing professional development. The support is also aligned with the school or district vision and objectives.

<http://www.k12.wa.us/ProfDev/default.aspx>

OSPI Professional Development

<http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/pd0cont.htm>

Finding Time for Professional Development; Evaluating Professional Growth And Development

<http://www.nsd.org/standards/indexc.cfm>

Standards for Staff Development (revised 2001)

http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/rpl_esys/pdlitrev.htm

Results-oriented Professional Development by Thomas Guskey

www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/6/cu12.html

Staff development. Adult Learning and Change by Jocelyn Butler

www.teachers.net

www.ncrel.org/pd/toolkit.htm Professional Development. Learning from the Best

Calhoun, E. F. (1994). *How to Use Action Research in the Self-Renewing School*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Cunningham, W. G. and Gresso, D. W. (1993). *Cultural Leadership: The Culture of Excellence in Education*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. See chapter 8, Personal and Professional Development; chapter 9, Employee Empowerment.

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- Washington State Professional Development Planning Guide: Part One Teacher Professional Development, Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction, July 2003
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8. SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The school has a safe, civil, healthy and intellectually stimulating learning environment. Students feel respected and connected with the staff, and are engaged in learning. Instruction is personalized and small learning environments increase student contact with teachers.

www.goodschools.gwu.edu/pubs/book.htm

NCCSR Publications. Bookmark. November 2001. Improving School Climate

www.learningfirst.org/publications/safeschools/

Every Child Learning: Safe and Supportive Schools

www.wested.org/policy/pubs/full_text/pb_ft_csr23.htm

Policy Brief 23, Class Size Reduction: Lessons Learned from Experience

www.prrac.org/pubs_ain.php

Add It Up: Using Research to Improve Education for Low-Income and Minority Students.

www.ed.gov/pubs/ClassSize/practice.html#student

Class Size and Students At Risk

Instructional Practice and Student Behavior

<http://ton.edu/sdrg//depts.washington.edu/sdrg/>

Social Development Research Group, U of W., David Hawkins and Richard Catalano

www.safetyzone.org/ www.nwrel.org/mentoring/index.html

National Mentoring Center Clearinghouse on School Safety

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/>

School Mental Health Project, Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor

www.epaa.asu.edu/epaa/vol9.html

Committing to Class-Size Reduction and Finding the Resources to Implement It: A Case Study of Resource Reallocation

- Adelman, H. & Taylor, L. (1999) New Directions in Enhancing Educational Results: Policymaker's Guide to Restructuring Student Support Resources to Address Barriers to Learning, The Center for Mental Health in Schools, UCLA, Los Angeles.
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Failure.” in Stringfield, S. & Land, D. (Eds.). Educating At-Risk Students. NSSE Yearbook. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

9. HIGH LEVELS OF COMMUNITY AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT

There is a sense that all have a responsibility to educate students, not just the teachers and staff in schools. Families, as well as businesses, social service agencies, and community colleges/universities all play a vital role in this effort.

www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine.html

The Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE)

FINE is a national network interested in promoting strong partnerships between educators, families, and communities.

www.hfrp.org

Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP)

HFRP strives to increase the effectiveness of public and private organizations as they promote child development, student achievement, healthy family functioning, and community development.

www.responsiveeducation.org

Institute for Responsive Education: Connecting School, Family and Community (IRE)

IRE is a research, policy, and advocacy organization that encourages and supports school, family and community partnerships for academic success. This site includes tools and materials for public use.

www.sedl.org/connections/

National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools

This center bridges research and practice by linking people with research-based information and resources that they can use to effectively connect schools, families, and communities.

www.chswpirc.org

Children’s Home Society: Parent Information and Resource Center

This is a virtual resource center to help parents in Washington State support their child’s education and increase connections between schools and families.

www.sedl.org/connections

“A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement” by Anne T. Henderson and Karen L. Mapp. National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2002

A synthesis of research that examines the evidence that family and school connections make a difference in student success. Includes effective strategies to connect schools, families and communities.

The Essential Conversation – What Parents and Teachers Can Learn from Each Other”, by Sara Lawrence Lightfoot, Random House NY/Toronto, 2003.

This book is a collection of interviews that capture the dynamics of the relationship between parents and teachers and identifies new principles and practices for improving family-school relationships.”

www.wssda.org Washington State School Directors Association

www.pta.org National Parent Teacher Organization

www.pta.org/parentinvolvement/standards/index.asp

National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs

www.wastatepta.org/resources/Parent%20Resources/intro.htm

You Can Make a Difference for Public Schools, Family Involvement Guide
10 Ways to Help Your Child Succeed

www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/pa0cont.htm School Improvement Pathways
Family and Community. Supporting Ways Parents and Families Can Become Involved in Schools

www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000 Family, school, and community involvement.

www.edletter.org/ Harvard Review, past issues. September/October 1997. Six types of involvement.

www.ed.gov/pubs/Reform/ School based reform. Role of parents and community in school reform.

www.ed.gov/pubs/SER/ParentComm/index.html
Studies in Education Reform: Parent and Community Involvement in Education

www.nwrel.org/scpd/re-engineering/keyissues/schoolfamily.shtml
Students at the Center. School, Family, and Community Partnerships

<http://www.prrac.org/additup.pdf>
Add It Up: Using Research to Improve Education for Low-Income and Minority Students

Baker, E., Herman, J., and Bain, J. What Makes a Good School? A Guide for Parents Seeking Excellence in Education. (undated) Los Angeles, CA: The Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards & Student Testing.

<http://cresst96.cse.ucla.edu/CRESST/Files/GoodSchool.pdf>

Cotton, K. (1995). Research You Can Use to Improve Results. Alexandria, VA: ASCD and Portland, OR: NWREL. See chapter 8, Parent and Community Involvement.

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Darling-Hammond, L. (1999). The Right to Learn. Blueprint for Creating Schools that Work. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

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Washington State PTA. Family Involvement Guide.
<http://www.wastatepta.org/resources/familyinvolvementguide.PDF>

MEANINGFUL STUDENT INVOLVEMENT Selected Resources

Organizations :

At The Table Initiative. The At the Table initiative aims to promote youth governance in schools and communities across the United States. Their website features a resource catalogue, success stories, a calendar of events, and “What’s At the Table,” a resource collection. Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 6930 Carroll Avenue, Suite 502, Takoma Park, MD 20912 www.atthetable.org

Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform. They have a special focus on student action that is taking root through several local programs and partnerships, supporting advocates who want to work directly with youth on issues of school reform. 407 South Dearborn Street, Suite 1500, Chicago, IL 60605. http://www.crosscity.org/advocacy_action/advocacy_youth.html

ESRC Network Project: Consulting Pupils about Teaching and Learning. This program, based at Cambridge University in the UK, has a variety of aims, among which is seeking to integrate a theory of teaching, learning and attainment with a theory of student voice and participation in school change. Their information includes useful publications that document research findings and conference proceedings, among other details.
www.consultingpupils.co.uk

Forum for Youth Investment. This organization has gathered several years' experience in youth development and education reform to design a youth-centered vision of schooling. They identified five areas, including Climate, Instruction & Curriculum, Connections, Outcomes, and Engagement. Their material explores this vision and offers new insights for school improvement. 7064 Eastern Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20012.
<http://www.forumforyouthinvestment.org/issues/ythcntrdreform.htm>

Project 540. "Students turn for a change." A project at Providence College that is currently engaging 100,000 students nationwide in dialogues about school change. Their website includes facilitation guides, a resource collection, and discussion forums for registered students. Providence College, FAC 407, Providence, RI 02918 www.project540.org

SoundOut. A national resource center promoting meaningful student involvement in school change. Their website offers exciting examples, powerful research studies, effective classroom tools, and dozens of other resources. SoundOut.org features an online discussion forum with users around the world and a monthly newsletter. SoundOut.org c/o The Free Child Project, PO Box 6185, Olympia, WA 98507. info@soundout.org www.soundout.org

What Kids Can Do. This organization documents the value of young people working with teachers and other adults on projects that combine powerful learning with public purpose. They have several projects promoting student voice and action, including "Students as Allies," "Students Push for Equity in School Funding," and more. Their materials include webpages and publications created by students and adults dedicated to student voice. P.O. Box 603252, Providence, RI 02906. www.whatkidscando.org

Youth on Board. This program prepares youth to be leaders and decision makers in their schools and strengthens relationships between youth and adults through publications, customized workshops, and technical assistance. 58 Day Street Somerville, MA 02144.
www.youthonboard.org

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www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/ed440049.html.
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School Improvement Planning Process Guide

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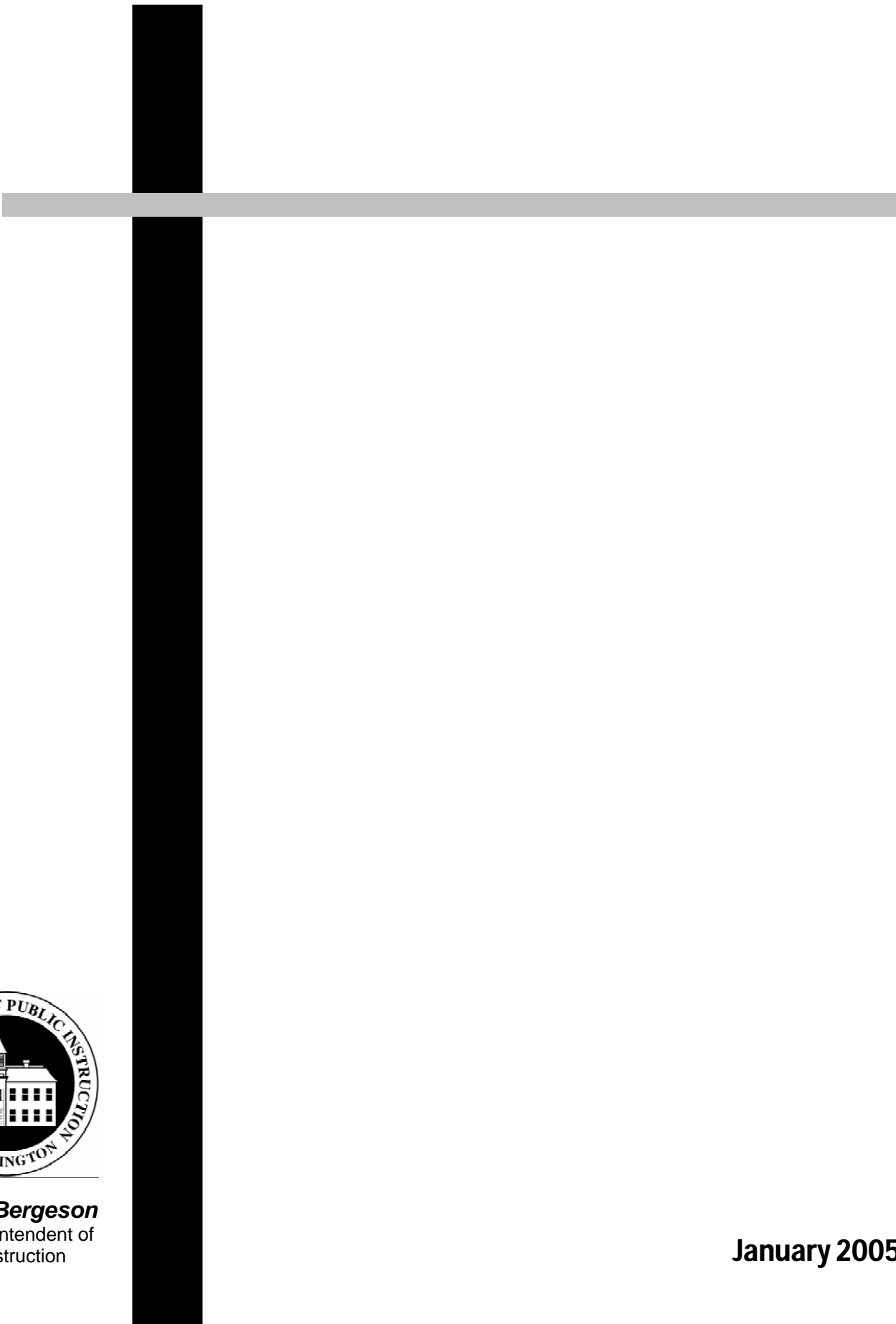
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Dr. Terry Bergeson
State Superintendent of
Public Instruction

January 2005