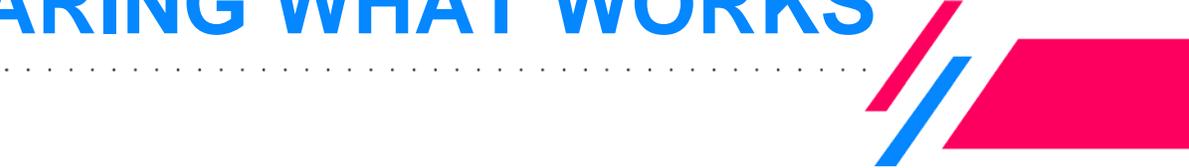


Supporting Schools

A Framework for Effective Practices

SHARING WHAT WORKS



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EDUCATION

Ensuring a bright future for every child

OFFICE OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

The vision of the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) is to create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens. The work of the Office of School Improvement (OSI) is driven by a commitment to help every school and district become rated “C” or higher. To that end, this vision, along with the mission and goals of the Mississippi State Board of Education sets the roadmap for changing the trajectory of public education in Mississippi.

The OSI is responsible for supporting the **systemic** improvement of the lowest performing schools and districts in the State of Mississippi. Along with this responsibility, the OSI oversees the implementation of state legislation regarding low performing schools (Miss. Code § 37-18-5).

The MDE, along with school districts and schools is working with a sense of urgency to improve the lowest performing schools and increase access to quality learning opportunities for children in Mississippi’s schools. The MDE, in collaboration with leaders, teachers, and other high leverage partnerships will seek and promote the use of instructional practices with strong evidence of effectiveness. These high-leverage partnerships and organizations include the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), Center on School Turnaround, Johns Hopkins University, Chiefs for Change, Academic Development Institute, and the Mississippi State University Research and Curriculum Unit. Each partner provides a degree of support and assists with promoting initiatives across the agency. Such partnerships enable the OSI to subscribe to the following theory of action:

If the Office of School Improvement supports district and school leaders in building their capacity to support school reform, **then** district and school leaders’ capacity to make courageous decisions that are necessary to drive change will be strengthened; **and**

If district and school leaders make courageous decisions that are necessary to drive change, **then** they will be equipped to create and sustain conditions (e.g., leadership, teaching and learning, family and community engagement) necessary for schools to fully and effectively impact measurable student outcomes.

The CCSSO released 10 Principles of Effective School Improvement Systems in 2017. These principles articulate a heightened urgency for processes that should be a mainstay of systems focused on transforming schools that have the greatest need. CCSSO leads a charge to “*drive dramatic improvements for students in our lowest performing schools and schools with the most significant achievement gaps*”. The 10 principles, which support the OSI’s theory of action, also demonstrate a strong commitment to leverage the greatest equalizer for children in our state – a quality education. The principles, manifested at the state, district, and school level,

will go far in closing the significant achievement gaps. Practical descriptions of each principle are provided below. The full document can be found in the resource library at ccsso.org.

- If everything is a priority, nothing is.
- Put students at the center so that every student succeeds.
- If you want to go far, go together.
- One size does not fit all.
- Failing to plan is planning to fail.
- Talent matters.
- Put your money where your mouth is.
- What gets measured gets done.
- Ideas are only as good as they are implemented.
- Do not be a flash in the pan.

This theory of action is further supported by operationalized indicators of effectiveness by focusing on:

- crafting and refining planning efforts around providing strong leadership;
- ensuring effective teaching and improved instruction; increasing learning time;
- strengthening school instructional programs; using data to inform instruction for continuous improvement;
- improving school safety and discipline;
- providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement;
- and ensuring schools receive ongoing assistance and related support.

As such, the Center on School Turnaround's research addressing domains of rapid improvement is being utilized to provide a framework by which Mississippi's efforts can be aligned to four key areas driving school improvement work. The following domains provide a needed framework for categorizing improvement work as the state transitions to implementation requirements of The Elementary and Secondary Education Act as reauthorized under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) for identifying and supporting its low performing schools. They are:

- Transformational Leadership
- Talent Development
- Instructional Transformation
- Culture Shift

As supported by evidence, when using these drivers, schools have experienced improved and sustainable student outcomes. To achieve these outcomes, this system of focus must be systematically, collectively and effectively implemented. It is the position of the MDE that local educational agency (LEA) implementation efforts - when done with fidelity-strongly influence the potential for improved student outcomes. Additionally, as with any school improvement initiative, there must exist a high level of effective practices and processes that are routinely performed at each level (state, district, and school). This approach provides a view of implementation efforts at not only the school and district, but also at the state level.

OVERVIEW OF DOMAINS

Each domain described below assists educational leaders at the school, district, and state level as they critically consider high-leverage decision point to support struggling schools.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Transformational leadership ensures that there are coordinated efforts by the team charged with executing improvement and leading those involved to a shared vision. Rapid improvement efforts are also prioritized, and the urgency of these efforts is explicitly communicated. Short- and long-term goals are routinely monitored, and targeted support is customized to meet improvement needs.

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Rapid school transformation requires experienced and dedicated personnel at the school, district and state level. As such, there must exist a commitment to recruit, develop, retain, and sustain passionate talent. Additionally, targeted professional learning opportunities are essential to *talent development* while clear performance expectations are essential to transform underperforming schools. Talent development requires intensive effort to select devoted and experienced personnel at each level. The commitment to recruit, sustain, develop, and retain talent is essential to the clear demonstration of performance expectations.

INSTRUCTIONAL TRANSFORMATION

Instructional transformation requires system-wide support that involves an analysis of relevant student data with appropriate responses to student learning goals. Effective instructional practices must include strong standards-based instruction aligned with the Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards to provide and opportunities for academic growth provided for every student.

CULTURE SHIFT

A *culture shift* is required for rapid school transformation; this involves open dialogue, trust, and shared accountability and equity. Building a culture focused on student learning and achievement requires concerted efforts and engaged stakeholders. Cooperatively, students and families must pursue educational goals geared toward academic excellence. Additionally, school, district and state leaders must work toward ensuring that “every student has access to the resources and educational rigor they need at the right moment in their education regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, family background or income”

A strong community gives attention to the culture both inside and outside the school, gathering input from stakeholders and gauging perceptions about the school and the transformational effort. A positive school climate reflects a supportive and fulfilling environment, learning conditions that meet the needs of all students, people sure of their roles and relationships in student learning, and a culture that values trust, respect and high expectations.

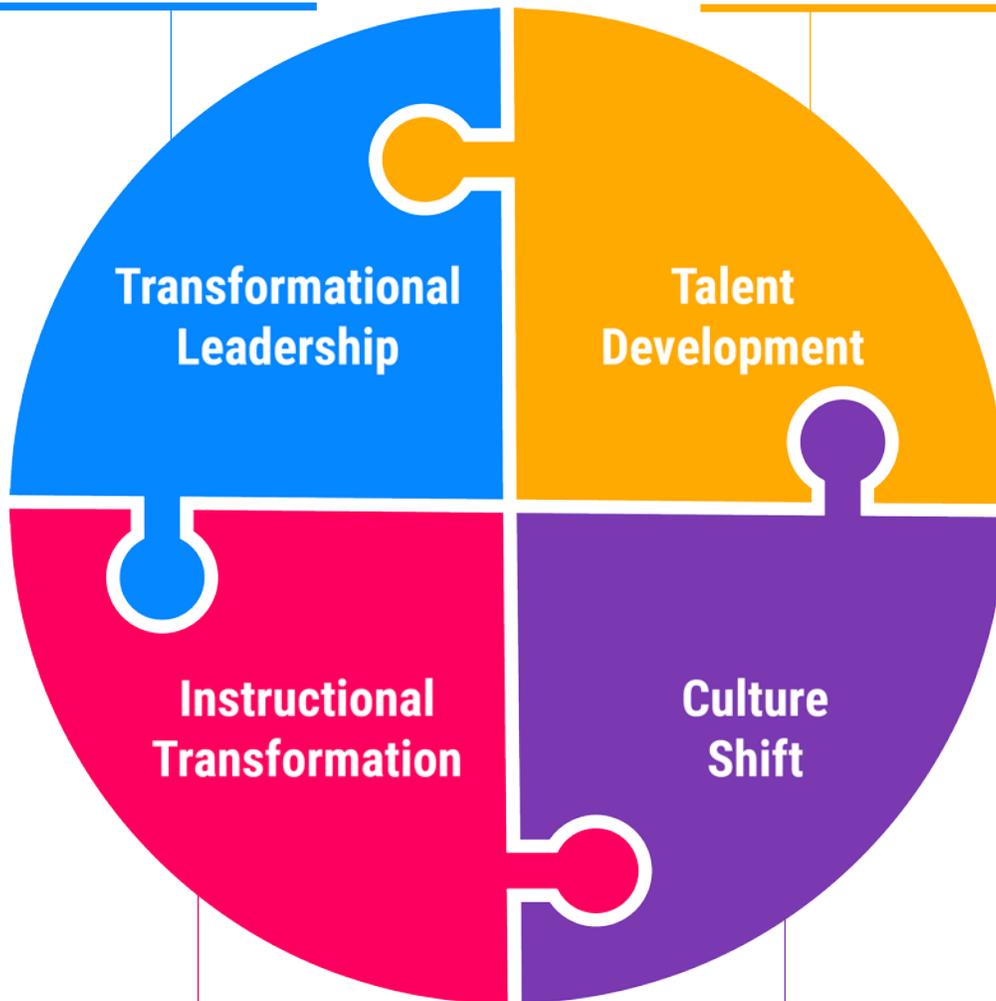
RAPID SCHOOL TRANSFORMATION

PRACTICES

- Prioritize improvement and communicate its urgency
- Monitor short- and long-term goals
- Customize and target support to meet needs

PRACTICES

- Recruit, develop, retain, and sustain talent
- Target professional learning opportunities
- Set clear performance expectations



PRACTICES

- Diagnose and respond to student learning goals
- Provide rigorous evidence-based instruction
- Remove barriers and provide opportunities

PRACTICES

- Build a culture focused on student learning and outcomes
- Solicit and act upon stakeholder input
- Engage students and families in pursuing education goals

THEORY OF ACTION

If the OSI supports district and school leaders in building capacity to support school reform, *then* district and school leaders’ capacity to make courageous decisions that are necessary to drive change will be strengthened; and *If* district and school leaders make courageous decisions that are necessary to drive change, *then* they will be equipped to create and sustain conditions necessary for schools to fully and effectively impact measurable student outcomes.

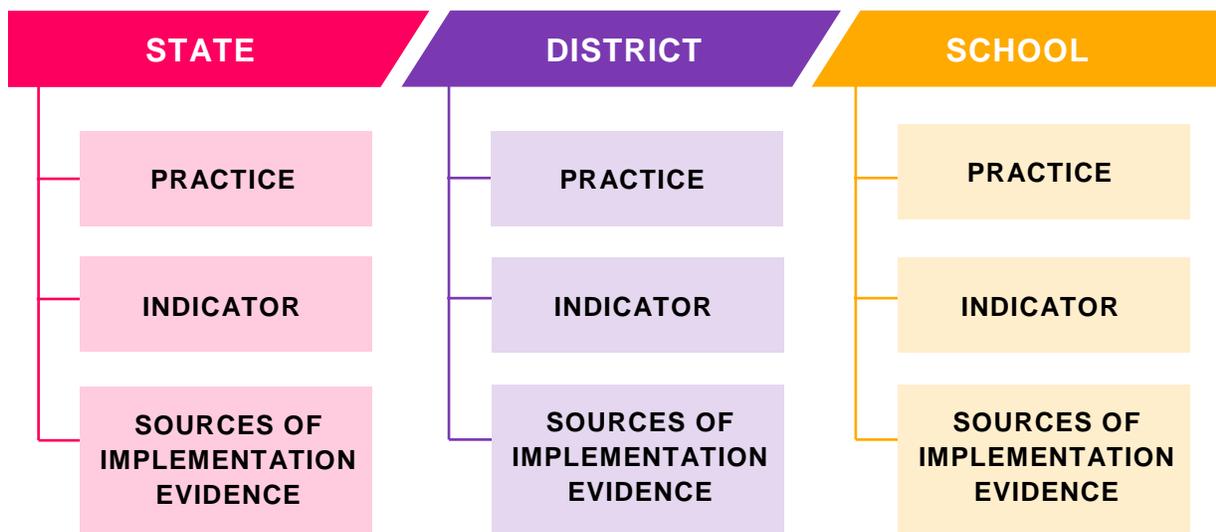
INPUTS ▶ Who supports the work?	ACTIVITIES ▶ What does the SEA do?	OUTPUTS ▶ What happens immediately?	OUTCOMES ▶ What are our goals?	IMPACT What are our long-term results?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of School Improvement • Office of Federal Programs • Office of Teaching and Leading • Office of Secondary Education and Career Technical Education • Local Education Agencies • Office of School Safety • Office of Elementary Education and Reading • Office of Special Education • Office of Professional Development 	Support LEAs and schools in implementing the <i>“Support Schools: A Framework for Practice”</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor implementation of <i>“Support Schools: A Framework for Practice”</i> • Deliver professional support that builds capacity • Provide targeted resources to address specific needs 	All schools and districts are rated “C” or higher	Systems in place that support improved and sustained student achievement
PLANNED WORK		INTENDED RESULTS		

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The purpose of this guide is to provide schools and LEAs with a framework of foundational support as they navigate the process for improving the schools in their communities. This guide is developed around a system of support geared toward integrating the Center for School Turnaround’s Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement (2017) into the state’s process for supporting schools and districts. The domains identified in this framework are: **Transformational Leadership, Talent Development, Instructional Transformation, and Cultural Shift.**

The domains and practices identified in the framework can apply at the state, the district and the school level. Users of this guide will have the opportunity to examine how each domain is leveraged at each level and aligned to effective practice, indicators, and sources of implementation evidence (see graphic below).

DOMAINS IN ACTION



- **“Practice”** provides the reader with an example of the actual application of a specific domain.
- **“Indicator”** provides the reader with an example of how to enact the practice.
- **“Sources of Implementation Evidence”** provides the reader with an example of specific documentation to support the indicator.

According to the Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement (2017),” **transformational leaders** at the state, district, and school levels drive initiatives to facilitate rapid, significant improvement for low-performing schools. Because the state education agency, districts, and schools function collectively as a system, leaders’ initiatives at any one level of the system affect other levels. At all levels in the system, leaders make it a priority to elevate the performance of low-achieving schools, and they communicate the urgent need for so that all students receive the high-quality education they deserve. The policies, structures, resources, and personnel leaders put in place to rapidly and significantly improve the schools reflect the leaders’ strong commitment to this work. **Transformational leaders** catalyze and organize the coordinated work of the staff charged with implementing efforts to rapidly improve schools, harnessing their efforts and drawing them to a shared vision of success. Leaders at all levels understand their role in ensuring; they develop and execute data-informed plans that are customized to local needs to guide and monitor initiatives; and they accept responsibility for results” (p.5).

HOW DIFFERENT LEVELS OF THE SYSTEM CAN ENACT THIS PRACTICE

STATE

PRACTICE

Establish an office for supporting policy, programmatic, and implementation efforts that guide school improvement work. Share clear expectations for high-performing schools and provide exemplars of schools that have been successful in improving outcomes. Create overarching expectations for improved student outcomes that are clearly articulated and measurable and that can be adapted for local context. Leverage communication efforts, public forums, and other strategies to gain community and parental support. Conduct site visits to observe plan implementation, and focus support based on identified areas of growth.

INDICATOR

State leadership sets a clear direction for the state with a stated vision, theory of action, goals, and strategies for the state’s continuous and sustained improvement.

SOURCES OF IMPLEMENTATION EVIDENCE

Direction document, agendas, and meeting minutes demonstrating where the vision has been shared.

DISTRICT

PRACTICE

Select senior level district official(s) to lead local school improvement efforts including overseeing principal support and growth, policy expansion, district-wide data inquiry, and overall strategic plan direction. Provide tiered support to principals and school leadership teams to help create action items, timelines, and responsibilities aligned with their school's improvement plan. Identify and prioritize the needs of schools; ensure needs are supported by data and school capacity.

INDICATOR

District Leadership Team (or other team appointed by leadership) oversees the district's improvement benchmarks and other transformational school initiatives.

SOURCES OF IMPLEMENTATION EVIDENCE

Names and roles of team members, description of team's responsibilities, and meeting minutes, sign-in sheets, and agendas that reflect focused work.

SCHOOL

PRACTICE

Build leadership teams, cultivate leadership capacity, and foster **reflective practices** for school transformation. Provide faculty and staff with opportunities to be engaged in the school's improvement work. Disseminate leadership responsibilities among faculty and staff to strengthen commitment, increase collaboration, and provide faculty and staff with opportunities to improve their professional practice. Create and update the school's **action plan** to reflect clear short- and long-term goals.

INDICATOR

Communication strategies, as outlined in a plan developed by school leadership, are used to routinely share improvement priorities faculty and staff, with students, and with the school's broader community.

SOURCES OF IMPLEMENTATION EVIDENCE

Communication plans; examples of communication to staff, faculty, and community articulating improvement priorities (e.g., agendas, sign-in sheets, emails, letters, staff/community meeting minutes).

QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS

Center on School Turnaround (2017, p. 9) recommends the following questions to help focus the work for **DOMAIN 1: Transformational Leadership**:

- What are your school goals?
- How do you define success regarding meeting school goals?
- What structure(s) or processes are in place to assess whether your efforts are successful?
- Who will be held accountable for creating timelines and updating the team regarding continuous progress?
- How will your progress on data-referenced goals be monitored, tracked, and communicated?
- What measures will be monitored to identify successes and challenges in student outcomes for school transformation?
- Who will be held accountable at each level to monitor and report changes in student outcomes?
- Who will determine what interim assessments will be administered and analyzed?
- Who will be held accountable for analyzing and reporting the results of the interim assessments?
- How will the results of the interim assessments be reported to everyone involved?
- What tools, systems, and structures need to be established to give school leaders adequate decision-making authority and **autonomy**?
- How will you publicly advocate for your lowest-performing schools and your process? What steps need to be established for this advocacy process and who will be held accountable?
- What is your plan for engaging parents and other community stakeholders in your process?
- How do you define flexibility and how will you offer it to your leadership?
- What tools, systems, and structures are needed to provide flexibility to leadership?
- How will you consider the sustainability of improvement efforts from the start?

STRATEGIES FOR LEVERAGING FEDERAL DOLLARS

Aligned to the Four Domains

Transformational Leadership

To support Transformational Leadership, a district could reserve Title I Part A funds for district-managed initiatives such as the following:

TITLE I PART A

District Level Spending

Title I Part A can support such activities as the following:

- Recruit principals with specific skills necessary for low-achieving Title I schools
- Financial incentives and awards to retain qualified and effective principals
- Principal academy to build the leadership capacity of principals in Title I schools
- Providing feedback to and evaluations of principals of Title I schools

School Level Spending

A Title I school operating a schoolwide program could spend Title I Part A funds on activities such as the following:

- Activities in the list for district-level spending, but carried out at the school level
- Recruiting principals with the needed skills to implement rigorous interventions
- Screening and identifying external partners, as appropriate, and/or
- Designing multi-pronged strategies for changing the culture and improving teaching and learning

TITLE II PART A (Districts not required to allocate to schools)

Title II Part A can support such activities as the following:

- Partnering with organizations to provide leadership training
- Developing opportunities to collaborate, problem-solve, and share best practices
- An evaluation and support system for principals
- Professional development for principals and other school leaders
- Programs and activities that:
 - Increase effective instruction for students with disabilities and for English learners
 - Increase knowledge of instruction in the early grades
 - Developing feedback mechanisms to improve school working conditions

IDEA PART B (Districts not required to allocate to schools)

IDEA Part B funds can support school leadership activities relating to students with disabilities, such:

- Training principals and other leaders on
 - Supporting teachers to improve instruction for students with disabilities
 - Specific strategies to support students with disabilities, such as progress monitoring and data-driven decision-making to improve interventions, placement decisions, and staffing decisions
- Establishing data systems to support students with disabilities

https://www.centeronschoolturnaround.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CST_Leveraging-Federal-Dollars.pdf

According to the Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement (2017) indicates, that “turnaround requires competent and committed personnel at every level and in every position. Policies and procedures to identify, select, place, retain, and sustain these personnel, especially teachers and school-level leaders, are a precursor to school, and placement of teachers and leaders in schools should be approached with equity in mind. competencies are identified and used to select and develop teachers, model teachers, and leaders. At all levels, educators utilize and hone their instructional and transformational leadership to build capacity in those they supervise by continually balancing support with accountability” (p.13).

HOW DIFFERENT LEVELS OF THE SYSTEM CAN ENACT THIS PRACTICE

STATE

PRACTICE

Implement a statewide teacher and principal evaluation system focused on providing high-quality feedback to improve practice. Provide ongoing training and support to observers of instructional practices. Provide districts with data on teacher and leader practice. Inform educator preparation programs using teacher and leader practice data. Provide guidance on the implementation of Grow-Your-Own strategies to districts to create multiple pathways to certification. Provide districts with guidance on the implementation of teacher leadership practice. Develop and implement a comprehensive professional learning system that uses data to inform professional learning

INDICATOR

State provides and/or supports programs to prepare and develop transformational leaders and teachers.

SOURCES OF IMPLEMENTATION EVIDENCE

Schedules, agendas, and participation records.

DISTRICT

PRACTICE

Ensure that observers of instructional practice are using the Professional Growth System with fidelity. Ensure that teachers and leaders are provided with data driven professional learning opportunities. Co-construct partnerships with educator preparation programs to address teacher shortage challenges. Identify which district-level roles will contribute to school improvements efforts. Review and refine job expectations and descriptions at the central office level to support rapid school improvement.

INDICATOR

District uses multiple measures and data sources to assess teacher and leader transformational capacity, with special attention to readiness and potential, and uses these tools to select and develop teachers and leaders to serve in transformational contexts.

SOURCES OF IMPLEMENTATION EVIDENCE

Assessment criteria and tools.

SCHOOL

PRACTICE

Provide teachers with high-quality feedback and professional learning opportunities aligned to that feedback. Provide teachers with leadership opportunities that impact the instructional program in the school. Ensure that professional learning opportunities are purposeful, individualized and linked specifically to school improvement efforts.

INDICATOR

School leadership hires teachers and leaders from an identified talent pool for transformational context developed by the district and conducts its own recruitment to ensure a staff of teachers and leaders well-matched to school needs.

SOURCES OF IMPLEMENTATION EVIDENCE

Documentation of hiring source for teachers, teacher leaders, coaches, and assistant principals.

QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS

Center on School Turnaround (2017, p. 17) recommends the following questions to help focus the work for **DOMAIN 2: Talent Development**

- Do you use competencies for the identification of teachers for low-performing schools? If so, what are the competencies for teachers in your context?
- Do you use competencies for the identification of principals for low-performing schools? If so, what are the competencies for leaders in your context?
- If you do not use competencies, how will you identify the skills and aptitudes needed for turnaround leaders and/or teachers? What resources are available?
- What tools, systems, and structures need to be established for leaders to maintain a balance of support with accountability at all levels? Do the tools, systems, and structures need to vary depending on the level (state, district, or school)?
- Who will be responsible for identifying the hiring needs of schools?
- How will you create consensus and understanding of teacher placements and assignments? What will you use to match school needs with teacher and leader competencies?
- What are the professional learning needs of leadership and staff? What steps need to be accomplished to fulfill those needs?
- How will high-performing teachers be leveraged to expand their positive influence outside of just their own classrooms?
- Who will be responsible for providing and leading the professional learning opportunities and experiences for leadership and staff? How can you ensure that professional learning will be rapid, responsive, and customized?
- Who will be held accountable for setting clear performance expectations for staff?
- How will they determine those expectations? How will staff be assessed or held accountable for achieving those performance expectations?

STRATEGIES FOR LEVERAGING FEDERAL DOLLARS

Aligned to the Four Domains

Talent Development

TITLE I PART A

District Level Spending

Title I Part A district level may use funds for such activities as the following:

- Financial incentives and rewards for teachers who serve in low-performing Title I schools, to attract and retain qualified and effective teachers
- Professional development for educators who support Title I students, which can include:
 - Hiring instructional coaches to work with educators who support Title I students
 - Paying stipends to educators to participate in professional development, and/or

School Level Spending

Title I Part A School Level may use funds for such activities as the following:

- Recruitment and retention of effective teachers, particularly in high-need subjects
- Induction programs for new teachers
- Creating time within the school day for teachers to plan collaboratively
- Instructional coaches to provide high-quality, school-based professional development
- Training to support activities such as:
 - Accelerating the acquisition of content knowledge for English learners
 - Career and technical education programs
 - Parent and family engagement
- Equipment and training needed to compile and analyze student achievement data

TITLE II PART A (Districts not required to allocate to schools)

Examples of activities that Title II Part A can support include the following:

- Evaluation system for auditing the quality of evaluation
 - Initiatives to recruit, hire, and retain effective teachers who do not meet state standards
 - Recruiting qualified individuals from other fields to become teachers
 - Programs and activities that:
 - Increase knowledge of instruction for the early grades
 - Provide training to support the identification of students who are gifted and talented
 - Promote high-quality instruction and instructional leadership in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects, including computer science
-

IDEA PART B (Districts not required to allocate to schools)

Examples of activities that IDEA Part B can support include the following:

- Hiring effective, dually certified special education teachers
 - Paying for teachers to participate in high-quality certification programs that increase effectiveness in improving outcomes for students with disabilities
 - Job-embedded professional development for special education teachers that leads to certification
 - Providing site-based, job-embedded professional development for general education teachers that leads to certification in special education
 - Evidenced-based induction programs
-

https://www.centeronschoolturnaround.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CST_Leveraging-Federal-Dollars.pdf

According to the Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement (2017) “espouses that improvement in student learning outcomes depends on system-wide support for change in the classroom instruction. Effective instructional practice, including strong standards-based instruction, data-based planning, differentiation and individualization, research-based pedagogical approaches, and classroom management, must be identified and supported at the school, district, and broader system level. Schools cultivate an environment of both high expectations and support for students’ academic accomplishment. While districts and schools strive to focus their organization’s attention on the in-school factors impacting student performance, they also attempt to address factors that are traditionally non-school-based so that every student comes to the task of learning ready for the challenge” (p. 21).

HOW DIFFERENT LEVELS OF THE SYSTEM CAN ENACT THIS PRACTICE

STATE

PRACTICE

Provide guidance in how educators receive continuous feedback, so they can modify their instruction in a timely manner to improve student outcomes. Focus on professional development programs where educators regularly apply what they are learning on the job and continually improve their craft. Provide districts with access to tools for tracking, analyzing, and sharing data on school performance. Offer systemwide instructional experiences, developed in partnership with educational stakeholders, that guarantees that all educators have the knowledge and talents needed to help every student excel. Provide guidance in transforming how teachers are credentialed, licensed, and participate in professional development opportunities. Identify ways to make educator preparation and development more meaningful and tailored to teacher needs and individual student needs.

INDICATOR

State provides training and coaching to district and school leadership to develop a systematic approach to implementation and evaluation of instructional practices.

SOURCES OF IMPLEMENTATION EVIDENCE

Dates of training and coaching sessions, with documentation of content delivered and participants rosters.

DISTRICT

PRACTICE

Develop rigorous partnerships between executive-level central office staff and school principals that seek to support the principal growth as an instructional leader. Redesign each central office's purpose to support principal and student growth. Such a restructuring involves each entity working with diverse data sets to identify a clear set of qualities and appropriate services to aid schools in building capacity for quality teaching and learning. Develop protocols to support teachers in identifying individual student needs in addition to developing professional development opportunities that aid in strengthening teacher instructional capacity.

INDICATOR

District provides and supports learning opportunities for school leaders and teachers to design and implement flexible schedules and extended instructional opportunities to meet student needs.

SOURCES OF IMPLEMENTATION EVIDENCE

Agendas, materials, and participant lists from learning opportunities.

SCHOOL

PRACTICE

Regularly examine student data and systems of support while creatively examining instructional practices. Conduct frequent analysis of the curriculum and pacing. Map lessons that encompass the Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards and monitor equity in curricula exposure. Identify avenues that students can use to recover lost academic opportunities. Conduct Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) with a focus on improved instructional outcomes. Offer opportunities for teachers to analyze individual data to meet student needs.

INDICATOR

School teams use student learning data and instructional strategy data to design fluid instructional groupings to meet individual student needs.

SOURCES OF IMPLEMENTATION EVIDENCE

Individual student data, team meeting minutes, and descriptions of instructional groupings.

QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS

Center on School Turnaround (2017, p. 25) recommends the following questions to help focus the work for **DOMAIN 3: Instructional Transformation**

- How could fluid grouping of students be implemented and supported?
- How will alignment of instruction with standards be facilitated?
- What are possible barriers to student learning and how can each level of the system can work to remove those academic and non-academic barriers in schools?
- How will teachers guide and track the progress of each student? What tools, systems, and structures need to be established?
- Who will establish these tools, systems, and structures?
- What learning benchmarks will teachers use to guide and track the progress of students?
- What types of early warning systems will identify students who may be falling behind?
- Who will be held accountable for establishing those early warning systems?
- What interventions are used to help students who are falling behind? How might those be adjusted or changed? Who will be included in the team to adjust or change those interventions?
- How can funds be leveraged by your schools to provide additional academic supports, extended learning opportunities, credit recovery programs, and virtual courses?
- Are there stakeholders who would be willing to financially support these programs?
- How do teachers challenge students that are exceeding their current level of schooling?
- What types of programs do your schools offer?
- What types of higher-level assessments and courses have your schools offered in the past and have they worked well to challenge gifted or advanced students? What can schools do differently to challenge gifted or advanced students?
- How do teachers give students authentic experiences, to connect their interests with real-world applications?

STRATEGIES FOR LEVERAGING FEDERAL DOLLARS

Aligned to the Four Domains

Instructional Transformation

TITLE I PART A

District Level Spending

A district could reserve Title I Part A funds for district-managed initiatives such as the following:

- Summer school
- Professional development relevant to instructional transformation
- Instructional materials

School Level Spending

A Title I school operating a schoolwide program could, if consistent with the school's needs assessment and schoolwide plan, spend Title I Part A funds on activities such as the following:

- High-quality preschool or full-day kindergarten and services to facilitate the transition from early learning to elementary education programs
- Reorganizing the school day to give teachers time to collaborate
- Evidence-based strategies to accelerate the acquisition of content knowledge for English learners
- Career and technical education programs to prepare students for postsecondary education and the workforce
- A ninth-grade academy and/or programs to support the transition to high school

TITLE II PART A (Districts not required to allocate to schools)

Title II Part A can support activities such as the following:

- Community-of-learning opportunities for principals and other school leaders
 - Induction or mentoring programs for new educators, designed to improve instruction
 - Reducing class size to a level that is evidence-based
 - Programs and activities that:
 - Increase effective instruction for students with disabilities and English learners
 - Increase knowledge on instruction in the early grades
 - Provide training to support the identification of students who are gifted and talented
 - Training related to school conditions for student learning, such as:
 - Safety, peer interaction, drug and alcohol abuse, and chronic absenteeism
 - Referrals for students affected by trauma or mental illness
 - How to prevent and recognize child sexual abuse
-

IDEA PART B (Districts not required to allocate to schools)

Examples of activities that IDEA Part B could support include the following:

- Purchasing technology hardware and software
 - Supporting the use of assistive technology (AT), including:
 - Purchasing AT devices and services for students with disabilities
 - Establishing AT labs or lending libraries; and
 - Response-to-intervention (RTI) activities, including:
 - Math interventions for students with disabilities, including evidence-based math screening instruments and intervention materials
 - Positive behavioral supports for students with disabilities
-

https://www.centeronschoolturnaround.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CST_Leveraging-Federal-Dollars.pdf

According to the Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement (2017), “a successful depends on many people working together to achieve extraordinary results. Attaining the necessary level of commitment to achieve these results require a dramatic culture shift toward high academic expectations. A culture fuses strong community cohesion with an academic press; one without the other is insufficient. Leadership establishes the structures and opportunities for faculty and staff to work together around common goals, engendering a culture of mutual respect, shared responsibility, and focused attention on student learning. State, district, and school leaders engage families to support their children’s learning and the overall transformation effort. A strong school community attends to the culture both inside and outside the school, gathering input from stakeholders and gauging perceptions about the school and the effort. Students are challenged and supported to aim higher, work harder, and realize the satisfaction of accomplishment. A positive school climate reflects a supportive and fulfilling environment, learning conditions that meet the needs of all students, people sure of their roles and relationships in student learning, and a culture that values trust, respect, and high expectations” (p.29).

HOW DIFFERENT LEVELS OF THE SYSTEM CAN ENACT THIS PRACTICE

STATE

PRACTICE

Provide the guidance and a framework for supporting strong engagement across multiple stakeholder groups (parents, teachers, students). Monitor for the effective use of federal resources allocated to support parental engagement activities. Identify and provide exemplars of schools/communities that demonstrate strong stakeholder engagements. Provide instruments and protocols for conducting local perception surveys, forms, and focus groups to districts and schools; provide opportunities for parents and community members to provide feedback at state and local levels. For families, educators and communities establish ownership by supporting family engagement initiatives for improved student outcomes. Provide on-going professional development so that families and educators have the knowledge to build a solid partnership, become informed decision-makers, and advocate for all children. Provide guidance in establishing and implementing a community-based engagement council to aid in school transformation. Ensure that equity, in terms of resources and rigor, is accessible to every student regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background, and/or family income.

INDICATOR

State provides districts and schools with examples of climate surveys and protocols for administration, analysis, and reporting of the survey, which districts may adopt or use to inform development of their own climate survey. State provides support and assistance to ensure that educational resources are equitable and appropriate for every student at the right moment in their education.

SOURCES OF IMPLEMENTATION EVIDENCE

Sample surveys and descriptions of how they are accessed and used.
Review of data (expenditures, access to resources, assignment of human capital) to examine equitable practices

DISTRICT

PRACTICE

Establish the structures and opportunities for faculty and staff to work together around common goals, promoting a culture of mutual respect, shared responsibility, and focused attention on student learning. Create an environment that supports collaboration among schools and leaders in the district. Provide opportunities to share best practices and implement procedures to solicit and collect feedback from stakeholders. Leverage resources to support family engagement in the school improvement process. Ensure equitable resources are available to every student by developing partnerships with education and business leaders.

INDICATOR

Expects each school to nurture a culture that recognizes and celebrates academic achievement by including the expectation in position descriptions and evaluation criteria for school personnel. Measure academic proficiency and set clear expectations for equity inclusion.

SOURCES OF IMPLEMENTATION EVIDENCE

Position description from district policy; evaluation of equity policies, resource allocation data (per pupil, teacher distribution, proportionality).

SCHOOL

PRACTICE

Implement procedures where student academic and behavioral successes are shared and celebrated. Develop ways for constituents to share concerns and ideas. Establish systems for collaborative work, staff and student recognition, and open dialogue. Maintain a positive learning environment conducive to learning. Develop systems to recruit and retain highly qualified educators. Develop and implement schoolwide equity training to give raise awareness levels and sensitivity towards underserved populations.

INDICATOR

School facilitates two-way communication and face-to-face association among school personnel, students, and students' families to advance student learning with a focus on ensuring equity.

SOURCES OF IMPLEMENTATION EVIDENCE

Parent meetings, state-of-the-school addresses, open houses, and community forums with a description of each activity posted on the school website.

QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS

Center on School Turnaround (2017, p. 33) recommends the following questions to help focus the work for **DOMAIN 4: Cultural Shift**

- How will you invite parents and community members to engage in meaningful dialogue?
- How will you include their ideas in your process for creating a culture that values effort, respect, and academic achievement?
- How will you include members of the community in your efforts? How will you encourage them to participate in the process?
- How will you communicate the progress of your efforts? Who will be held accountable for this communication at each level? How will the path be made clear to everyone?
- How will you solicit input from stakeholders regarding their perceptions about your schools? What tools need to be created to solicit that input? Who will be held accountable in developing and distributing those tools?
- What will you need to do to adjust perceptions about your schools, if negative, from your stakeholders? How will you show them your school's progress?
- How will you share assessment results explanations with your families? What will need to be in place to ensure that all families have access to this information? How will you assist families in educational planning?
- How will you ensure equitable practices around staffing and resource allocation?

STRATEGIES FOR LEVERAGING FEDERAL DOLLARS

Aligned to the Four Domains

Culture Shift

TITLE I PART A

District Level Spending

Title I Part A funds to reserve at least 1 percent for parent and family engagement activities, which must include at least one of the following:

- Professional development on parent and family engagement strategies
- Disseminating information on best practices focused on parent and family engagement
- Collaborating with community-based organizations
- Expanding a parent resource room to increase the bilingual materials
- Conducting forums throughout the school year to support parents of Title I students

School Level Spending

Title I Part A funds may support activities such as the following:

- Family literacy programs
- Attendance-incentive programs
- Recognition events that highlight successful student academic performance
- Student-advisory systems that connect teachers to small groups of students
- Creating time within the school day for teacher collaboration
- Coordinating health, nutrition, and social services with local service providers
- Counseling and school-based mental health programs
- After-school homework-support programs

TITLE II PART A (Districts not required to allocate to schools)

Examples of activities that Title II Part A can support include the following:

- A mentoring and induction program
 - Career opportunities and advancement initiatives for effective teachers
 - Professional development aimed at cultural competency and responsiveness
 - Strategies and systemic interventions designed to better attract, place, support, and retain effective educators who are culturally competent and culturally responsive
 - Incentives for effective educators to teach in high-need schools
-

IDEA PART B (Districts not required to allocate to schools)

Examples of activities that IDEA Part B can support include the following:

- Job-embedded professional development for all teachers who work with students with disabilities, including time for collaboration
 - Universal Design for Learning, a framework that maintains high achievement expectations for all students, including students with disabilities and students who are limited English proficient
 - A schoolwide data system that measures school climate in a rigorous way so that progress can be assessed and measured
 - Implementing behavior interventions and positive behavioral supports to improve school climate
 - Secondary transition services, including career assessment, exploration, and development tools, for students with disabilities
-

https://www.centeronschoolturnaround.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CST_Leveraging-Federal-Dollars.pdf

COMPREHENSIVE AND TARGETED SUPPORT AND IMPROVEMENT

The following pages detail a comprehensive overview of identification, support, and exit criteria for Comprehensive and Targeted Support, as well as timelines and supports for each category.

Differentiated school improvement efforts will include a focus on building local capacity through coaching, professional development for teachers and administrators, and improved parent and community engagement. As the role of the state, district, and school are examined, it becomes evident that realistic improvement of outcomes take place primarily in the classroom, that is, due to teacher quality. This supports the reality that “true” agents of change rests in the district, school and the individual classroom.

COMPREHENSIVE AND TARGETED SUPPORT AND IMPROVEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

STATE	DISTRICT	SCHOOL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide policies and procedure • Provide professional development • Provide instructional resources • Develop rigorous academic standards • Administer statewide assessments • Distribute funds • Monitor outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the School improvement process • Provide needs driven, outcome based, professional development • Evaluate evidence based instructional resources • Recruit highly effective and qualified teachers and leaders • Monitor the implementation of a high quality and focused improvement plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a robust plan to improve academic outcomes • Provide high quality instruction day-to-day, bell-to-bell • Provide differentiated professional development • Administer formative assessments that align to the standards • Provide a safe and orderly climate



WHY WAS MY SCHOOL IDENTIFIED?

School Identification Method

1. graduation rate less than or equal to 67% (identification in 2018-19 based on 2017-18 data; subsequent identification every 3rd year);

OR

2. bottom 5% of Title IA schools (identification in 2018-19 based on 2017-18 data; subsequent identification every 3rd year);

OR

3. previously identified Additional TSI school with 3 consecutive years of subgroup proficiency performance (ELA or math) at or below that of all students in the bottom 5% of Title IA schools (identification for this group to begin in 2021-2022).

RESPONSIBILITIES

School has Primary Responsibility

- Complete comprehensive needs assessment to determine root cause(s) focus areas: Achievement, Fiscal and Human Resources, Instructional Capacity, Early Warning Mechanisms, Multi-Tiered System of Support Implementation effectiveness
- Develop plan to address identified areas and resource inequities; must be board approved and aligned with Title I Schoolwide Plan; document plan and implementation progress in Mississippi Schools Obtaining Academic Results for Success (MS SOARS); all activities in plan must be based on the required levels of evidence (Strong, Moderate, Promising)
- Create a school leadership team to regularly address progress toward areas causing underperformance
- Reserve 20% of its Title I allocation to support evidence-based interventions for areas causing underperformance (all activities must be based on the required levels of evidence (Strong, Moderate, Promising)
- Present monthly progress update on plan implementation to District Leadership team and local school board (must be a standing item on the District Leadership Team and School Board Agenda)

District has Primary Responsibility

- Review and provide feedback on plan prior to submitting for board approval (Instructional and Fiscal Review)
- Track progress of school, quarterly, to ensure fidelity to plan implementation
- Ensure district leadership team engages schools in professional learning through collaborative discussions on current and relevant achievement data, school culture/climate, and instructional decisions
- Conduct end-of-year summative review of school's progress for the school year (may be revised once accountability results provided in the subsequent year)
- Establish and regularly engage P16 Community Engagement Council (Monthly) - *school or district level*

MDE has Primary Responsibility

- Approve, monitor, and review plan
- Funding to support evidence-based interventions for improving student achievement
- Provide technical assistance as requested/needed; (Level 1-provide face to face job-embedded coaching support; Level 2-provide virtual coaching support)
- Provide professional development that is focused on key areas for improvement/aligned to comprehensive needs assessment areas (Quarterly regional leadership meetings and webinars) participation required.

HOW CAN I EXIT?

EXIT (School Identification Method #1) after 3 years, graduation rate above 67%.

EXIT (School Identification Method #2 and #3) after 3 years:

- above the bottom 5% of Title IA schools;

AND

- an increase in the accountability letter grade;

OR

- an increase in the accountability letter grade that crosses over the midpoint of the letter grade. (For example, bottom half of "F" to top half of "F")

TARGETED SUPPORT AND IMPROVEMENT

WHY WAS MY SCHOOL IDENTIFIED?

School Identification Method

- Subgroup in lowest 50% of overall accountability index;

AND

- Subgroup in lowest quartile of 3-year average gap-to-goal;

AND

- Subgroup scores in the lowest quartile of 3-year improvement toward gap-to-goal closure

Schools with a subgroup meeting all 3 of the above criteria will be rank-ordered *annually*, using overall accountability index, and bottom 5% of all schools not identified for CSI will be identified for TSI

RESPONSIBILITIES

School has Primary Responsibility

- Complete comprehensive needs assessment to determine root cause(s) focus areas: Achievement, Fiscal and Human Resources, Instructional Capacity, Early Warning Mechanisms, Multi-Tiered System of Support Implementation effectiveness
- Develop plan to address identified focus areas for subgroup(s), must be board approved and aligned with Title I Schoolwide Plan – document plan and implementation progress in Mississippi Schools Obtaining Academic Results for Success (MS SOARS) all activities in plan must be based on the required levels of evidence (Strong, Moderate, Promising)
- Create a school leadership team to regularly address progress toward areas causing underperformance
- Reserve 20% of its Title I allocation to support evidence-based interventions for subgroup(s) causing underperformance (all activities must be based on the required levels of evidence (Strong, Moderate, Promising)
- Present monthly progress update on plan implementation to District Leadership team and local school board (must be a standing item on the District Leadership Team and School Board Agenda)
- Notify parents regarding identification and subgroup(s) performance annually

District has Primary Responsibility

- Review and provide feedback on plan prior to submitting for board approval (Instructional and Fiscal Review)
- Track progress of school in meeting subgroup(s) needs, on a quarterly basis, to ensure fidelity to plan implementation
- Ensure district leadership team engages schools in professional learning through collaborative discussions on current and relevant achievement data, school culture/climate, and instructional decisions
- Conduct end-of-year review summative review of school's progress for the school year (may be revised once accountability results provided in the subsequent year)
- Establish and regularly engage parents and community members

MDE has Primary Responsibility

- Funding to support evidence-based interventions for improving student achievement (if available)
- Provide access to technical assistance as requested/needed
- Provide access to professional development that is focused on key areas for improvement/aligned to comprehensive needs assessment areas (Quarterly regional leadership meetings and webinars)

HOW CAN I EXIT?

EXIT

- School no longer meets criteria that led to identification

AND

- 3-year average growth in subgroup proficiency exceeds target proficiency growth rate projected for the same statewide subgroup

School Identification Method for Additional TSI for all schools, 3-year average subgroup performance is at or below that of all students in the lowest performing schools (bottom 5% of Title IA schools) (identification in 2018-19 based on 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 data; subsequent annual identification based on most recent 3-year data trend)

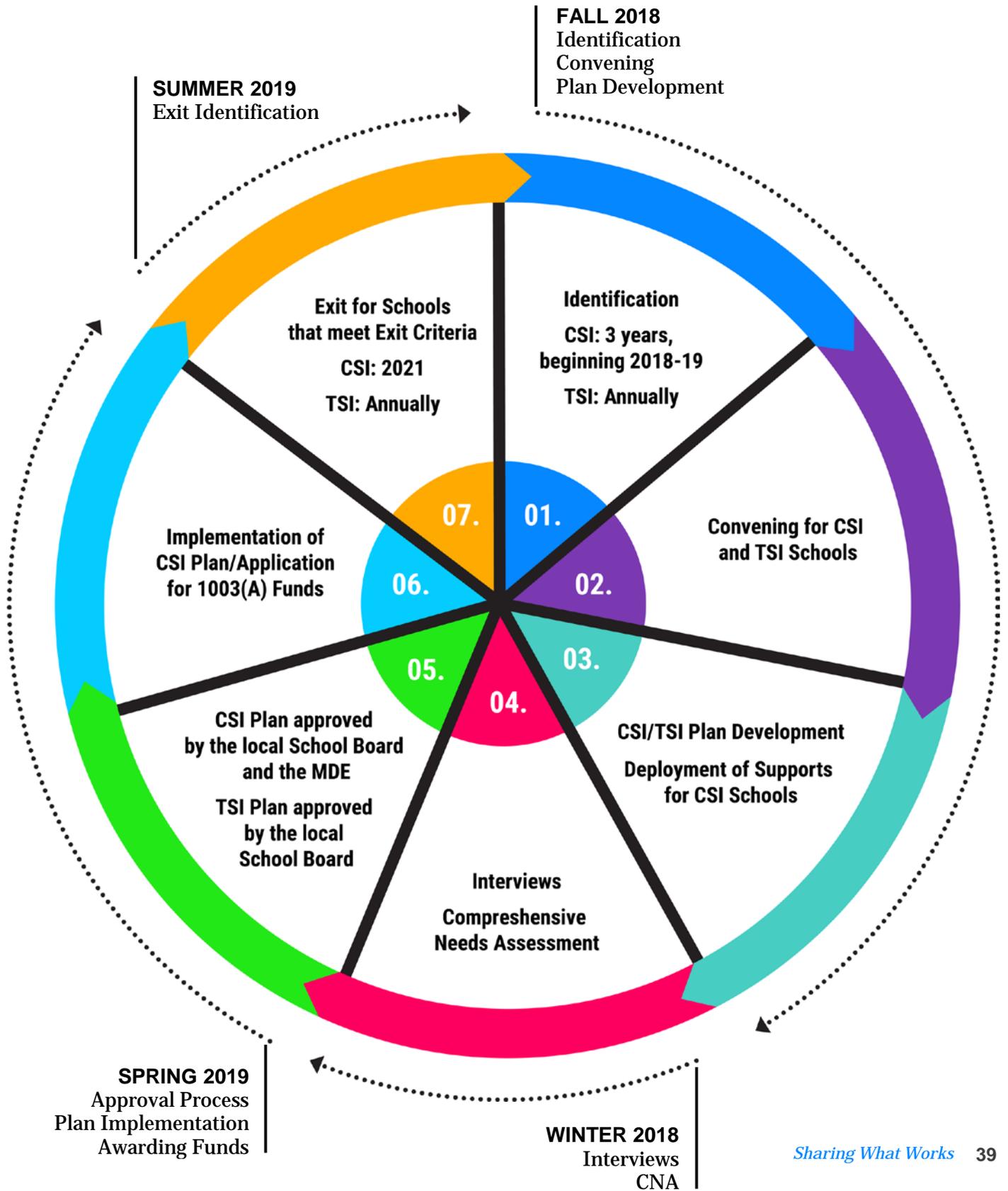
EXIT Subgroup performance above that of all students in the lowest performing schools (bottom 5% of Title IA schools), based on identification year data;

AND

- an increase in the accountability letter grade;
- OR**
- an increase in the accountability letter grade that crosses over the midpoint of the letter grade. (For example, bottom half of "F" to top half of "F")

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT CYCLE FOR

COMPREHENSIVE AND TARGETED SUPPORT AND IMPROVEMENT



01 IDENTIFICATION

- Schools will be identified based on 2018 Final Accountability Results

02 COMPREHENSIVE & TARGETED SUPPORT IMPROVEMENT CONVENING

- Identified schools will attend meeting on requirements for implementing the school improvement cycle as described in the Mississippi Succeeds Plan

03 CSI & TSI PLAN DEVELOPMENT

- Districts will develop a CSI Plan with stakeholder engagement
- Districts and schools will develop a TSI Plan with stakeholder engagement

04 INTERVIEWS FOR TSI AND CSI SCHOOLS

- Interviews with CSI and TSI schools will be scheduled and held to support plan development

05 CSI & TSI PLAN APPROVAL

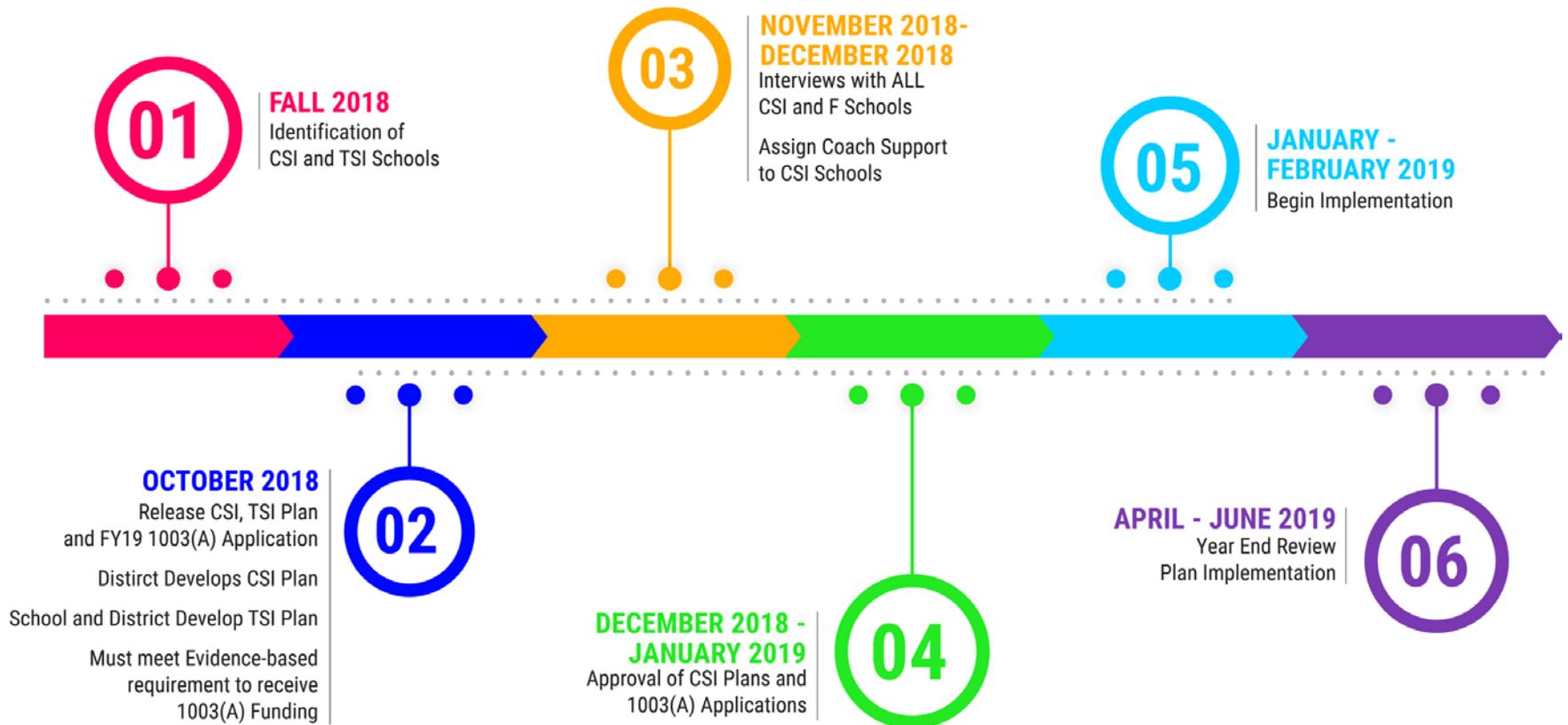
- The final CSI Plan must be approved by the local school board and the MDE
- The final TSI Plan must be approved by the local school board
- Plan implementation begins once approval has been granted
- Program monitoring as scheduled through SEA/LEA Monitoring Process

06 1003A APPLICATION RELEASE AND APPROVAL

- Approved CSI Plans will be supported with 1003A funds to implement evidence-based interventions included in the plan at the strong, moderate, or promising level for eligible schools
- Approved TSI Plans, as funds are available will be supported with 1003A funds to implement evidence-based interventions included in the plan at the strong, moderate, or promising level for eligible schools
- Plan implementation begins once approval has been granted
- Program monitoring as scheduled through SEA monitoring process

07 EXIT (determined by established Mississippi Succeeds timeline)

- CSI Schools will be eligible for exit in three (3) years (for example: schools identified in 2018 will be eligible for exit in 2021)
- TSI Schools will be eligible for exit annually



EVIDENCE-BASED INTERVENTIONS

The Mississippi Department of Education supports school district efforts to invest in proven strategies that have an evidence base for effectiveness toward improving outcomes for children in our schools. The factors that undergird the MDE's position include but are not limited to the expectations and requirements bulleted below.

- State law requires that we categorize all programs and activities based on evidence of effectiveness (Mississippi Code 27-103-159).
- Federal law requires that we select and implement evidence-based programs when using federal funds (Every Student Succeeds Act).
- The Mississippi Board of Education has established the expectation that we are to create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce. To obtain this vision, we must use evidence-based practices/programs with a proven track record of success.

The term 'evidence-based,' when used with respect to a state, district, or school activity, means an activity, strategy, or intervention that has demonstrated a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) defines four tiers of evidence, directing grantees to spend funds on practices with higher levels of evidence where the evidence base is strong.

USEFUL EVIDENCE-BASED RESOURCES

- [What Works Clearinghouse](#): developed by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) (not categorized in ESSA evidence tiers; studies included here meet only most rigorous evidence criteria)
- [Results First Clearinghouse Database](#): developed by the Pew Charitable Trusts (not categorized in ESSA evidence tiers; evaluates interventions as rated by eight national databases)
- [Best Evidence Encyclopedia](#): developed by the Center for Data-Driven Reform in Education at Johns Hopkins University (not categorized in ESSA evidence tiers)
- [Evidence for ESSA](#): developed by Johns Hopkins University (categorized in ESSA evidence tiers)
- [RAND report on school leadership interventions under ESSA](#): (categorized in ESSA evidence tiers)
- [Next Generation High Schools](#): developed by the U.S. Department of Education (not categorized in ESSA evidence tiers)

- [Roadmap to Evidence Based Reform for Low Graduation Rate High Schools](#): developed by Every Student Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University
- [Results for America](#): RFA advocates for programs and practices that use evidence and data to improve quality
- [Preschool Curriculum Report](#): developed by the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning
- [SERP Institute](#): Strategic Education Research Partnership
- [SIG Network](#): a library of relevant tools and resources
- [Synthesis of Evidence Resources](#): a synthesis of resources and literature on evidence-based practices in school improvement
- [National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance](#): NCEE conducts unbiased, large-scale evaluations of education programs supported by federal funds
- [Ed Reports](#): educator-led, evidence-based reviews of K-12 instructional materials
- [Implementing Evidence-Based Literacy Practices](#): developed by the Florida Center for Reading Research
- [Evidence Provisions within ESSA](#): MDE PowerPoint Presentation, March 2017
- <http://new.every1graduates.org/>: Every 1 Graduates
- <http://new.every1graduates.org/cshsc/>: Cross State High School Collaborative (CSHSC)
- <https://www.darden.virginia.edu/darden-curry-ple/>: Partnership for Leadership in Education
- <https://www.centeronschoolturnaround.org/resource/support-for-rapid-school-improvement-how-federal-dollars-can-be-leveraged-for-systematic-improvement>: Support for Rapid School Improvement: How Federal Dollars Can Be Leveraged for Systemic Improvement
- https://www.centeronschoolturnaround.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CST_Leveraging-Federal-Dollars.pdf: Strategies for Leveraging Federal Dollars
- <http://www.hsredesign.org/getting-started/needs-assessments/> : Cross State High School Collaborative. MDE Partnership with CCSSO and the *Everyone Graduates Center*

DEFINITION OF “EVIDENCE-BASED” IN THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT

ESSA’s definition of “evidence-based” includes 4 levels of evidence. The top 3 levels require findings of a **statistically significant effect** on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on:

(1) Strong

- At least 1 well-designed and well-implemented **experimental** study (i.e., randomized)

(2) Moderate

- At least 1 well-designed and well-implemented **quasi-experimental** study (i.e., matched)

(3) Promising

- At least 1 well-designed and well-implemented **correlational** study with statistical controls for selection bias

Required for school improvement plans funded by 7% set aside (Section 1003)

AND

Eligible for a priority under 7 competitive grants

The 4th level is designed for ideas that do not yet have an evidence base qualifying for the top 3 levels above. Given the requirement in the second bullet below to examine the effects of these ideas, this evidence-*building* level can be referred to as “under evaluation.”

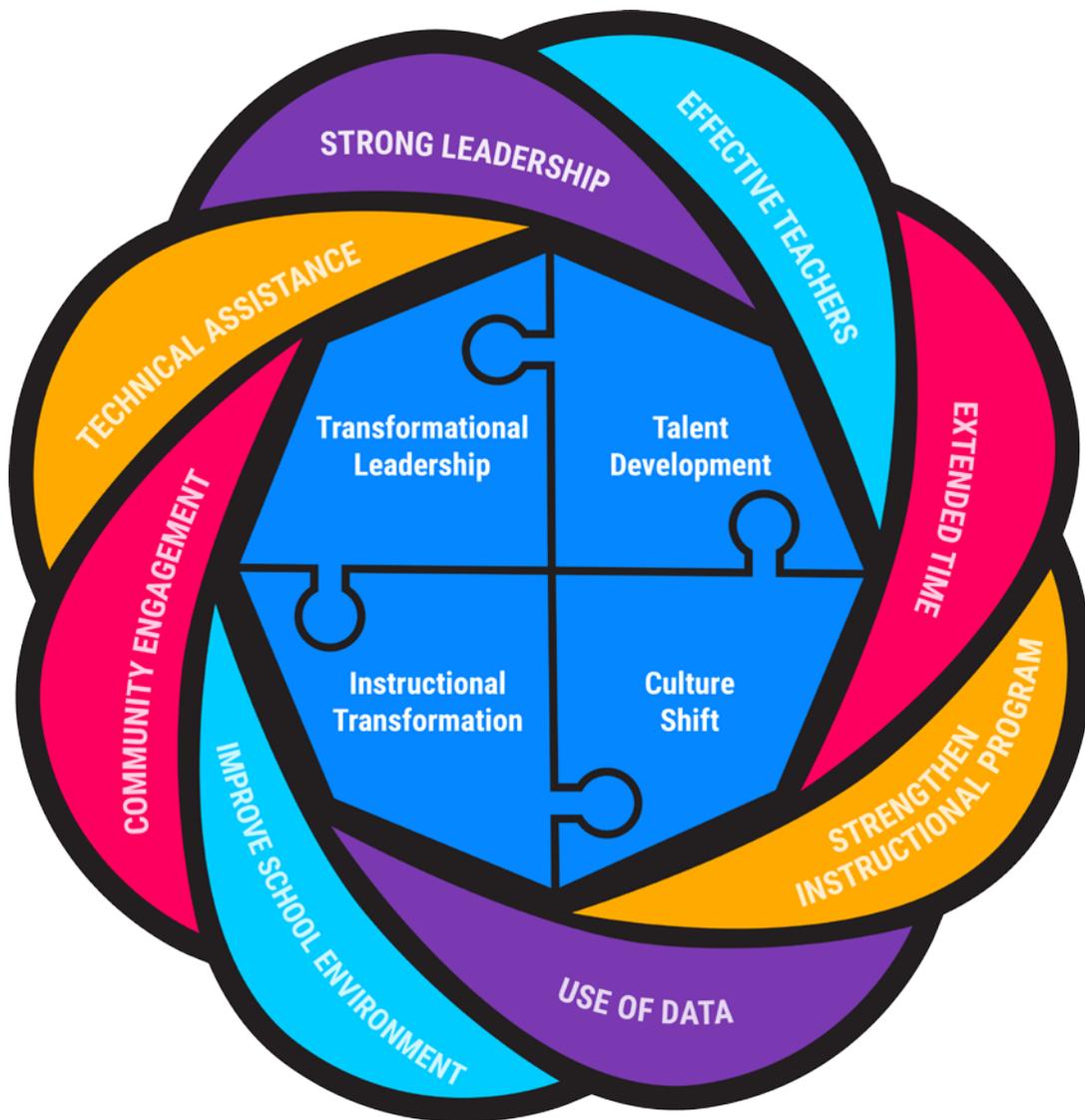
(4) Under Evaluation

- **Demonstrates rationale** based on high-quality research or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes
- Includes **ongoing efforts to examine the effects** of such activity, strategy, or intervention

Included for all other uses of “evidence-based”

FOUR DOMAINS CROSSWALK

For the past four years, school and district leadership teams, supported by the Office of School Improvement, have guided improvement efforts through the eight principles, and their corresponding behavioral indicators. The principles, utilizing Mississippi Schools Obtaining Academic Results for Success (MS SOARS) were a means to operationalize the work. As the Office of School Improvement shifts the guiding framework to reflect the Center on School Turnaround's Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement, a crosswalk has been developed and is provided to support schools. While the crosswalk aligns the Four Domains with the Indicators of Effective Practice, there are also connections to the Council of Chief State School Officers' 10 Principles of Effective School Improvement Systems.



SCHOOL TURNAROUND

FOUR DOMAINS FOR RAPID IMPROVEMENT

Transformational Leadership

- Prioritize improvement and communicate its urgency
- Monitor short- and long-term goals
- Customize and target support to meet needs

- Providing strong leadership

- If everything is a priority, nothing is
- One size does not fit all
- Failing to plan is planning to fail
- Put your money where your mouth is

Talent Development

- Recruit, develop, retain, and sustain talent
- Target professional learning opportunities
- Set clear performance expectations

- Ensuring that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction
- Ensuring that the school receives ongoing, intensive technical assistance and related support

- Talent matters

Instructional Transformation

- Diagnose and respond to student learning goals
- Provide rigorous evidence-based instruction
- Remove barriers and provide opportunities

- Redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration
- Strengthening schools' instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is researched-based, rigorous, and aligned with state academic content standards
- Using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including providing time for collaboration on the use of data

- Put students at the center so that every student succeeds
- What gets measured gets done
- Ideas are only as good as they are implemented

Culture Shift

- Build a culture focused on student learning and effort
- Solicit and act upon stakeholder input
- Engage students and families in pursuing education

- Establishing a school environment that improves school safety and discipline and addresses other nonacademic factors that impact student achievement such as students' social, emotional, and health needs
- Providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement

- If you want to go far, go together
- Don't be a flash in the pan

INDICATORS OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

10 PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SYSTEMS

CROSS STATE HIGH SCHOOL COLLABORATIVE

MDE Partnership with CCSSO and the *Everyone Graduates Center*

<http://www.hsredesign.org/getting-started/needs-assessments/>

The Cross State High School Redesign Collaborative (CSHSC) is a joint effort of seven participating states, **Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, and Ohio** supported by the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University School of Education, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and Civic Enterprises.

The CSHSC's goal is to use The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to enable struggling high schools in high-needs communities to reinvent themselves and become institutions that propel adolescents to adult success in their communities in the 21st century. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires schools identified in need of comprehensive improvement to conduct needs assessments to identify current areas of challenge and areas where evidence-based improvement strategies need to be applied. To support high school redesign the needs assessment process must be both more tailored and comprehensive than traditionally has been the case. Evidence-based high school redesign needs to be built upon a deep understanding of:

- The educational challenges the school must meet
- The current and possible post-secondary destinations of the school's students
- The existing system which leads to current outcomes
- The prior reform history at the school
- How the perceptions of students, school staff, and community of current challenges and desired outcomes, may or may not align

School eligible to participate in the collaboration are:

- High Schools identified as Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)
 - Graduation Rate at or below 67%
 - High Schools in the bottom 5%

This work is divided into three phases:

- Early identification of schools based upon 2017 graduation rates
- Final CSI identification, plan development and application for funding phase, and
- Implementation of the CSI.

During Phase I high schools with a 2017 graduation rate at or below 67% were identified as CSI schools in September 2018 based on 2018 Accountability Data.

Phase I activities allowed participants to:

- Be exposed to districts of innovation
- Hear about the various types of innovation and evidence-based interventions taking place in secondary schools
- Be invited to participate in the Exploring Networked Improvement Communities that are part of the Mississippi Innovation Laboratory Network (MSILN), and
- Be part of their own networked community around evidence-based redesign/ interventions for high schools

During Phase II, the remainder of CSI were identified based on performance of the bottom 5% in September 2018. (ESSA requires all CSI to complete and submit a plan to address areas that caused the identification). To reduce duplication, it is recommended that high schools use their CSI or TSI Plan as their restructuring plan that is required by state statute.

During Phase III, full implementation of the CSI Plan will take place with on-going Technical Assistance from the *Everyone Graduates Center* at Johns Hopkins University. Plan monitoring will take place collaboratively between the Offices of School Improvement and Secondary Education.

WHAT THE EVIDENCE SAYS

Summaries of the evidence-base for high school improvement are presented in this section. The evidence is organized according to the *four key drivers of student outcomes* that schools can directly influence and impact.

Organizing Adults

How the adults are organized in a school building is a foundational driver of school outcomes. If the daily interactions of teachers, administrators, partners, parents AND students – leave them more satisfied, more productive, more supported, more connected and more engaged, evidence shows that the school will achieve greater success. The evidence is clear, there are better and worse ways to organize the adults in high schools to achieve these ends. The resources are arranged among the following categories:

- Teacher Teams
- Distributed Leadership

- Leadership, Development, and Support
- Building Relationships and Trust
- Data-Driven Decision Making (Follow the Evidence)
- Whole School Organizations
- Continuous Improvement Processes

Putting Students at the Center

“Putting Students at the Center” examines the evidence-based research that highlights core principles to consider when redesigning high school experiences to increase student motivation, engagement, and active participation in their learning. Student apathy, lack of motivation, and non-productive behaviors are factors which limit learning and underlie teacher stress and burnout. The longer students are in school, the less hopeful they become regarding their educational experiences. This has resulted in higher rates of student and teacher absenteeism, higher rates of student suspension and less learning ultimately.

A shift can occur that places students at the center when redesigning schools, which aligns students’ interest with teachers and administrators desired outcomes. The resources below are divided into five actions schools can do to reach these goals:

- Positive Developmental Relationships with Adults
- Building Hope, Purpose, and Agency
- Safe and Trusting School Climates
- Student Voice
- Early Warning and Multi-Tiered Student Response Systems and Community Support

Teaching & Learning

The resources for this driver are organized into seven key domains. Each of these may require substantial changes in teacher practice and preparation, and as such, it will be important to give considerable thought on how best to stage and sequence these actions and build the necessary teacher, leader, and student capacities in supportive and achievable manners. The seven evidence-based key domains:

- Creating Challenging & Caring Classrooms
- Using the Learning Sciences
- PLCs and Instructional Coaching
- Aligned Standards, Instruction, & Assessments
- Using Formative Assessments to Tailor Instruction and Supports

- Integrating Social, Emotional, and Academic Development
- Developing Cultural Competencies

Postsecondary Options

Postsecondary pathways present the evidence and research base which identify core principles to consider when redesigning the high school experience to enable all students to graduate with a strong and supported pathway to postsecondary success. Design pathways should reflect the high school as a beginning and not an ending. The evidence indicates that the core principals are:

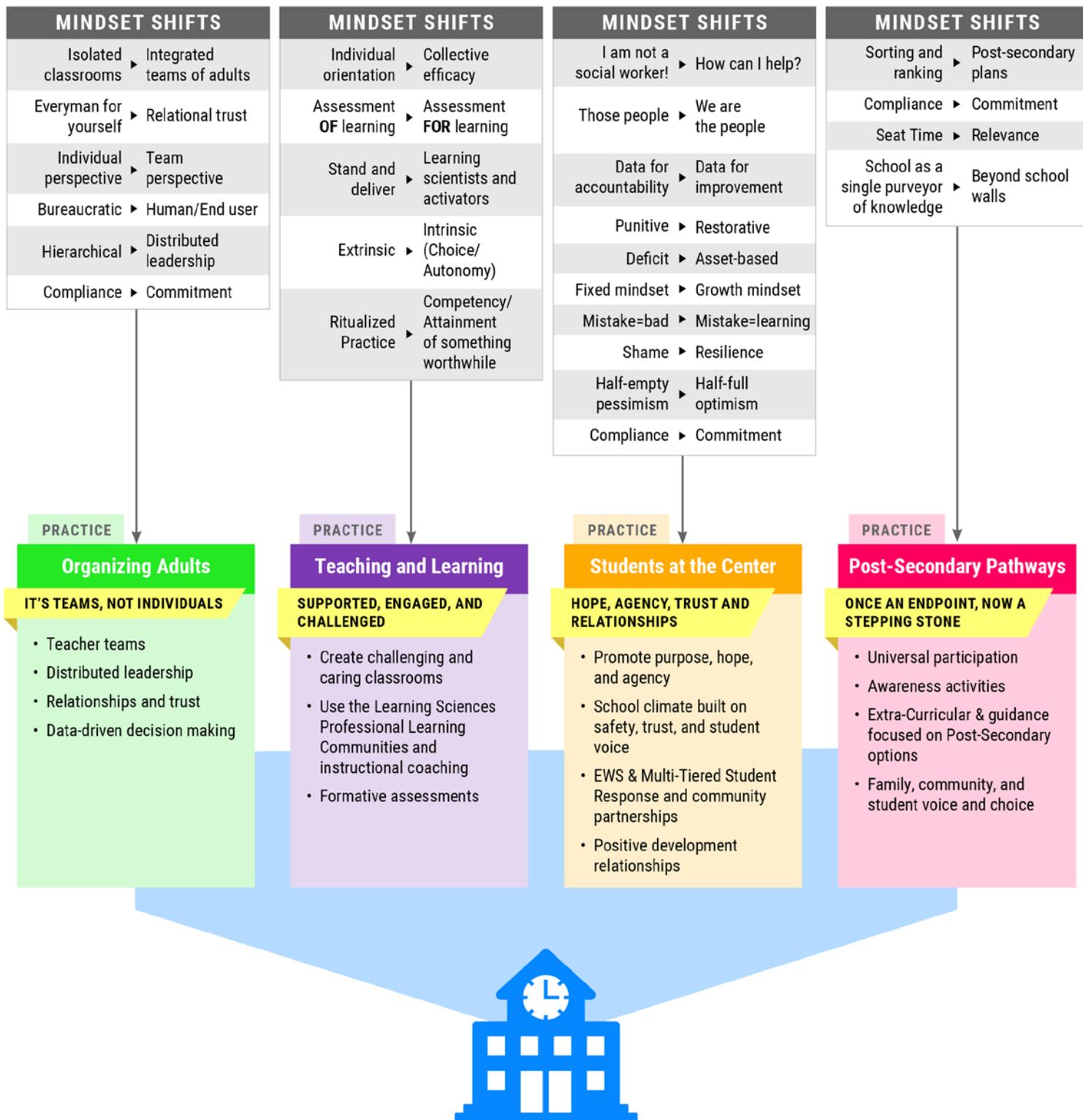
- Provide universal access and use of postsecondary preparations and guidance supports
- Keep students' options open
- Keep the choice of which pathway with students and their families
- Collaborate beyond the school walls with families, employers, community partners and postsecondary education providers

More information may be found at <http://www.hsredesign.org/getting-started/needs-assessments/>

SHIFTING TO EVIDENCE-BASED IDEAS

CROSS STATE HIGH SCHOOL COLLABORATIVE

www.hsredesign.org/getting-started/needs-assessments/
www.every1graduates.org



REDESIGN HIGH SCHOOLS to support their communities in the 21st Century.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM RATES

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10 percent or more of the time enrolled in school for any reason, which includes excused and unexcused absences and suspensions. The data used to calculate these latest rates comes from the 2016-2017 school year. Overall, 14.2 percent of Mississippi students were absent 10 percent or more of the time. The rate is slightly lower than the state's first report of chronic absence in 2015, which revealed 15 percent of students were chronically absent in the 2013-14 school year.

Attendance Works and the Everyone Graduates Center's [report "Portraits of Change: Aligning School and Community Resources to Reduce Chronic Absence"](#) shows 88 of 902 schools in Mississippi, or 9 percent, report "extreme chronic absence," defined as 30 percent or more of students are chronically absent in a given school year.

More Mississippi high schools experience extreme chronic absence than elementary and middle schools, according to the report.

The national average for extreme chronic absence is 8 percent. Nationwide, absence levels are significantly higher in schools with larger percentages of low-income students.

"Missing too many days of school for any reason puts children at risk academically and can translate into a child who can't read by the end of third grade, fails courses in middle school and eventually drops out of high school," said Hedy N. Chang, executive director of Attendance Works.

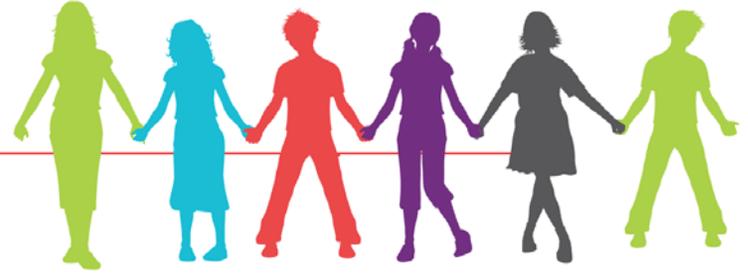
"The research is clear about the link between chronic absence and student achievement. If children are not in school, they are not learning," said Carey Wright, state superintendent of education. "Parents, school and communities need to work together to ensure that students are attending and staying engaged in school every day."

Similar to national trends, Mississippi's chronic absenteeism rate is high in kindergarten (13.6 percent), tapers off in early elementary years and increases steadily throughout middle and high school. The rate peaks in grade 12 at 30.1 percent. Starting as early as preschool and kindergarten, chronic absence can leave third-graders unable to read proficiently, sixth-graders struggling with coursework and high school students off track for graduation. A school's average daily attendance (ADA), which is the average number of enrolled students who attend school each day, does not reveal how many students are chronically absent.

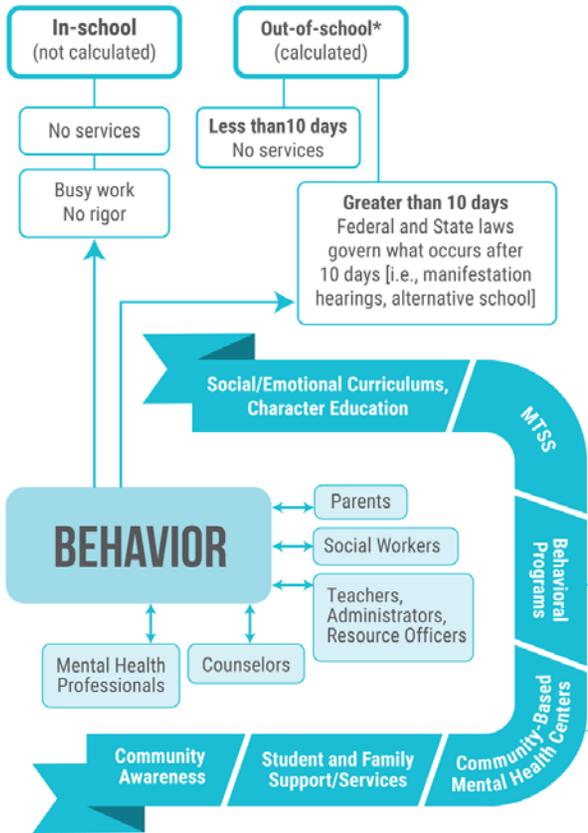
The following on Chronic Absenteeism, visit

- <http://www.attendanceworks.org/Portraits-of-Change>
- <http://www.djournal.com/news/education/mde-releases-chronic-absenteeism-rates>
- <http://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Attendance-Works-Portraits-of-Change-Executive-Summary-Final-Sept.-1.pdf>

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM



1 SUSPENSIONS



2 EXCUSED ABSENCES

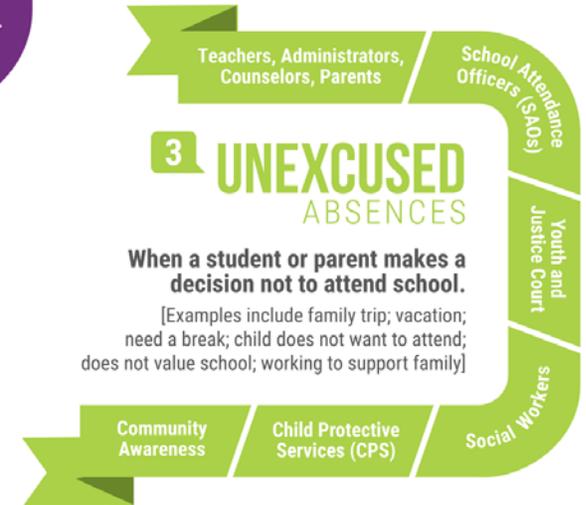
[Examples include illness, environmental factors; death; medical or dental; religious observances]



3 UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

When a student or parent makes a decision not to attend school.

[Examples include family trip; vacation; need a break; child does not want to attend; does not value school; working to support family]



STRIVE FOR LESS THAN FIVE

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM AWARENESS CAMPAIGN



*Anytime a child is removed from an educational setting (for an unspecified period of time) constitutes a suspension. This includes parent monitoring, overnight suspensions, etc.

GLOSSARY

Action plan

A comprehensive plan that explicitly addresses each of the principles. Plan must be based on Comprehensive Needs Assessment results and Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-Based (SMART) oriented goals.

Action research

A wide variety of evaluative, investigative, and analytical research methods designed to diagnose problems or weaknesses—whether organizational, academic, or instructional—and help educators develop practical solutions to address them quickly and efficiently. (edglossary.org)

Autonomy

The practice of principals and teachers having the freedom to make decisions that further school improvement efforts and instructional practices.

Learning walks

A brief, structured, non-evaluative classroom observation by the district leadership team, principal, and staff that is followed by a conversation between the observer and the teacher about what was observed.

MCAPS (Mississippi Comprehensive Automated Performance-based System)

An online system where required plans and funding applications for Federal Programs, School Improvement, and Special Education (at the school and district level are housed).

P-16 Council

P-16 Councils are community-based entities that unite a cross-section of the community from early care providers and community members with young children through parents and staff of local school districts to businesses, college-representatives, and concerned citizens.

Teacher Pipeline

A teacher pipeline is used to create a systematic, visible system of identifying and developing potential leaders.

Reflective Practices

A reflective practitioner examines his/her beliefs and behaviors with the intention of actively making changes to further school improvement efforts.

Systemic

Systemic refers to having, showing, or involving a system, method, or plan to lead school improvement.

Transformational Leader

One who focuses on problem solving by collecting and analyzing data into an **action plan** for quick results. This may include communicating a positive vision, influencing key supporters, and silencing critics with speedy success.

REFERENCES

The Center on School Turnaround. (2017). *Four domains for rapid school improvement: A systems framework* [The Center on School Turnaround at WestEd]. San Francisco, CA: WestEd.

Council of Chief State School Officers. (February 2018). *States Leading for Equity: Promising Practices Advancing the Equity Commitments*. Washington, DC.

Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965, As Amended by The Every *Student Succeeds Act. Accountability and State Plan* [Mississippi Consolidated State Plan], March 2018.

APPENDIX

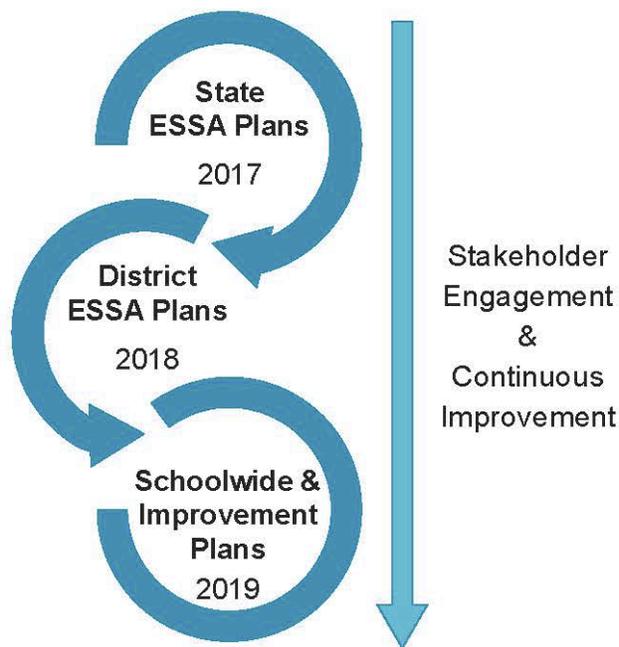
CCSSO PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SYSTEMS

1	Elevate school improvement as an urgent priority at every level of the system—schools, LEAs, and the SEA—and establish for each level clear roles, lines of authority, and responsibilities for improving low-performing schools.	<i>If everything's a priority, nothing is.</i>
2	Make decisions based on what will best serve each and every student with the expectation that all students can and will master the knowledge and skills necessary for success in college, career, and civic life. Challenge and change existing structures or norms that perpetuate low performance or stymie improvement.	<i>Put students at the center so that every student succeeds.</i>
3	Engage early, regularly, and authentically with stakeholders and partners so improvement is done with and not to the school, families, and the community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with schools, families, and community members to build trusting relationships, expand capacity, inform planning, build political will, strengthen community leadership and commitment, and provide feedback loops to adjust as needed. Integrate school and community assets as well as early childhood, higher education, social services, and workforce systems to, among other things, help address challenges outside of school. 	<i>If you want to go far, go together.</i>
4	Select at each level the strategy that best matches the context at hand—from LEAs and schools designing evidence-based improvement plans to SEAs exercising the most appropriate state-level authority to intervene in non-exiting schools.	<i>One size does not fit all.</i>
5	Support LEAs and schools in designing high-quality school improvement plans informed by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> each school's assets (and how they're being used), needs (including but not limited to resources), and root causes of underperformance; research on effective schools, successful school improvement efforts, and implementation science; best available evidence of what interventions work, for whom, under which circumstances; and the science of learning and development, including the impact of poverty and adversity on learning. 	<i>Failing to plan is planning to fail.</i>
6	Focus especially on ensuring the highest need schools have great leaders and teachers who have or develop the specific capacities needed to dramatically improve low-performing schools.	<i>Talent matters.</i>
7	Dedicate sufficient resources (time, staff, funding); align them to advance the system's goals; use them efficiently by establishing clear roles and responsibilities at all levels of the system; and hold partners accountable for results.	<i>Put your money where your mouth is.</i>
8	Establish clear expectations and report progress on a sequence of ambitious yet achievable short- and long-term school improvement benchmarks that focus on both equity and excellence.	<i>What gets measured gets done.</i>
9	Implement improvement plans rigorously and with fidelity, and, since everything will not go perfectly, gather actionable data and information during implementation; evaluate efforts and monitor evidence to learn what is working, for whom, and under what circumstances; and continuously improve over time.	<i>Ideas are only as good as they are implemented.</i>
10	Plan from the beginning how to sustain successful school improvement efforts financially, politically, and by ensuring the school and LEA are prepared to continue making progress.	<i>Don't be a flash in the pan.</i>

Source: *Roadmap to Implementing the CCSSO Principles of Effective Systems of School Improvement*

OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT UNDER ESSA

Under ESSA, states have a new responsibility and opportunity to lead on school improvement. In contrast to the more top-down approaches to school improvement of the No Child Left Behind Act and Elementary and Secondary Education Act flexibility waivers, ESSA establishes some federal guardrails (especially regarding equity considerations) and then empowers each state—working in close partnership with its LEAs, schools, principals, teachers, parents, students, civil rights leaders, community members, tribes, and other key stakeholders—to design its own system of school improvement. This includes developing (or evolving) the state system’s vision and theory of action; its architecture and policies; its implementation, supports, incentives, and consequences; and its efforts to ensure that all levels of the system fulfill their specific roles. School improvement is not a “one and done” moment of ESSA implementation. Rather, it is part of a sequence of opportunities for innovation, evaluation, and continuous improvement that connects state, local, and school efforts to improve student outcomes.



To help maintain a strong connection between the principles and the decisions states must make as they implement ESSA’s new school improvement regime, this Roadmap includes below a review of the “nuts and bolts” about the new law’s school improvement requirements, specifically the rules governing which schools must be identified (though states can choose to identify more) and the distribution of responsibility across state, district, and school for the various aspects of the support and improvement process. (See CCSSO’s [ESSA Implementation Timeline](#) for more information.)

Source: Roadmap to Implementing the CCSSO Principles of Effective Systems of School Improvement

