IDAHO
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

INSTRUCTIONAL CORE
FOCUS VISIT

Patterns of Practice

PROCESS MANUAL

Patterns of Practice:
A School Improvement Process
IDAHO VERSION

8/27/2010

IDAHO FOCUS VISIT
PROCESS MANUAL

Information   Tools   Training

Positive results for students will come from changes in the knowledge, skill, and behavior of their teachers and parents. State policies and programs must provide the opportunity, support, incentive, and expectation for adults close to the lives of children to make wise decisions.

The Center on Innovation & Improvement helps regional comprehensive centers in their work with states to provide districts, schools, and families with the opportunity, information, and skills to make wise decisions on behalf of students. The Center on Innovation & Improvement is administered by the Academic Development Institute (Lincoln, IL) in partnership with the Temple University Institute for Schools and Society (Philadelphia, PA) and Little Planet Learning (Nashville, TN).

The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position of the supporting agencies,

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Table of Contents

Section 5. Preparing and Transmitting the Instructional Core Focus Visit Report ...135

Section 6 - Frequently Asked Questions...171

Section 1: Introduction

In order to provide support to districts and schools that fall into the in need of improvement category, it is critical for states to distinguish among those that are engaged in long-term improvement efforts and those that have not begun such a process (Elmore, 2003). States must determine the different needs of low-performing schools. They also need to include detailed information on the quality of teaching, learning, and leadership in identified schools. Furthermore, the National Governors' Center for Best Practices suggests that the State Educational Agency (SEA) might maximize the usefulness of this information by developing or adopting fine-tuned assessment tools that can provide specific data about classroom instruction. Additionally, the use of the information should inform educational practice.

Fullan (2005) advises higher-level educators (e.g., at the SEA level) to partner strategically with district and school leaders, outside technical assistance providers, researchers, and others who can assist states in creating an aligned, coherent, and coordinated education system focused on common goals around improving student learning and achievement.

At the request of the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) in the District of Columbia, the Center on Innovation & Improvement and the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center engaged in a process of developing a planning process/protocol for conducting annual school reviews. This process uses research-based standards and indicators to assess local educational agencies (LEAs) in the areas of academic and organizational performance as outlined in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) and has been named *Patterns of Practice School Review* . Idaho State Department of Education has taken the foundational work and research of the Patterns of Practice School Review and developed a model specific to Idaho's districts and schools needs. This model is called ***Instructional Core Focus Visit***.

The Instructional Core Focus Visit is based on 49 indicators found in *Handbook on Restructuring and Substantial School Improvement* (2007) published by the Center on Innovation & Improvement, one of the U.S. Department of Education's five national content centers in the Comprehensive Centers Program, and endorsed by the United States Department of Education, to provide action-oriented principles for improving schools drawing on the existing research base.   The Idaho adopted version has been modified to only include the *School Improvement Success Rapid Indicators and District Improvement Success Indicators*.   Modifications have been made through this

document to reflect and update changes based on selected Idaho Rapid Indicators, as reflected in the WISE (Ways to Improve School Effectiveness) Tool. These are research/evidence-based indicators associated with substantial school improvement. A set of nine standards was adopted to scaffold the indicators. Modifications have been made to these nine standards for the Idaho version. Indicators have been linked to the *9 Characteristics of High Performing Schools* and realigned to reflect these characteristics.

The purpose of the Instructional Core Focus Visit process is to meet the rigorous demands set forth in NCLB. The clearly stated purpose of NCLB is to ensure that all public school students are proficient in reading/language arts, mathematics, and science by 2014. Guidance for meeting NCLB requirements defines the structures that are to be in place to meet this goal. An example is the requirement that states must establish processes to identify schools/districts where students are not meeting the standards as well as a statewide system of support to strengthen the performance of schools and ensure that every child receives a quality education. The Instructional Core Focus Visit process can provide information to SEA's, LEA's, as well as schools themselves, to more effectively design professional development and technical assistance focused around improving student learning and achievement. More specifically, it is hoped that the results of Instructional Core Focus Visits will: 1) assist LEAs in addressing deficiencies and strengthening core academic subjects that may have caused the identified problems, and support the design of school improvement plans that promote high-quality professional development and 2) address the academic needs of the school.

The Focus Visit process looks for evidence of the presence of indicators associated with substantial school improvement and to the degree these indicators are observed and documented. It includes collecting detailed information on the quality of instruction, assessment, curriculum, planning, and parent involvement. Data collection activities include classroom observation, perceptional surveys and interviews with staff, and the review of documents related to the educational program at all instructional levels. The process was designed to be conducted by an outside team with expertise in the area of educational administration and pedagogy.

Sections 2-5 lay out the process for conducting a Instructional Core Focus Visit organized within four phases: Planning, Preparing, Conducting, Reporting and Follow-up. Section 6 contains a set of Frequently Asked Questions regarding the Instructional Core Focus Visit process.

Appendix 1-A: Conversion of Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools to the Nine Standards of the POP manual

#	Characteristics of High Performing Schools	#	POP Standard
1	Clear & Shared Focus		
2	High Standards & Expectations for All Students	1	Curriculum
		3	Instruction
		4	Comp & Effective Planning
		5	School Culture
3	Effective School Leadership	5	School Culture
		7	Leadership
4	High Levels of Collaboration & Communication	4	Comp & Effective Planning
		5	School Culture
		8	Org. Structure & Resources
5	Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Aligned w/State Standards	1	Curriculum
		2	Assessment & Evaluation
		3	Instruction
6	Frequent Monitoring of Learning & Teaching	2	Assessment & Evaluation
		3	Instruction
7	Focused Professional Development	6	Professional Development
8	Supportive Learning Environment		
9	High Levels of Family & Community Involvement	5	School Culture
		7	Leadership
		9	Parent & Community Involvement

Appendix 1-B: District and School WISE Indicator Framework

The indicators for this framework were adapted in part from the *New Jersey Collaborative Assessment & Planning for Achievement* document and the *Handbook on Restructuring and Substantial School Improvement from the Center on Innovation & Improvement*, and has been modified based on the Idaho Rapid School Improvement Indicators and Idaho District Improvement Success Indicators as reflected in the WISE Tool.

Clear and Shared Focus:

Characteristic 1	District Improvement Indicators
Clear and Shared Focus	**District Context and Support for School Improvement**
	IA08: The school board and superintendent present a unified vision for school improvement.
	District and the Change Process
	IB08: The district ensures that school improvement and restructuring plans include a clear vision of what the school will look like when restructured or substantially improved.

High Standards and Expectations for All Students:

Characteristic 2	District Improvement Indicators
High Standards and Expectations for All Students	**District Context and Support for School Improvement**
	IA07: The district sets district, school, and student subgroup achievement targets.
	IA09: The superintendent and other central office staff are accountable for school improvement and student learning outcomes.
	District and the Change Process
	IB06: For each restructuring school, the district ensures that the restructuring plan includes both changes in governance and a detailed plan for school improvement.
	IB07: The district ensures that school improvement and restructuring plans include research-based, field proven programs, practices, and models.

Characteristic 2	Rapid School Improvement Indicators
	Classroom Instruction - Preparation
	IIIA01: All teachers are guided by a document that aligns standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
	IIIA02: All teachers develop weekly lesson plans based on aligned units of instruction.
	IIIA05: All teachers maintain a record of each student's mastery of specific learning objectives.
	IIIA06: All teachers test frequently using a variety of evaluation methods and maintain a record of the results.
	Classroom Instruction – Teacher Directed - Introduction
	IIIA09: All teachers clearly state the lesson's topic, theme, and objectives.
	IIIA11: All teachers use modeling, demonstration, and graphics.
	Classroom Instruction – Teacher Directed - Presentation
High Standards and Expectations for All Students	**IIIA13:** All teachers explain directly and thoroughly.
	IIIA16: All teachers use prompting/cueing.
	Classroom Instruction – Teacher –Student Interaction
	IIIA26: Teachers encourage students to check their own comprehension.
	Classroom Instruction – Student-Directed (Small Group, Independent Work)
	IIIA28: All teachers travel to all areas in which students are working.
	IIIA31: All teachers interact instructionally with students (explaining, checking, giving feedback).
	IIIA32: All teachers interact managerially with students (reinforcing rules, procedures).
	Classroom Instruction – Computer-Based Instruction
	IIIA35: Students are engaged and on task.
	IIIA40: All teachers assess student mastery in ways other than those provided by the computer program.
	Classroom Instruction – Homework/Parent Communication

Characteristic 2	Rapid School Improvement Indicators
	IIIB06: All teachers systematically report to parents the student's mastery of specific standards-based objectives.
	Classroom Instruction – Classroom Management
	IIIC01: When waiting for assistance from the teacher, students are occupied with curriculum-related activities provided by the teacher.
	IIIC05: All teachers use a variety of instructional modes.
	IIIC10: All teachers reinforce classroom rules and procedures by positively teaching them.
	IIIC12: All teachers engage all students (e.g., encourage silent students to participate).

Effective District/School Leadership:

Characteristic 3	District Improvement Indicators
	District Context and Support for School Improvement
	IA04: The district provides incentives for staff who work effectively in hard-to-staff and restructured schools.
	IA10: The district regularly reallocates resources to support school, staff, and instructional efforts.
Effective District Leadership – Central Office Role	**IA05**: The district contracts with external service providers for key services in restructured schools.
	IA12: The district intervenes early when a school is not making adequate progress.
	IA14: The district recruits, trains, supports, and places personnel to competently address the problems of schools in need of improvement.
	District and the Change Process
	IB02: The district examines existing school improvement strategies being implemented across the district and determines their value, expanding, modifying, and culling as evidence suggests.
	IB04: For each restructuring school, the district ensures that the restructuring options chosen reflect the particular strengths and weaknesses of the restructuring school.

Characteristic 3	District Improvement Indicators
	IB05: For each restructuring school, the district ensures that the restructuring plan reflects the resources available to ensure its success.
	IB09: The district ensures that an empowered change agent (typically the principal) is appointed to head each restructuring school.
	IB11: The district ensures that school improvement and restructuring plans include "quick wins," early successes in improvement.
	IB12: The district is prepared for setbacks, resistance, and obstacles on the path to substantial improvement.
	District-School Expectations
	IC04: District policies and procedures clarify the scope of site-based decision making granted a school and are summarized in a letter of understanding.

Characteristic 3	Rapid School Improvement Indicators
Effective School Leadership – Principal's Role	**IE06:** The principal keeps a focus on instructional improvement and student learning outcomes.
	IE07: The principal monitors curriculum and classroom instruction regularly.
	IE10: The principal celebrates individual, team, and school successes, especially related to student learning outcomes.
	IE13: The principal offers frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement.

High Levels of Collaboration & Communication:

Characteristic 4	District Improvement Indicators
High Levels of Collaboration & Communication	**District Context and Support for School Improvement**
	IA01: The district includes municipal and civic leaders in district and school improvement planning and maintains regular communication with them.
	IA02: The district includes community organizations in district and

Characteristic 4	District Improvement Indicators
	school improvement planning and maintains regular communication with them.
	IA03: The district includes parent organizations in district & school improvement planning & maintains regular communication w/ them.
	District and the Change Process
	IB01: The district operates with district-level and school-level improvement teams.
	IB10: In restructuring schools, the district ensures that the change agent (typically the principal) is skilled in motivating staff and the community, communicating clear expectations, and focusing on improved student learning.
	District-School Expectations
	IC02: The district designates a central office contact person for the school, and that person maintains close communication with the school and an interest in its progress.
	IC03: District and school decision makers meet at least twice a month to discuss the school's progress.
	IC04: District policies and procedures clarify the scope of site-based decision making granted a school and are summarized in a letter of understanding.

Characteristic 4	Rapid School Improvement Indicators
	ID01: A team structure is officially incorporated into the school improvement plan and school governance policy.
High Levels of Collaboration & Communication	**ID07:** A Leadership Team consisting of the principal, teachers who lead the Instructional Teams, and other key professional staff meets regularly (twice a month or more for an hour each meeting).
	ID08: The Leadership Team serves as a conduit of communication to the faculty and staff.
	ID13: Instructional Teams meet for blocks of time (4 to 6 hour blocks, once a month; whole days before and after the school year) sufficient to develop and refine units of instruction and review student learning data.

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments Aligned with State Standards:

Characteristic 5	District Improvement Indicators
Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments Aligned with State Standards	**District-School Expectations**
	IC05: The district provides a cohesive district curriculum guide aligned with state standards or otherwise places curricular expectation on the school.

Characteristic 5	Rapid School Improvement Indicators
Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments Aligned with State Standards	**IIA01:** Instructional Teams develop standards-aligned units of instruction for each subject and grade level.
	IIA02: Units of instruction include standards-based objectives and criteria for mastery.
	IC01: Units of instruction include specific learning activities aligned to objectives.
	IC03: Materials for standards-aligned learning activities are well-organized, labeled, and stored for convenient use by teachers.

Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching:

Characteristic 6	District Improvement Indicators
Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching	**District Context and Support for School Improvement**
	IA11: The district ensures that key pieces of user-friendly data are available in a timely fashion at the district, school, and classroom levels.
	IA13: The district works with the school to provide early and intensive intervention for students not making progress.
	District-School Expectations
	IC01: The school reports and documents its progress monthly to the superintendent, and the superintendent reports the school's progress to the school board.

Characteristic 6	Rapid School Improvement Indicators
	Classroom Assessment
	IIB01: Units of instruction include pre-/post-tests to assess student mastery of standards-based objectives.
	IIB04: Teachers individualize instruction based on pre-test results to provide support for some students and enhanced learning opportunities for others.
	IIB05: Teachers re-teach based on post-test results.
	Periodic Assessment
Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching	**IID06:** Yearly learning goals are set for the school by the Leadership Team, utilizing student learning data.
	IID08: Instructional Teams use student learning data to assess strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and instructional strategies.
	IID09: Instructional Teams use student learning data to plan instruction.
	IID10: Instructional Teams use student learning data to identify students in need of instructional support or enhancement.
	IID11: Instructional Teams review the results of unit pre-/post-tests to make decisions about the curriculum and instructional plans and to "red flag" students in need of intervention (both students in need of tutoring or extra help and students needing enhanced learning opportunities because of their early mastery of objectives).

Focused Professional Development:

Characteristic 7	District Improvement Indicators
	District Context and Support for School Improvement
Focused Professional Development	**IA06:** The district provides schools with technology, training, and support for integrated data collection, reporting, and analysis systems.
	District-School Expectations
	IC06: The district provides the technology, training, and supports to facilitate the school's data management needs.
	IC07: Professional development is built into the school schedule by

Characteristic 7	District Improvement Indicators
	the district, but the school is allowed discretion in selecting training and consultation that fit the requirements of its improvement/restructuring plan and its evolving needs.
	IC08: Staff development is built into the schedule for support staff (e.g., aides, clerks, custodians, cooks) as well as classroom teachers.

Characteristic 7	Rapid School Improvement Indicators
Focused Professional Development	**IF01:** The principal compiles reports from classroom observations, showing aggregate areas of strength and areas that need improvement without revealing the identity of individual teachers.
	IF02: The Leadership Team reviews the principal's summary reports of classroom observations and takes them into account in planning professional development.
	IF03: Professional development for teachers includes observations by the principal related to indicators of effective teaching and classroom management.
	IF04: Professional development for teachers includes observations by peers related to indicators of effective teaching and classroom management.
	IF05: Professional development for teachers includes self-assessment related to indicators of effective teaching and classroom management.
	IF06: Teachers are required to make individual professional development plans based on classroom observations.
	IF08: Professional development for the whole faculty includes assessment of strengths and areas in need of improvement from classroom observations of indicators of effective teaching.
	IF10: The principal plans opportunities for teachers to share their strengths with other teachers.

High Level of Family and Community Involvement:

(Indicators will be monitored through the Parent Involvement Application)

Characteristic 9	Rapid School Improvement Indicators
High Level of Family and Community Involvement	**IE 13:** The principal offers frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement.
	IIIB01: All teachers maintain a file of communication with parents.
	IIIB06: All teachers systematically report to parents the student's mastery of specific standards-based objectives
	Parent Involvement Application Indicators
	PIA: A majority of the members of the School Community Council are parents of currently enrolled students and are not also employees of the school.
	PIA: Parents receive regular communication (absent jargon) about learning standards, their children's progress, and the parents' role in their children's school success.
	PIA: Parents receive practical guidance to encourage their children's regular reading habits at home.
	PIA: Parents are given opportunities to meet with teachers to discuss both their children's progress in school and their children's home-based study and reading habits.

Section 2: Planning the Focus Visit

The SDE initiates the Instructional Core Focus Visit activity in a planning phase that consists of two (2) parts: (1) selection of the school districts that are to participate in the Instructional Core Focus Visit process, and (2) scheduling the Instructional Core Focus Visits. The SDE undertakes these two activities in cooperation with the LEAs involved. The SDE prefers to precede these activities whenever possible by holding briefings for leadership in the LEAs regarding the Instructional Core Focus Visit process to promote understanding and cooperation.

Selection Process for Participating Districts:

To identify LEAs that are most in need of support from the State, the Idaho State Department of Education (ISDE) applies multiple layers of data analysis to evaluate districts and sort them according to a comprehensive view of their needs. This analysis consists of four components: the definition of the academic risk factors and local resources, an analysis of achievement data for at-risk populations, the consecutive number of years in school improvement status, and district graduation rates.

Population Definition
The first layer of data analysis involves defining each district's student population according to non-academic factors. By defining the local population of students, the State is able to make comparisons about the academic performance of each district to similar districts. This is done by plotting two factors against each other. All Title I districts in the State are classified into cells that indicate (a) the degree to which their students are traditionally considered to be At-Risk and (b) the financial resources made up of state and local dollars that are available to spend on the educational needs of their students. The relationship of these two variables forms the ***Risk Factors & Resources Scatterplot***.

Academic Risk is defined according to four demographic features. Students who are from families that are economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, students from non-white ethnicity groups, and students with limited English proficiency are traditionally considered at risk. While educational systems can have an impact on all of these students, the reason that a child is placed in such a category is external to the school or district instructional impact. Therefore, Idaho defines one aspect of a district's population in relation to this external set of factors. For each of the four risk categories into which any individual student falls, a student receives a point. Thus, for example, a student who falls into none of the above risk factors receives a value of 0; a student who is economically disadvantaged and LEP receives a value of 2; a student who is LEP, economically disadvantaged, has disabilities, and is a non-white ethnicity[1] receives a

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[1] Non-white ethnicity is grouped into one category for two reasons. Idaho is 85% white. The majority of the remaining population is Hispanic. However, in some school districts, the primary alternate ethnicity is Native American. Because ethnic groups are usually dichotomous in the districts, the criteria uses a dichotomous variable or white or non-white for analysis.

value of 4. Based upon this value, every student in grades 3-8 throughout a district is analyzed and the mean value of these Risk Factors is taken. Thus, in a district in which the average Risk Factor is 1.75, it can be said that of the 4 risk categories, the average student in the district fits into 1.75 risk categories.

This information is useful because it spreads districts across a possible continuum of 0-4 in which the initial or potential educational challenges of the student population can be better understood. The closer a district is to 0, the less risk a district has that is purely based on demographic make-up, whereas the closer a district is to 4, the more at-risk its population is according to these traditionally underserved and underperforming categories.
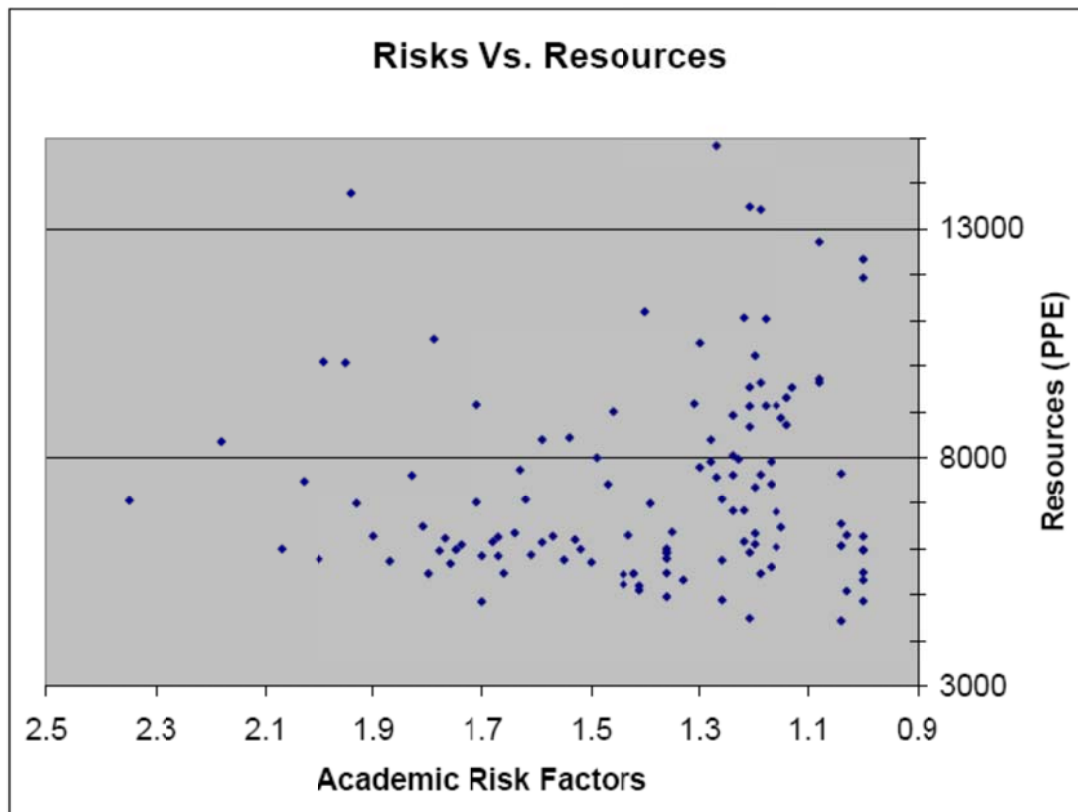
Resources are defined as the amount of state and local dollars that are made available to districts. Specifically, this is the state Per Pupil Expenditure (PPE) for each district and is based on Average Daily Attendance (ADA). While there are some extreme outliers in PPE data due to the rural and remote characteristics of a few small districts, the PPE spreads districts along a continuum in which each district can be evaluated in relation to its financial capital available to meet the needs of its learners. When excluding the outliers, the PPE in Idaho falls along a continuum between $4,400 and $11,000. It is hypothesized that districts that have greater financial resources per pupil are in less need of extra school improvement funding than those districts with similar challenges that have far fewer financial resources.

On the basis of these two variables, districts are plotted on the **Risk Factors & Resources Scatterplot**, and from there they are categorized as having High or Low Risk Factors and High or Low Resources. The cells are first defined by finding the mean[2] for each axis. Then, by demarking +/- 1 standard deviation from the mean, districts are further subdivided to separate the norm of each axis from the extreme highs and lows in the Idaho district population. The resulting sub-cells form quadrants in which districts with similar funding and similar risk populations are stratified, thereby forming the basis for tentative comparisons. Because these two axes are defined in relation to non-instructional variables, further analysis can better extrapolate any impact that the instructional system is having when compared to similar populations.
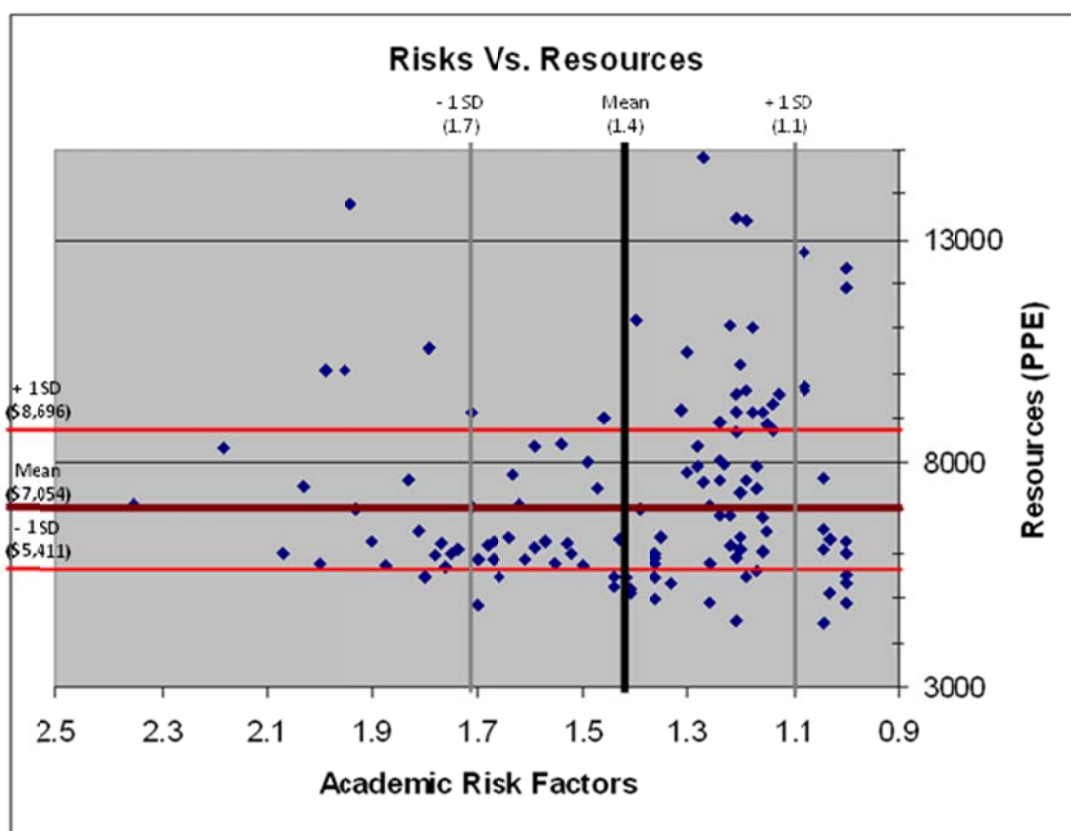
Because the State views these cells in terms of radiating levels of need, each subdivided cell is given a categorical label of 1 to 6. Lower numbers in this range mean that the district has a higher degree of academic risk and a lower level of financial resources per student. Higher numbers in the range represent less need in terms of fewer risk factors and higher resources.

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[2] The mean for the Resources (PPE) axis excludes values above $11,100 in order to not inordinately skew the standard deviation.

Risks Vs. Resources
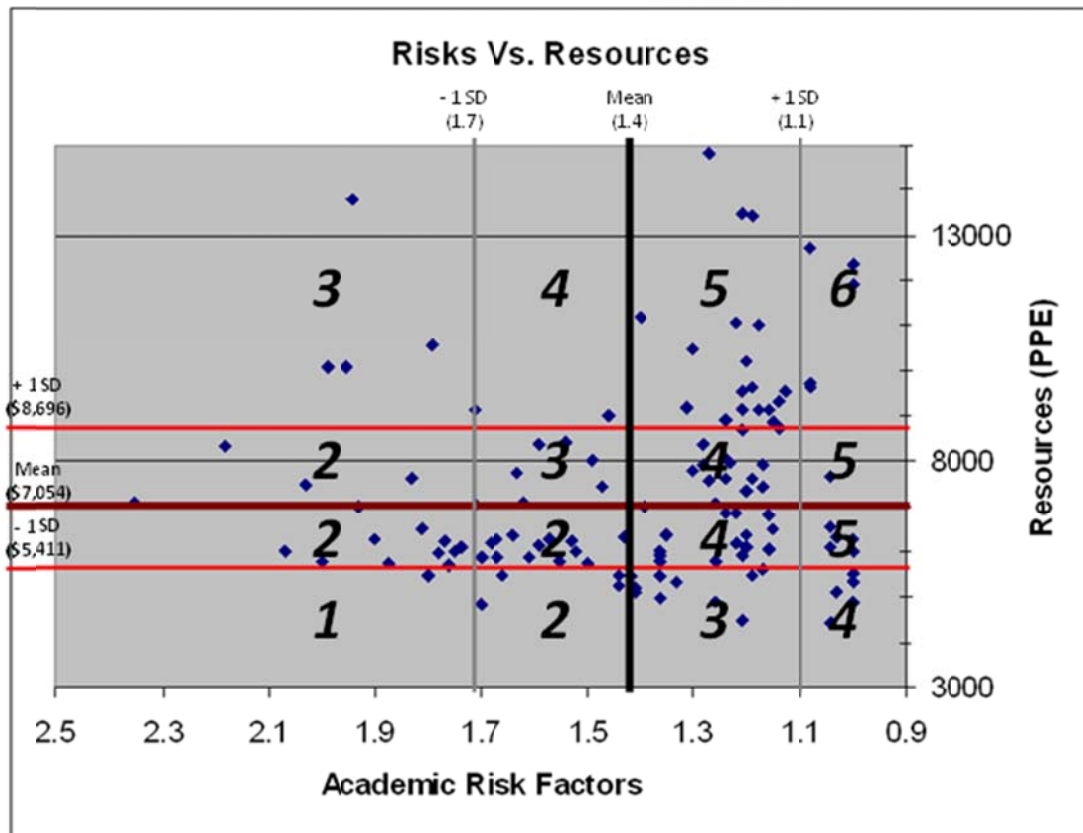
With each district given a categorical label of 1 to 6, the State then overlays academic achievement data using the assessments outlined in section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA in reading and mathematics. Using a sample of grade levels and indicators, the State creates one numeric value that represents the performance of each district in relation to academic achievement. Specifically, the State has chosen to sample grades 4 and 8 in reading and mathematics to define a district's general performance. The rationale for this selection is multifaceted. First, these grades parallel NAEP, thus providing for some comparison to other measures. Second, the placement of grade levels varies in Idaho in terms of the type of school in which they are housed. For example, some 5th grade classrooms are located in elementary schools, whereas in other districts they are located in middle schools. Similarly, 8th grade classrooms could be located in middle school or high school. In fact, because many of Idaho's school districts are rural and remote, there are many instances in which one building houses all of grades K-12. By sampling grades 4 and 8, the State is able to confidently represent a continuum of district level performance at two key grade levels that align with elementary and secondary education. The State considered sampling grade 10 also. However, while the assessment data is collected accurately in grade 10 and demographics are accurately represented in the student enrollment files used to code the assessment data, the State recognizes that there is a national trend in which students from low-income backgrounds do not necessarily report their economic needs in high school for social and other reasons. Therefore, since the calculations rely on representing each of the four major risk categories described above, the State believed that it was best to not

include a 10th grade sample due to the possibility of skewing the data in cases where some districts have more accurate information on economically disadvantaged high school students. Additionally, 8th grade assessment data correlates quite highly with 10th grade data in Idaho; therefore, the 10th grade data were not necessary for this purpose. Lastly, the State has sampled from reading and mathematics alone because these two assessments are the State's two primary AYP indicators and are thus a common focus for every district and school in Idaho. While language usage and science assessments are extremely important and valued, language usage is replaced in upper grades as a 3rd indicator by graduation rate and science is assessed only in grades 5, 7, and 10. Thus, for simplicity and accuracy of sampling, grades 4 and 8 assessments in reading and mathematics form the basis for the academic achievement component of the selection criteria.

Academic Achievement Data

From the assessment data that are sampled, assessment outcomes are combined into one variable. The Idaho accountability assessments (ISAT) are scored along a vertical interval scale. Because of the nature of the scale, a numeric score of 250 can reasonably be compared with that of 212. While the interpretations of each number will vary between content areas and proficiency levels will vary between grade levels, the values themselves are intervals that have more or less the same type of meaning. Therefore, the scores can be averaged within any given assessment and grade level, and the mean score of one district can be compared to the mean score of another district. Therefore, the State has calculated the mean scale score for every student in a district who is labeled at-risk (in order to maintain continuity with the Risk Factors & Resources Scatterplot) for grades 4 and 8 in reading and mathematics. The mean scale score for each grade level and content area is then added to form an overall point value from which comparisons about districts can be made. The Sum of Means is therefore sensitive to detect differences in individual districts at an aggregated level of overall achievement based on the sample.

$$(G4^{At\text{-}Risk}\ Mean^{Reading}) + (G4^{At\text{-}Risk}\ Mean^{Math}) + (G8^{At\text{-}Risk}\ Mean^{Reading}) + (G8^{At\text{-}Risk}\ Mean^{Math}) = Sum\ of\ Means$$

District Name	Reading 4 At-Risk Scale Mean	Reading 8 At-Risk Scale Mean	Math 4 At-Risk Scale Mean	Math 8 At-Risk Scale Mean		Sum of Scale Score Means
Sample District 01	202	221	209	228		860
Sample District 02	202	229	203	239		873
Sample District 03	208	221	216	232		877

Once the Sum of Means for at-risk students is determined for each district, the values are analyzed for variance and then ranked using a categorical variable: high (4), above

average (3), below average (2), and low (1) achievement. This categorical variable is utilized when comparing achievement with other indicators in the criteria.

School Improvement Status
Because persistent low performance is of great concern, each district is evaluated on the basis of how many years it has been in School Improvement status for AYP. Because the achievement data used rely on reading and mathematics, the School Improvement status is also based solely on reading and mathematics at the district, aggregate level. Each year of improvement, therefore, is counted such that year 6 is equal to 6, year 3 is equal to 3, and so forth. The only special consideration is that of districts who are not in improvement or who are in alert. In these cases, "Met Goal" counts as 0, while Alert counts as 0.5. In order to describe the magnitude of the district's status, each year of improvement for the two content areas is added together.

$$(Improvement\ Year^{Reading}) + (Improvement\ Year^{Math}) = Sum\ of\ Years\ in\ Improvement$$

It is hypothesized, for example, that a district in Year 5 for reading and Year 2 for math (sum = 7) is in greater need than a district in Year 3 for reading and 2 for math (sum = 5). Similar to the process for achievement data, the values thus created by the magnitude of a district's School Improvement status are analyzed and ranked using a categorical variable: low (3), medium (2), and high (1) degrees of magnitude of years in improvement status. This categorical variable is also utilized when comparing other indicators in the criteria.

Graduation Rate
Graduation is a key indicator in the performance of a district and its ability to meet the needs of all learners. As such, graduation rates are factored into the selection criteria much like the other indicators. Using the federal definition for graduation (34 CFR 200.19(b)), each district's graduation rate is utilized and assigned a categorical variable: greater than 97% (3), 90% < 97% (2), and less than 90% (1). These categories provide further weight in the analysis of each district's performance.

Data Analysis
Once each of the four indicators is determined for each district, the resulting categorical variables are placed into an equation that weights academic achievement while taking the other three into significant consideration.

Indicator	Categorical Values
Academic Risks & Resources Layers (ARR)	1, 2, 3
Academic Achievement (AA)	1, 2, 3, 4
School Improvement Status (SI)	1, 2, 3
Graduation Rate (GR)	1, 2, 3

The equation values Academic Risks & Resources Layers, School Improvement Status, and Graduation Rate with the same weight. These three categorical variables are

added together. However, considering that the values associated with Academic Achievement portray actual student achievement, it is weighted with more importance. The equation is the following.

$$AA \times [(ARR) + (SI) + (GR)] = District\ Unit\ of\ Analysis\ Value$$

The District Unit of Analysis Value is used as the last step in the process to rank each district according to the outcomes of all the key indicators. Values have a possible range of 3 to 36; the lower the value, the greater the need.

School Level Analysis
To identify the lowest five percent of schools, Idaho is first identifying the lowest performing districts. Due to the small, rural, and remote nature of many Idaho schools and districts[3], the Idaho Department of Education has determined that it is more effective to identify districts as the unit of analysis and then target schools within the district for improving academic achievement. Often, the small schools' performance does not show up in AYP data sets because they have populations that are less than the minimum n-count for accountability. Therefore, our system of support must aggregate the data into a larger unit of analysis in order to identify those who truly are in need. Therefore, the lowest 5% of schools will be identified by serving the lowest 5% of districts.

The SEA determines the number of schools to participate in the Instructional Core Focus Visit process based on available resources. The criteria for selecting schools include factors such as: (1) type of school (i.e., elementary, middle, high); (2) results on state assessments; (3) school status under NCLB accountability provisions; or (4) other criteria of interest. Once the list of schools to participate in the Instructional Core Focus Visit process is finalized, a review schedule is worked out with the LEAs.

The review schedule needs to reflect awareness of the academic year calendar, as well as specific activities scheduled by individual schools. Reviews should be scheduled when regular classes are in session. Therefore, it is important to avoid times when special activities (e.g., school holidays, professional development days or parts of days, testing, parent conference days, field trips, or assemblies) have been scheduled.

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[3] More than half of Idaho school districts serve less than 500 students.

Scheduling Focus Visits:

Focus Visits are scheduled on (2-3) consecutive days for each school/district. During the Focus Visit, teams conduct the following data collection activities:

- Introductory meeting with representation expected from the district/building leadership and school board.
- Exit meeting with representation expected from the district/building leadership and school board.
- Interview with the superintendent. (90 minutes)
- Interview with each building principal. (90 minutes)
- Interview with central office administration and personnel. (90 minutes)
- Focus group with the leadership team at each building. (60 minutes)
- Focus group with 6-8 members of the instructional staff at each building. (60 minutes)
- Focus group with 6-8 members of the classified support staff (e.g., cooks, custodians, etc) at each building. (60 minutes)
- Focus group with 10-20 parents (who are not employed by the LEA) at each building representative of the populations. (60 minutes)
- Focus group with 6-8 students grades 4-12 at each building representative of the populations. (60 minutes)
- Classroom observations of 100% of certified teaching staff. (20 minutes)
- Interviews with at least 60% of teachers whose classrooms are observed. (15 minutes)
- Review a set of documents relevant to the Focus Visit indicators. (on-going)
- At the option of the SDE, a survey of school staff prior to the on-site visit. (pre-visit).

Once the SEA has completed the planning tasks, Focus Visit Teams are based on LEA size and location and instructed to proceed with the preparation phase.

(see Section 3).

ACTIVITY	COMPLETION DATE
SEA determines criteria for LEA selection	**July-August**
SEA selects LEAs to have Instructional Core Focus Visits	**August**
SEA schedules Instructional Core Focus Visits	**August**
SEA contacts LEA regarding the Instructional Core Focus Visit	**August**
SEA provides briefings to LEA	**6-8 weeks prior to visit**
SEA forms and assigns Instructional Core Focus Visit Teams	**6-8 weeks prior to visit**

Section 3: Preparing for the Focus Visit

The SDE, the Focus Visit team leader and team, as well as the district and building level administration are all involved in preparations leading up to the on-site Focus Visit.

The SDE makes initial contact with the district superintendent to confirm the Instructional Core Focus Visit activity and provide the superintendent with the name and contact information of the Instructional Core Focus Visit team leader. At this time, the SDE requests that the superintendent send in the information needed for the team leader to create the on-site visit schedule (Appendix 3-A). The SDE forwards this information to the team leader. The SDE provides the Instructional Core Focus Visit team with the supplies and equipment needed to conduct the review, as well as meeting space needed prior to and following the on-site visit.

The responsibility of arranging the Instructional Core Focus Visit falls to the Instructional Core Focus Visit team leader. A task checklist is provided in Appendix 3-M. The team leader is the point of contact between the team and the superintendent, as well as between the team and the SDE. As soon as the team leader receives notification from the SDE regarding a specific Instructional Core Focus Visit, he/she contacts the team members and arranges for an initial team meeting. The team leader plans the meeting agenda and chairs this and all other meetings of the team. The team leader develops a preliminary schedule to be confirmed with the principal(s) for the on-site visit activities and makes individual team member assignments. A schedule for future meetings, including all focus groups, interviews and post-visit follow-up visits should also be set.

The team leader also makes an initial contact with the district level administration team to discuss the upcoming Instructional Core Focus Visit. It is essential to maintain regular contact with the superintendent and principal(s) (in person, via Idaho Education Network (IEN), via email, or telephone) throughout the preparation phase to ensure that the review runs smoothly. The team leader should ensure that the district level administration leadership team understands the nature of the Instructional Core Focus Visit, and how it takes place, and shares this information with their building level leadership teams. The team leader works with the administration leadership team to obtain the information needed prior to the on-site visit in order to schedule on-site activities (Appendix 3-K contains a list of documents to be provided prior to the on-site visit), to arrange for a secure work space in the assigned school for the team, and to ensure that documents to be examined during the on-site visit are ready for the team upon its arrival at the school. The team leader provides the superintendent with a written list of school documents required by the review team, if applicable. Appendix 4-K contains a list of documents that may possibly be reviewed during the on-site visit.

The principal makes the school staff aware of the CEE perceptual survey and facilitates the administration of it three to four weeks prior to the on-site visit. One week prior to the on-site visit, the team leader reports to the principal the number of respondents and requests a second notice about participation is sent to school staff. It is important to have as high a response rate as possible to ensure the validity of the results. Survey responses are anonymous and, if responses are disaggregated, the disaggregation does not allow specific individuals to be identified.

As described in Section 2, the team conducts multiple activities during its 2-3 day visit. Therefore, establishing a realistic schedule is critical. A major activity involves 20-minute classroom observations. Classroom observations concentrate on reading/language arts or math lessons, but ensure 100% participation of all certified staff members. There must be sampling across grade levels and special programs. Observation should include a mixture of the beginnings, middles, and ends of lessons.

The SDE requests that the principal inform the teachers who are involved in the observation/interview process. Teachers will be notified of the times of their observations. Teachers will also be notified if they have been selected to participate in the interviews. A minimum of 60% of all certified staff members per building will be selected to participate in the interview process. These teachers are requested to have the following materials available for reference at the interview: (1) weekly lesson plan (for the week of the visit); (2) related unit plans; (3) related curricular content standards; (4) records of student performance; (5) sample of assessments (e.g., formative and summative); and (6) written communications to parents.

The team leader provides team members with a schedule for observation and interviews that includes the names of the teachers, the grade level, the subject (for secondary schools), the room locations, and the observation and interview times. A map of the school is also provided. The observation period should reflect typical classroom activity. Sufficient time between observations and interviews should be scheduled to allow for reviewing notes, travel between classrooms, and breaks.

In addition to the schedule for classroom observations and teacher interviews, the team leader provides team members and the principal with the schedule for the interviews, focus group discussions, and time to review documents. It is expected that all team members participate in completing the Document Review Checklist (Appendix 4-L) and devote some of their on-site time to this task.

The team leader schedules times during the on-site visit for the team to meet and debrief and discuss areas of concern and points of clarification to maintain a high level of reliability and validity in the data collection. The team leader should also meet with the principal during the on-site visit to discuss any matters related to conducting the

Instructional Core Focus Visit. The district and building level administration teams are required to attend a kick-off meeting prior to or at the beginning of Day 1 to review all aspects of the focus visits, meet the review team and provide an orientation to the school would be very helpful in setting a collegial tone. Team members also have a number of responsibilities during the preparation phase. They are to review background information provided by the school, prepare themselves to carry out their assignments during the on-site visit, and participate in all team meetings held prior to the on-site visit. Once the Instructional Core Focus Visit Team has completed the preparation tasks, it proceeds to conduct the Instructional Core Focus Visit (Section 4).

Refer to the appendices related to this section which include samples of correspondence, talking points, checklists, and forms.

Section 3 Appendices: Preparing for the Instructional Core Focus Visit

3-A   Preparing for the Review Timeline

3-B   Sample letter from team leader to district superintendent regarding review arrangements (i.e. work space for team, class schedules for purpose of scheduling classroom observations, schedule to conduct focus groups, information about composition of focus groups)

3-C   Talking points for team leader's use in briefing superintendent about Instructional Core Focus Visit

3-D   Sample letter to principal regarding conducting CEE survey

3-E   Sample message for principal to use requesting staff to complete CEE survey

3-F   Sample message for principal to provide teachers involved in classroom observation and individual interviews

3-G   Sample message for principal to use requesting parents to participate in a Focus Group

3-H   Sample message for principal to use requesting students and parent permission to participate in Focus Group

3-I   Team Leader Checklist for Arranging Instructional Core Focus Visit Schedule

3-J   Instructional Core Focus Visit Schedule Form

3-K   List of documents to be requested prior to on-site visit

3-L   Agenda for Instructional Core Focus Visit Team Meeting to Prepare for Review

3-M   Team leader Task Checklist

Appendix 3-A: Preparing for the Review Timeline

ACTIVITY	COMPLETION DATE
SEA selects Team leader and team members	**6-8 weeks** before on-site visit
SEA sends notification letter to school (including request for documents to help prepare)	**6-8 weeks** before on-site visit
SEA provides requested school documents to Team leader	**4 weeks** before on-site visit
Team leader contacts Principal	**6 weeks** before on-site visit
Team leader arranges for CEE survey access to school staff	**6-8 weeks** before on-site visit
Team leader meets with team	**1-2 weeks** before on-site visit
SEA provides review supplies/equipment to Team leader	**1 week** before on-site visit

Appendix 3-B: Sample Letter from Team leader to Superintendent Regarding Review Arrangements

Date

Superintendent
District
Address

RE: Instructional Core Focus Visit

Dear Superintendent (Name);

As we discussed last week, your district will receive a Focus Visit (fill in dates) that is designed to support the district's improvement efforts. The team will be comprised of approximately (fill in number of staff) members from the Department of Education.   (fill in team lead) will be the team lead.   Other possible team members include:
> (add team members)
> (add team members)
> (add team members)
> (add team members)
> (add team members)
> (add team members)
> (add team members)
> (add team members)
> (add team members)
> (add team members)

I, too, will be attending the Focus Visit.   The creation of Focus Visit support teams for districts struggling to meet the needs of all learners is part of our statewide system of support. Data collection activities will guide the process and will include classroom observations, teacher interviews, a survey administered to all levels of staff, focus groups with identified staff and the review of documents related to instruction. The Department intends to use the information to make recommendations to the district in relate to other state sponsored technical assistance that is available, professional development that may be needed, and other types of improvement activities.

(Insert team lead name) will be in touch prior to the review and will give you samples of the observation tool we'll be using as well access to the survey instruments.

Prior to our arrival we'll ask you to send us:
- Map of the schools
- Master Class Schedules
- Bell Schedule
- Lunch Schedule
- Any special events you might have planned for those days

You can email those documents to (fill in team lead) or you can fax them to her at (208) 334-2228.

On the first day of the review we'll need the following documents (if possible) ready for the team's review:
- Representative course syllabi from middle and high schools
- Three most recent faculty meeting agendas
- Collaboration team meeting schedules (three most recent agendas, and any minutes)
- Agendas and minutes from three most recent school board meetings
- Pacing guides (elementary)
- Professional Development Plan, Schedule, Sessions
- Mission and Vision Statement
- Sample of newsletters sent to parents/community

We will need a dedicated work space for the dates of the review in which the data that are collected may be discussed in confidence.   The space should be large enough to accommodate all team members and available from 7:30 until 5:00 p.m. And it would work best to have the documents listed above ready first thing in the morning; please place them in the room prior to our arrival on the first day.   We will be observing each teacher in the district for 20 minutes.   If we can not fit classroom observations of all the teachers into the schedule we'll focus on reading, math, science, and English language arts. If there are particular areas of instruction (student engagement, classroom management, standards based activities, etc.) that you would like us to focus on please let (fill in team lead) know.

We would like to meet with your leadership team the during the kick-off meeting prior to the Focus Visit to introduce ourselves and explain each of our roles.   On (fill in dates)

afternoon, I'd like to spend about an hour with you to debrief the team's findings. After that we would like to present recommendations to your leadership team as part of an exit interview. Several districts that have participated in Focus Visits have also found it helpful to invite School Board Members to attend the exit interview since it can promote further program coherence.

I want to stress that this visit is not for monitoring. We will be focusing on instruction rather than on compliance. We want to make sure that we match the technical assistance we provide with the current needs of your district.

Sincerely,

Marybeth Flachbart, Ed.D.
Deputy Superintendent Student Achievement and School Improvement
Idaho Department of Education

Appendix 3-C: Talking Points for Team Leader's Use in Briefing Superintendent and Principal about Focus Visits

- Self-introduce to principal following initial correspondence
- Review the request for materials needed to construct the visit schedule
- Schedule time(s) for principal interview (and other meetings as desired)
- Review logistical arrangements (space, parking, lunch availability)
- Emphasize the need to work together to set up and conduct the review
- Provide principal with contact information
- Review each element of the review (e.g., online survey, observation/interview, focus groups, and document review) and answer all questions
- Arrange for further conversations leading up to on-site visit
- Schedule follow-up conversations and visits

The Instructional Core Focus Visit consists of the following data collection activities:

- On-line CEE survey of school staff – begins one week prior to on-site visit and ends just prior to visit. The team leader will review the on-line survey with principal and arrange for access to it at least one week before the visit. The team leader will provide the principal with material describing the survey and how it can be accessed to disseminate to school staff. It is the principal's responsibility to inform staff of the need to complete the survey and inform the team leader of any technical problems related to the survey in a timely manner.

- Teacher interview and classroom observations (TICO) – the number of observations and interviews conducted during the review will provide a representative sample of classrooms at the school. Each team member will complete a TICO form for classroom observation, and the observation period is to be exactly 20 minutes in length. The interview may be conducted either before or after the observation at a time when the teacher is free to meet for 15 minutes. Teachers should have lesson plans, curriculum content standards, records of student performance, sample assessments, sample written communications with parents, etc., available for consultant review at this time.

- Principal/Superintendent interview—should be scheduled for a total of 90 minutes, and can occur in one block or in two 45 minute blocks.

- Focus groups for instructional staff and leadership team—the principal will assist with Focus group activities by ensuring appropriate space for the

groups to meet in, that participating school staff arrive promptly, and if a group member is unavailable to participate at the time of the focus group, will identify a substitute.

- Review of documents—principal is provided with a list of documents to be reviewed on-site in letter from Team leader. Team leader, working with principal, ensures that these documents are available for review beginning at 7:30 on the day of the visit.

Appendix 3-D: Sample Letter from Team Leader to Principal Regarding CEE Survey

Date

Principal

School

Address

Address

Dear Principal (NAME):

An essential component of the (name of state)'s Focus Visit onsite review is the completion of a CEE survey, which is entitled "Instructional Staff Survey." The purpose of this tool is to gather data that will be used to identify resources and strategies to enhance and increase the effectiveness of delivering services to students and parents in your school.

While we understand that every staff person in your building plays a vital role in educating children, we also recognize that during the Focus Visit site review that we will be unable to dialogue with everyone. As a result, the SDE is utilizing a survey, with the intent to provide all school staff an opportunity to participate in the site review process. It is also important to note that all responses to the survey are anonymous – none will be identified or reported individually. All of the data collected will be summarized to provide a snapshot of your school.

In order to ensure that the survey is completed in a timely fashion, the survey will be made available to your staff four weeks prior to the review, beginning (DATE) and ending (DATE). (TEAM MEMBER) will be the lead on administering this survey and will be in contact to find an optimal time to administer the survey to all participating stakeholders. We ask that you make the school staff aware of the survey ahead of the beginning date and encourage their full participation.

I will contact you mid-week to provide you a report on the number of respondents and most likely, to request that a second call for participation be made to staff. We're hoping for 100% participation!

I welcome any questions or concerns that you may have regarding the survey, and invite you to contact me at anytime at either (PHONE) or (EMAIL) for further discussion. We appreciate your collaboration and cooperation with us as we work together to build strong and effective schools for the children of the (name of district).

Sincerely,

Team leader

Appendix 3-E: Sample Letter from Principal to Staff Regarding CEE Survey

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Date

To All (SCHOOL NAME) Staff:

The Idaho State Department of Education will be conducting a Focus Visit onsite review at our school on (DATE). An essential component of the review is a survey that the site review team would like for you to complete. The purpose of this process is to gather perceptional data that will be used to identify resources and strategies to enhance and increase the effectiveness of delivering services to the students and parents in our school. All the responses to the survey are anonymous – no one will be identified or reported individually. All of the data collected will be summarized to provide a snapshot of our school, and help us to identify areas of need.

In order to ensure that the survey is completed in a timely fashion, the survey will be administered to all staff on (DATE) and ending (DATE). I ask that you all take a moment and complete the survey before the ending date.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation – let's go for 100% participation!

Thank you!

(Principal's Name)

Appendix 3-F: Sample Letter from Principal to Staff Regarding Classroom Observations and Interviews

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Date

Dear (SCHOOL NAME) Staff

On (DATE), representatives from the Idaho State Department of Education will be conducting an onsite school review. Among the many facets of this review, some or all of our teachers will be observed and interviewed during the course of the day. I have been notified that you will be one of those teachers.

In preparation for the site review, I have provided the site review team with a copy of (SCHOOL NAME) master and classroom schedules; which lists the names of all the faculty members, when particular subjects will be taught, grade levels and classroom locations (numbers), and a list of all staff with room location and job titles. This information will permit members of the site review team to create a schedule of visits and interviews. Please be advised that teachers will be notified as to the time when this observation will take place.

Classroom observations will primarily concentrate on reading/language arts and math lessons, but given time, members of the team may elect to visit additional classrooms outside of the above stated subject areas. Throughout the day, members of the review team will be observing teachers in the classrooms for 20 minutes, as well as conducting a 15 minute teacher interview either before or after the observation. Teachers who have been selected to participate in the interview will be notified prior to the on-site visit. As a part of the teacher interview process, teachers will be asked to share with the team member(s) the following documents:

a) Lesson plans;
b) Curriculum content standards;
c) Records of student performance;
d) Sample assessments (i.e. pre- and post-test, interim assessments); and
e) Sample written communication to parents.
f) Sample criteria of mastery with descriptions

Please be certain that you have these items readily available during the interview. Thanking you in advance for your ongoing support and cooperation.

Appendix 3-G: Sample Letter from Principal to Parents Regarding Instructional Core Focus Visit

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Date

Address

Dear (SCHOOL NAME) Parent;

On (DATE), representatives from the Idaho State Department of Education will be conducting an onsite school review. Among the many facets of this review, parents of their respective schools will be asked to participate in a SDE facilitated focus group meeting.   I have been asked by the SDE to identify 10-20 parents who are not employed by our school district to participate in these focus group meetings.

   The group will meet for 60 minutes.

   Timeframes will be strictly honored (starting and ending times).

   The group will contain no more than 20 and no fewer 10 members.

   The group composition should be representative of the student population of the school.

   A minimum of two team members conduct the group: one to ask questions, the other to record conversation and observations of the group and be a timekeeper.

I am asking you to represent (SCHOOL NAME) as a participant in this focus group. The meeting will be held at (LOCATION) on (DATE) from (TIME). The meeting will include facilitating questions to the group in the areas of High Standards and Expectations for All Students; Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments Aligned with State Standards; Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching; High Level of Family and Community Involvement; School Communication and School Collaboration; and School Leadership. All meetings will be conducted and facilitated by SDE team members.

Please confirm your participation on this focus group by (DATE).

Thanking you in advance for your ongoing support and cooperation.

Thank you!

(Principal's Name)

Appendix 3-H: Sample Letter from Principal to Students Regarding Instructional Core Focus Visit

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Date

Address

Dear **(SCHOOL NAME)** Parent and Student;

On **(DATE),** representatives from the Idaho State Department of Education will be conducting an onsite school review. Among the many facets of this review, parents of their respective schools will be asked to participate in a SDE facilitated focus group meeting.   I have been asked by the SDE to identify 6-8 students to participate in these focus group meetings.

- The group will meet for 60 minutes.
- Timeframes will be strictly honored **(starting and ending times).**
- The group will contain no more than 8 and no fewer 6 members.
- The group composition should be representative of the student population of the school.
- A minimum of two team members conduct the group: one to ask questions, the other to record conversation and observations of the group and be a timekeeper.

I am asking you to represent **(SCHOOL NAME)** as a participant in this focus group. The meeting will be held **at (LOCATION) on (DATE) from (TIME).** The meeting will include facilitating questions to the group in the areas of High Standards and Expectations for All Students; Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments Aligned with State Standards; Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching; High Level of Family and Community Involvement; School Communication and School Collaboration; and School Leadership. All meetings will be conducted and facilitated by SDE team members.

Parent notification and permission is required for you to participate in this focus group meeting. Please confirm your participation and return the form by **(DATE).**

Thanking you in advance for your ongoing support and cooperation.

Thank you!

(Principal's Name)

School Name: _____   Date: _____

Date of Focus Group Meeting: _____

Location of Focus Group Meeting: _____

Student Name: _____   Grade: _____

Parent Name: _____

I, _____, will allow my student
_____ to participate in the student focus group meeting. The
meeting will be held at **(LOCATION) on (DATE) from (TIME).**

I understand the meeting will include facilitating questions to the group in the areas of
High Standards and Expectations for All Students; Curriculum, Instruction and
Assessments Aligned with State Standards; Frequent Monitoring of Learning and
Teaching; High Level of Family and Community Involvement; School Communication
and School Collaboration; and School Leadership. All meetings will be conducted and
facilitated by Idaho State Department of Education team members. Meetings will be
limited to 60 minutes and timeframes will be strictly followed.

Please check the appropriate box for participation:

☐   My student will be participating in the focus group.

☐   My student will NOT be participating in the focus group.

_____   _____
(Parent Signature)   (Date)

_____   _____
(Student Signature)   (Date)

Appendix 3-I: Team Leader Checklist for Arranging Instructional Core Focus Visit Schedule

Contact Principal by telephone to discuss arrangements
- Set up a date and time to meet and review arrangements. This may be via telephone or in person

3-4 weeks before the review you need:
- Map of the school
- Master class schedule which includes names of faculty, when particular subjects will be taught, grade levels and classroom locations (numbers)
- List of all staff with room location and job titles
- Bell schedule
- Lunch schedule
- List of any special events that may have been planned on the day of the review

3 weeks before the review, schedule Focus Groups, Principal Interview, Classroom Observations, and assign team members

In the three weeks before the review, create Agenda for on-site review

On day of review, you may need access to (inform Superintendent/Principal in letter with list):
- AYP Data
- Content and Performance Standards
- Course Syllabi
- Individualized Learning Plans
- Instructional Team Meeting Schedules, Faculty Meeting Agendas, and Notes
- Instructional Units and Pacing Guides
- Principal's Calendar
- Professional Development Plan, Schedule, and Session Agendas
- Sample of newsletters & communications to external & internal audiences
- School Events Calendar
- School Improvement Plan
- Teacher Handbook
- Dedicated work space

Appendix 3-J: Instructional Core Focus Visit Schedule Form

Day _____   School Name_____

Review Date _____   Building Principal _____

Time	Reviewer Name	Reviewer Name	Reviewer Name	Reviewer Name	Reviewer Name
AM					
7:00					
7:30					
8:00					
8:30					
9:00					
9:30					
10:00					
10:30					
11:00					
11:30					
PM					
12:00					
12:30					
1:00					
1:30					
2:00					
2:30					

Time	Reviewer Name	Reviewer Name	Reviewer Name	Reviewer Name	Reviewer Name
3:00					
3:30					
4:00					
4:30					
5:00					
5:30					
6:00					
6:30					
7:00					
7:30					

*Screen shot of Excel Worksheet

Note: Team leader will schedule the following review activities: classroom visit and interview, principal interview, leadership focus group, instructional staff focus group, parent focus group, non-instructional staff focus group, document review, team meetings (as needed).

Reminder: A minimum of 2 persons assigned for each focus group as well as Principal Interview.

Reminder: schedule 45-50 minutes for TICO, not necessarily back-to-back but at teacher's convenience (for interview)

Reminder: build in time for moving around, breaks, don't forget lunch!

Appendix 3-K: List of Documents to be Requested Prior to On-Site Visit

A major part of preparing for the Instructional Core Focus Visit involves setting up the schedule for on-site activities (e.g., classroom observations and accompanying teacher interviews, focus groups). Another important preparation component is to orient team members to basic facts about the school (e.g., enrollment size, student body composition, state assessment results, and content of School Improvement Plan [if applicable]).

At least four (4) weeks prior to the visit, the Team leader should receive the following documents from the principal:

- Map of school

- Master class schedule (should contain names of faculty, when particular subjects are being taught, grade levels, classroom numbers)

- List of all staff with room locations and job titles

- Bell schedule

- Lunch schedule

- List of any special events planned during period of review (e.g., field trips, assemblies, scheduled fire drills, and professional development sessions)

- School Fact Sheet (note: this information may be obtained through a web link or provided by the school district to the Team leader)

- School Improvement Plan (note: this information may be obtained through a web link or provided by the school district to the Team leader)

Appendix 3-L: Agenda for Instructional Core Focus Visit Team Meeting to Prepare for Review

(DATE)

(VIA Telephone/Internet/In Person)

Instructional Core Focus Visit Team Members:

Team Member

Team Member

Team Member

Team leader

I.   Review of Focus Visit process and requirements/Plan Matrix/TICO review

II. Discuss upcoming date(s): on-site review and post-site visit team meeting

III. Assignments

Teacher observations

Focus groups – assign interviewers and recorders for each

Principal interview – Team leader and one recorder

Document Review – all team members

Tally sheets

Data compilation

Data analysis

Writing assignments

IV. Due dates for Assignments

V.   Contact information exchange

VI. Wrap Up

Appendix 3-M: Team Leader Checklist

Contact the principal of the school

   ___confirm contact   ___schedule time to meet

Meeting with school principal

   ___ arrange with principal to provide information to teachers about their role and responsibilities for the review and the necessary required documentation.

   ___ arrange for document review

   ___ arrange for scheduling for observation, survey monkey, and focus groups

   ___ arrange for workspace

   ___ arrange for the principal to welcome the team the first day of the review

   ___ arrange for logistics (parking, badges, lunch, etc.)

Follow-up conference with principal to confirm and obtain copy of the review schedule

Schedule pre-visit meeting with team

   ___review online school data

   ___review and disseminate schedule

   ___make team assignments

- assign focus group responsibilities and locations
- assign classrooms to be observed
- collect CEE data
- logistics (lunch breaks, badges, parking, etc.)

Reminder phone call to all team members the day before school visit

Team meeting the morning of the visit

   ___ welcome by the principal

   ___ overview of the day

   ___ verify the team member assignments

Team meeting at the end of each day collects all notes and forms

   ___ debrief and make sure that all documentation is complete

   ___ make adjustments if necessary

Completion of school visit

   ___ team meets for final debrief

   ___ team leader meets with principal to close out the process

Section 4: Conducting the Instructional Core Focus Visit

The Idaho State Department of Education continues to provide support to the Instructional Core Focus Visit team as the Instructional Core Focus Visit is conducted, with the team leader serving as the point of contact. However, the major participants are the team leader and other team members.

The Instructional Core Focus Visit consists of the following data collection activities:

- On-line CEE survey of school staff
- Teacher interview and classroom observation (TICO)
- Superintendent/Principal interview
- Focus groups for instructional staff, classified support staff (e.g., cooks, custodians, etc), leadership team, and parents
- Review of documents

CEE Survey of School Staff , Parents and Students

Data collection for the Instructional Core Focus Visit actually begins four weeks prior to the on-site visit through the on-line CEE staff survey. Ideally, this activity ends just prior to the on-site visit.

In preparing for the Instructional Core Focus Visit (see Section 3) the Team Leader (or designee) will receive CEE survey results and provide results to Capacity Builders assigned to individual schools. The assigned Capacity Builder will review the on-line survey with the principal when the data becomes available. The Capacity Builder provides the principal with material describing the survey and how it can be accessed to disseminate to school staff (Appendices 3-E).

It is the principal's responsibility to inform his/her staff of the need to complete the survey. The team leader provides updates to the principal regarding the number of respondents to date. The principal should inform the team leader of any technical problems related to the survey as promptly as possible so these issues can be resolved.

Teacher Interview and Classroom Observation (TICO)

The most extensive part of the Instructional Core Focus Visit is Teacher Interview and Classroom Observation (TICO). All team members are assigned teachers to observe and to interview following the schedule developed by the team leader. 100% of all certified staff members will participate in the classroom observations and a minimum of 60% of all certified staff members will be chosen to participate in the teacher interviews.

The number of teachers involved in TICO varies depending on the school's size and the number of team members.

Each team member is responsible for familiarizing him/herself with the TICO items and instructions. It is important to apply the indicators consistently among team members. The TICO form is reviewed at a team meeting prior to the on-site visit. Below is a set of procedures related to the conduct of the classroom observation and the teacher interview.

Classroom Observation
Be punctual. When entering the classroom, adopt a friendly manner with both the teacher and students. While in the classroom, try to be unobtrusive and remain at a distance (in the back of the room or another area away from student focus) so both students and teacher will behave "naturally," without feeling overly self-conscious about your presence. Noting the times (and duration) when certain events in the classroom begin and end are often extremely useful for characterizing the classroom and should be noted as appropriate. Be sure to complete the identifying information on both the face page and summary sheet of the TICO form. When finished, if it can be done with a gesture that doesn't interrupt instruction, thank the teacher and move on.

Each team member is to complete a TICO form for classroom observation. There are a number of indicators related to the observation period. Guidance related to responding to each indicator is provided in Section I (Classroom Observation). Limited space is provided on the TICO form for notes. Notes must be referenced to specific indicators and are only included to provide explanations, if needed. Extensive notes are not required. The observation period is to be exactly 20 minutes in length.

Teacher Interview
Show respect for the teacher by beginning and ending the interview according to the agreed-upon schedule. The interview should be conducted by a pair (if possible), with one conducting the interview and one recording the interview using the TICO form. There are a number of indicators related to the interview. A script for conducting the interview, as well as guidance related to responding to each indicator, is provided in Section II (Teacher Interview). Notes must be referenced to specific indicators and are only included to provide explanations, if needed. Extensive notes are not required.

The interview may be conducted before or after the observation, at a time when the teacher is free to talk with you for about 15 minutes and has her/his teaching

records and plans at hand. Every effort will be given to assure that the teacher is not observed and interviewed by the same team member. Teachers should have been provided a list of documents to have ready (see Section 3 Preparing for the Instructional Core Focus Visit). To keep the interview within the allotted time, the greeting must be brief, but friendly, and the questions asked and answered in a quick-paced manner. When finished, thank the teacher and move on.

Completion of TICO Form

One TICO form is to be completed and submitted for each observation/interview. The final page is a summary sheet; it is very important to fill out the form completely and provide it to the team leader by the end of the on-site visit. The forms are compiled to provide a school-level impression of classroom practice related to each indicator. These data are analyzed along with the other information gathered during the review and are used in the preparation of the review report.

Superintendent/Principal Interview and Focus Group Discussions

All team members are assigned duties related to the conduct of the six interviews and/or focus groups. These sessions are held according to the schedule prepared by the team leader. It is expected that the principal will assist with these activities by ensuring that participating school staff arrive promptly and, in the case where a focus group member is unable to participate, identify an appropriate substitute.

Focus groups will be defined by the district being reviewed. For example, teachers, parents, classified support staff (e.g., cooks, custodians, etc.), and central office personnel (e.g., curriculum director, federal programs director, etc. are a few possible focus groups.

Focus groups and the superintendent and principal interviews are conducted by a pair of individuals, with one person conducting the interview or facilitating the focus group discussion and one person taking notes. Notes should be as complete as possible; include verbatim comments for significant points. These notes are used in the process of analysis and report writing. (The review report includes no comments attributed to specific focus group participants.) The note taker, with assistance from the interviewer/facilitator, transcribes the notes as soon as possible after the interview/focus group and codes the notes in terms of the 9 standards and, to the extent possible, to specific indicators. Questions in the interview/focus group protocols carry coding related to standards and/or indicators.

Protocols and note-taking forms for the interview/focus groups are located in Appendices 4-D through 4-M. Focus group sessions are scheduled for one hour each and the time limits must be respected. It is important to manage the allotted time so that all questions are addressed. The principal interview may be divided into shorter time segments (totaling one hour) to accommodate the principal's schedule.

Tips for facilitating a successful focus group session include:

- Make sure that everyone is introduced.

- Emphasize the importance of participation by all group members.

- Establish norms for comments (e.g., each comment is valid, differences of opinion are accepted, and judgments are not made on any comments).

- Establish a level of comfort by reminding participants that, although notes are taken, everything discussed within the focus group is confidential; no comments are attributed to individuals.

- Show respect for participants by adhering to the time schedule.

- Let participants know that, in order to address each question, there may be limits set on the discussion of a particular question.

Document Review

A list of the documents to be reviewed on-site is included in Appendix 4-N. The purpose of the document review is to ascertain the existence of written documentation reflecting the Focus Visit indicators. The team leader should build time for document review into the on-site schedule. The team leader makes review assignments to team members. The team leader, working with the principal, ensures that these documents are available for review beginning the first day of the on-site visit.

Each team member should be provided with a Document Review Checklist (Appendix 4-O). The checklist identifies which documents relate to particular standards (with embedded indicators). The checklist uses a yes-no format. If substantiating evidence of an indicator is found, the name of the document must be noted. This is important for the subsequent analysis and report preparation activities.

Team Meetings

To manage the on-site visit effectively, the team leader holds daily meetings of the team to review progress and address any logistical issues. The team meets with the principal at the beginning of the on-site visit to exchange introductions and receive, from the principal, a brief orientation to the school. It is recommended that the team leader collect TICO forms and document review checklists from team members at the end of each day. Interview and focus groups notes are be finalized shortly after the on-site visit.

Exit Conversation with the District and Building Leadership Teams

At the end of the on-site visit the team leader arranges a meeting in which participation is expected from the district, building, and school board leadership. The district is responsible for inviting key influential stakeholders to this exit meeting. The team leader is able to discuss highlights of the review process as well as identify some strengths of the school's program based on preliminary team discussion and share set of findings and recommendations at this time. The meeting is also an opportunity for the team leader to answer questions regarding the next step in the Instructional Core Focus Visit process, data analysis, and report preparation. A set of suggested talking points for the team leader is included in Appendix 4-S. Once the review team completes the on-site visit, it proceeds to the stage of compiling and analyzing the data and preparing the review report (Section 5).

The appendices related to this section include all of the data collection instruments, the list of documents the school provides on-site and suggested agendas for team meetings held during the on-site visit.

Section 4 Appendices: Conducting the Instructional Core Focus Visit

4-A	Conducting the Review Timeline
4-B	TICO Instructions
4-C (1)	Classroom Observation form
4-C (2)	TICO Scoring Rubric
4-C (3)	Teacher Interview form
4-D (1)	Superintendent Interview
4-D (2)	Superintendent Notes
4-E (1)	Principal Interview
4-E (2)	Principal Interview Notes
4-F (1)	Leadership Team Focus Group
4-F (2)	Leadership Team Focus Group Notes
4-G (1)	Instructional Staff Focus Group
4-G (2)	Instructional Staff Focus Group Notes
4-H (1)	Non-Certified Staff Focus Group
4-H (2)	Non-Certified Staff Focus Group Notes
4-I (1)	Parent Focus Group
4-I (2)	Parent Focus Group Notes
4-J (1)	Student Focus Group
4-J (2)	Student Focus Group Notes
4-K	List of Requested Documents for Document Review
4-L	Document Review Checklist
4-M	Instructional Staff Survey
	School Surveys (Staff, Family Perspectives, Students)

Appendix 4-A: Conducting the Review Timeline

ACTIVITY	COMPLETION DATE
Team conducts data collection activities including classroom observations, teacher interviews, principal and superintendent interviews, focus group meetings, etc.	Daily during on-site
Team leader collects observation checklists, interview notes, etc.	Daily during on-site
Team leader meets with principal(s)	Daily during on-site
Team leader collects data points and complies final recommendations	
Team leader returns school documents to principal*	Day 3 of Review

* Team may retain documents for reference until report is prepared

Appendix 4-B: Instructions for Using TICO Prior to School Visit

The team leader will make arrangements for both the classroom observations and the associated teacher interviews. Team members will be provided with a schedule for observation and interviews that includes the names of the teachers, the grade level, the subject (for secondary schools), the room location, and the observation and interview times. A map of the school will also be provided. The schedule will provide time for a 20-minutes classroom observation and a 15-minute interview. The observation period should reflect typical classroom activity.

The team leader will request that the principal inform the teachers who will be involved in the TICO process, including the times scheduled for the observation and interview periods. These teachers should be asked to have the following materials available for reference during the interview: (1) weekly lesson plan (for the week of the visit); (2) related unit plans; (3) related curricular content standards; (4) records of student performance; (5) sample of assessments (e.g., summative, diagnostic); and (6) written communications to parents.

Classroom Observation

Be punctual. When entering the classroom, adopt a friendly manner with both the teacher and students. While in the classroom, try to be unobtrusive and remain at a distance (in the back of the room or another area away from student focus) so both students and teacher will behave "naturally," without feeling overly self-conscious about your presence. Noting the times (and duration) when certain events in the classroom begin and end are often extremely useful for characterizing the classroom and should be noted as appropriate. Be sure to complete the identifying information on the TICO cover sheet and summary sheet.

If you are paired for the observation, consider dividing primary responsibilities for the set of indicators, particularly if multiple learning activities (e.g., small groups and independent work) are occurring simultaneously.

Each observer is to complete a TICO form for classroom observation. There are 13 indicators related to the observation period. Guidance related to responding to each indicator is provided in Section 4 of TICO (Classroom Observation) on pages 46-51. Limited space has been provided on the TICO form for notes. Notes should be referenced to specific indicators and are only needed to provide explanations, if needed. Extensive notes are not required.

Teacher Interview

Show respect for the teacher by beginning and ending the interview according to the agreed-upon schedule. The interview should ideally be conducted by a pair, with one

conducting the interview and one recording the interview using the TICO form. If necessary, one person may conduct the interview. There are 14 indicators related to the interview. A script for conducting the interview as well as guidance related to responding to each indicator is provided in Section 4 of TICO (Teacher Interview) on pages 68-70. Notes should be reference to specific indicators and are only needed to provide explanations, if needed. Extensive notes are not required.

The interview may be conducted before or after the observation, at a time when the teacher is free to talk with you for about 15 minutes and has her/his teaching records and plans at hand. To keep the interview within the allotted time, the greeting must be brief, but friendly, and the questions asked and answered in a quick-paced manner. When finished, thank the teacher and move on.

Completion of TICO Form

Partners (if applicable) should get together and complete one TICO form for each observation/interview. The form must be completely filled out and provided to the Team leader by the end of the on-site visit. The data on the Summary Sheet (pages 140-141) will be compiled to provide a school-level impression of classroom practice related to each indicator. These data will be analyzed along with the other information gathered during the review and will be used in the preparation of the review report.

Classroom Observation:

(A standard amount of observation time —20 minutes—for each teacher)

When entering the classroom, adopt a friendly manner with both the teacher and students. While in the classroom, try to be unobtrusive and remain at a distance (in the back of the room or another area away from student focus) so both students and teacher will behave "naturally," without feeling overly self-conscious about your presence. Noting the times (and duration) when certain events in the classroom begin and end are often extremely useful for characterizing the classroom and should be noted as appropriate.

Important Note: *The explanations of individual indicators in Sections b, c, and d, and apply them when responding to ensure consistency among reviewers. Reviewer response choices are provided for each indicator. Refer to the scoring rubric when making a determination of descriptors. This is strictly based on whether the indicator was observed and to the degree that indicator was observed as determined by the observer.*

General Information:

Please complete the general information before the observation is scheduled but complete this section in its entirety. General information includes:

Grade Level: _____   Teacher Name: _____

Subject: _____   Observer Name: _____

Date: _____ Begin: _____ End: _____ Total Time: _____

Observation Statistics:

Complete this portion of the TICO form during the actual observation. Refer to the focus visit master schedule to determine the observation time and only mark on box. The number of students will reflect the number of students in attendance during the observation not the total number of students listed on the class roster. Make note of the presence and total number of any additional adult instructional staff. In the space provided document what specific activities the additional adult instructional staff members are performing.

OBSERVATION STATISTICS:
(mark all that apply)   # of Students: _____   **Aide Present:**   Y   N

Observation Time *(refer to schedule)*   **How many?** _____
  ☐ **Beginning of Lesson**   *(If aide is present please make note of all duties performed)*
  ☐ **Middle of Lesson**
  ☐ **End of Lesson**

Percent of Time:

Please estimate the total percent of time spent on each of these areas of possible instructional techniques. This is strictly a rough estimate of the percent of time spent in each of these areas. If activities are observed other than those listed please include a specific description and percent of time in the "Other" category. *(If two or more instructional modes take place simultaneously, assign the time to each; the combined time of the five modes may, thus, exceed the total time of the observation. Indicate this situation in the Notes section of this form.)*

Percent of Time: *(please estimate the total percent of time spent on each of these areas of instruction)*

Tch Directed: _____ %   **Student Directed:** _____ %   **Independent Work:** _____ %

Computer-Based: _____ %   **Other:** _____ %
                                                    (please specify) _____

Teacher-Directed Whole Class / Teacher-Directed Small Group

Teacher-directed, whole-class instruction is the traditional mode of the teacher at the center of instruction with students at their desks or stations listening to the teacher and responding to the teacher. Depending upon when the observer is in the classroom, the teacher may be introducing the lesson, presenting the lesson, or summarizing the lesson. In teacher-directed small group, we are looking for the same teaching practices that a teacher would use in whole-class. The observer checks only the items appropriate for the phases of instruction observed

Student-Directed Groups

The teacher may have the students working in groups that are led by one student, groups engaged in cooperative learning activities, or groups following an agenda without a leader. It is possible that the teacher is working with one group while other groups of students are directing their own group activities. In that case, focus on the teacher within the group he/she is leading. This category, student-directed groups, applies if the teacher is NOT primarily occupied with one group.

Independent Work

Independent work is what is often called "seat time," when students are working on assignments individually. Taking a test wouldn't count as "independent work" and wouldn't make for a good observation session. In this set of observations, the focus is on the instructional interactions of the student, teacher, and the work.   We are looking to see if the teacher is active, using the time to check student work, provide feedback, and give assistance.

Domain 2: The Classroom Environment

The Classroom Management items are assessed by the observer by merely looking around the room at the time of the classroom observation, not by interview. Each indicator will be assessed for level of implementation based on the scoring rubric. This is strictly an observation, or a moment-in-time snapshot, and is not an evaluative

DOMAIN 2: The Classroom Environment		U	B	P	D	NA
IIIA28	Travel to all areas in which students are working.	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA32	Interacts managerially with students (reinforcing class rules, procedures)	1	2	3	4	0
IIIC01	When waiting for teacher assistance or finished with assignment, students are occupied with curriculum-related activities.	1	2	3	4	0
IIIC10	Reinforces classroom rules & procedures by positively teaching them.	1	2	3	4	0

process.

IIIA28: During the observed period the teacher moves to all areas of the classroom in which students are working.

IIIA32: Bi-directional, verbal interaction or observation between the teacher and student(s) includes at least one heard instance of explaining, reinforcing classroom procedures or rules.

IIIC01: This is evidence that the teacher has provided "wait time" procedures or activities. The item is checked observed if the observer notes students who turn from one activity (whether computer-based, small group, independent) to other curriculum-based work while waiting for teacher assistance.

IIIC10: At least one heard or observed instance of the teacher explaining, reinforcing classroom procedures or rules.

Domain 3: The Instruction

The Classroom Instruction items are assessed by the observer by merely watching the interaction and engagement of teacher and student. Each indicator will be assessed for level of implementation based on the scoring rubric. This is strictly an observation and not an evaluative process.

DOMAIN 3: Instruction		U	B	P	D	NA
IIIA09	Clearly states the lesson's topic, theme, or chief objective	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA11	Uses modeling, demonstration, graphics	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA13	Explains directly and thoroughly	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA16	Uses prompting/cueing	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA21	Re-teaches following questioning	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA26	Encourages students to check their own comprehension	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA31	Interacts instructionally with students (explaining, checking, giving feedback)	1	2	3	4	0
IIIC05	Uses a variety of instructional modes.	1	2	3	4	0
IIIC12	Engages all students (e.g., encourages silent students to participate)	1	2	3	4	0

IIIA09: The purpose of the lesson is clearly stated or implied to the students.

IIIA11: The teacher provides a concrete organizer by using a model, demonstration, or graphic.

IIIA13: Without rambling, the teacher clearly presents, "teaches" the lesson in a way that is clear to the students.

IIIA16: A cue or prompt is a signal, hint, or nudge to help the student toward a correct response. The teacher may frame a question to provide contextual cues.

IIIA21: The teacher follows questioning with "re-teaching" or "re-presentation" to fill gaps in understanding. If so, check YES.

IIIA26: The teacher asks questions that require not so much an answer to the teacher but a self-assessment of comprehension. This is similar to "thinking about your own thinking."

IIIA31: Bi-directional, verbal interaction between the teacher and student(s) includes at least one instance of instructionally-based comments during student group work or independent work.

IIIC05: During the observed period the teacher uses more than one mode of instruction (e.g., whole class, small group, computer-based, independent).

IIIC12: At least one heard or observed instance of the teacher explaining, reinforcing classroom procedures or rules.

Notes and Comments Regarding Classroom Observation

Please record any factual, observable, and antidotal information pertaining to each of the indicators on the reverse side of the collection tool to add clarity and transparency to the observation. Please be specific and thorough, but brief in your comments. These comments will be reviewed and reported as additional evidence to support each of the indicators. It is necessary that as much of the observation be collected as possible to provide the most accurate, objective "snap shot" of the classroom instruction.

Return the completed observation tool to the team leader as soon as possible for data entry and analysis.

(Reference the indicator code with each comment. Wrap Up/Check for Understanding)

Appendix 4-C (1): Classroom Observation Form

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION FORM　　　　　Confidential　　　　　Idaho State Department of Education

Grade Level: _____　　　　　　　　**Teacher Name:** _____

Subject: _____　　　　**Observer Name:** _____

Date: _____　　**Begin:** _____　　**End:** _____　　**Total Time:** _____

OBSERVATION STATISTICS:
(mark all that apply)　　　　　　　# **of Students:** _____　　**Aide Present:**　Y　N

Observation Time *(refer to schedule)*　　　　　　　　　　**How many?** _____
☐ **Beginning of Lesson**　　*(If aide is present please make note of all duties performed)*
☐ **Middle of Lesson**
☐ **End of Lesson**

Percent of Time: *(please estimate the total percent of time spent on each of these areas of instruction)*

Tch Directed: _____ %　　　　**Student Directed:** _____ %　　　　**Independent Work:** _____ %

Computer-Based: _____ %　　　　**Other:** _____ %
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(please specify) _____

DOMAIN 2: The Classroom Environment		U	B	P	D	NA
IIIA28	Travel to all areas in which students are working.	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA32	Interacts managerially with students (reinforcing class rules, procedures)	1	2	3	4	0
IIIC01	When waiting for teacher assistance or finished with assignment, students are occupied with curriculum-related activities.	1	2	3	4	0
IIIC10	Reinforces classroom rules & procedures by positively teaching them.	1	2	3	4	0
DOMAIN 3: Instruction		U	B	P	D	NA
IIIA09	Clearly states the lesson's topic, theme, or chief objective	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA11	Uses modeling, demonstration, graphics	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA13	Explains directly and thoroughly	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA16	Uses prompting/cueing	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA21	Re-teaches following questioning	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA26	Encourages students to check their own comprehension	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA31	Interacts instructionally with students (explaining, checking, giving feedback)	1	2	3	4	0
IIIC05	Uses a variety of instructional modes.	1	2	3	4	0
IIIC12	Engages all students (e.g., encourages silent students to participate)	1	2	3	4	0

Other Activities:

Include all critical comments and supporting evidence observed to strengthen the ranking for each indicator. Please be as objective, complete and clear as possible.

DOMAIN 2: The Classroom Environment

IIIA28	Travel to all areas in which students are working.
IIIA32	Interacts managerially with students (reinforcing class rules, procedures)
IIIC01	When waiting for teacher assistance or finished with assignment, students are occupied with curriculum-related activities.
IIIC10	Reinforces classroom rules & procedures by positively teaching them.

DOMAIN 3: Instruction

IIIA09	Clearly states the lesson's topic, theme, or chief objective
IIIA11	Uses modeling, demonstration, graphics
IIIA13	Explains directly and thoroughly
IIIA16	Uses prompting/cueing
IIIA21	Re-teaches following questioning
IIIA26	Encourages students to check their own comprehension
IIIA31	Interacts instructionally with students (explaining, checking, giving feedback)
IIIC05	Uses a variety of instructional modes.
IIIC12	Engages all students (e.g., encourages silent students to participate)

SCORING RUBRIC FOR CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

DOMAIN 2: Classroom Environment	Unsatisfactory 1	Basic 2	Proficient 3	Distinguished 4	NA 0
IIIA28 Travel to all areas in which students are working.	Student behavior is not monitored, and the teacher is unaware of what the students are doing.	Teacher is generally aware of student behavior but may miss the activities of some students.	Teacher is alert to student behavior at all times.	Monitoring by the teacher is subtle and preventive. Students monitor their own and their peers' behavior, correcting one another respectfully.	Not Observed

DOMAIN 2: Classroom Environment	Unsatisfactory 1	Basic 2	Proficient 3	Distinguished 4	NA 0
IIIA32 Interacts managerially with students (reinforcing class rules, procedures)	Teacher does not respond to misbehavior, or the response is inconsistent, is overly repressive, or does not respect the student's dignity.	Teacher attempts to respond to student misbehavior but with uneven results, or there are not major infractions of the rules.	Teacher response to misbehavior is appropriate and successful and respects the student's dignity, or student behavior is general appropriate.	Teacher response to misbehavior is highly effective and sensitive to students' individual needs, or student behavior is entirely appropriate.	Not Observed

DOMAIN 2: Classroom Environment	Unsatisfactory 1	Basic 2	Proficient 3	Distinguished 4	NA 0
IIICo1 When waiting for teacher assistance or finished with assignment, students are occupied with curriculum-related activities.	Students not working with teacher are not productively engage in learning or curriculum-related activities.	Students not directly supervised by the teacher are somewhat productively engaged in learning and curriculum-related activities.	Most students are productively engaged in learning and curriculum-related activities while unsupervised by the teacher.	Students are productively engaged in learning and curriculum-related activities while unsupervised by the teacher at all times, with students assuming responsibility for productivity.	Not Observed

Appendix 4-C (2): Classroom Observation Scoring Rubric

| DOMAIN 2: Classroom Environment | Unsatisfactory | Basic | Proficient | Distinguished | NA |
	1	2	3	4	0
IIIC10 Reinforces classroom rules & procedures by positively teaching them.	Teacher interaction with at leate some students is negative, demeaning, sarcastic, or inappropriate to the age or culture of the students. Students exhibit disrespect for the teacher.	Teacher-student interactions are generally appropriate but may reflect occasional inconsistencies, favoritism, or disregard for students' cultures. Students exhibit minimal respect for the teacher.	Teacher-student interactions are friendly and demonstrate general caring and respect. Such interactions are appropriate to the age and cultures of the students. Students exhibit respect for the teacher.	Teacher interactions with the students reflect genuine respect and caring for individuals as well as groups of students. Students appear to trust the teacher with sensitive information.	Not Observed

| DOMAIN 3: Instruction | Unsatisfactory | Basic | Proficient | Distinguished | NA |
	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA09 Clearly states the lesson's topic, theme, or chief objective	Teacher's purpose in a lesson or unit is unclear to students.	Teacher attempts to explain the instructional purpose, with limited success.	Teacher's purpose for the lesson or unit is clear, including where it is situated within broader learning.	Teacher makes the purpose of the lesson or unit clear, including where it is situated within broader learning, linking that purpose to student interests.	Not observed

| DOMAIN 3: Instruction | Unsatisfactory | Basic | Proficient | Distinguished | NA |
	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA11 Uses modeling, demonstration, graphics	Modeling, demonstrations or graphics are inappropriate for students' age or background. Students are not mentally engaged in them.	Modeling, demonstrations, or graphics are appropriate for some students and engage them mentally, but others are not engaged.	Most modeling, demonstrations, or graphics are appropriate for students, and almost all students are cognitively engaged with exploring content.	All students are cognitively engaged with modeling, demonstrations, or graphics in exploration of the content. Students initiate or adapt to enhance their understanding.	Not Observed

63

DOMAIN 3: Instruction

	Unsatisfactory 1	Basic 2	Proficient 3	Distinguished 4	NA 0
IIIA3 Explains directly and thoroughly	Teacher's directions and procedures are confusing to students.	Teacher's directions and procedures are clarified after initial student confusion.	Teacher's directions and procedures are clear to students.	Teacher's directions and procedures are clear to students and anticipate possible student misunderstandings.	Not observed
	The lesson has no clearly defined structure, or the pace of the lesson is too slow or rushed, or both.	The lesson has a recognizable structure, although it is not uniformly maintained throughout the lesson. Pacing of the lesson is inconsistent.	The lesson has a clearly defined structure around which the activities are organized. Pacing of the lesson is generally appropriate.	The lesson's structure is highly coherent, allowing for reflection and closure. Pacing of the lesson is appropriate for all students.	
	Teacher's explanation of the content is unclear or confusing or uses inappropriate language.	Teacher's explanation of the content is uneven; some done skillfully, but other portions are difficult to follow.	Teacher's explanation of content is appropriate and connects with students' knowledge and experience.	Teacher's explanation of content is imaginative and connects with students' knowledge and experience. Students contribute to explaining concepts to their peers.	

DOMAIN 3: Instruction

	Unsatisfactory 1	Basic 2	Proficient 3	Distinguished 4	NA 0
IIIA16 Uses prompting/cueing	Teacher's questions and cueing are virtually all of poor quality, with low cognitive challenge and single correct responses, and they are asked in rapid succession.	Teacher's questions are a combinatin of low and high quality, posed in rapid succession. Only some invite a thoughtful response.	Most of teacher's questions are of high quality. Adequate time is provided for studetns to respond	Teacher's questions are of unifuormly high quality, with adequate time for students to repousd. Students formulate many questions.	Not observed

64

DOMAIN 3: Instruction

	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	NA
	1	2	3	4	
	Teacher adheres rigidly to an instructional plan, even when a change is clearly needed.	Teacher attempts to adjust a lesson when needed, with only partially successful results.	Teacher makes a minor adjustment to a lesson, and the adjustment occurs smoothly.	Teacher successfully makes a major adjustment to a lesson when needed.	Not observed
IIIA21 Re-teaches following questioning	Teacher ignores or brushes aside students' questions or interests.	Teacher attempts to accommodate students' questions or interests, although the pacing of the lesson is disrupted.	Teacher successfully accommodates students' questions or interests.	Teacher seizes a major opportunity to enhance learning, building on student interests or a spontaneous event.	

DOMAIN 3: Instruction

	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	NA
	1	2	3	4	0
IIIA26 Encourages students to check their own comprehension	Students do not engage in self-assessment or monitoring of progress.	Students occasionally assess the quality of their own work against the assessment criteria and performance standards.	Students frequently assess and monitor the quality of their own work against the assessment criteria and performance standards.	Students not only frequently assess and monitor the quality of their own work against the assessment criteria and performance standards but also make active use of that information in their learning.	Not Observed

DOMAIN 3: Instruction

	Unsatisfactory 1	Basic 2	Proficient 3	Distinguished 4	NA 0
IIIA31 Interacts instructionally with students (explaining, checking, giving feedback)	The lesson has no clearly defined structure, or the pace of the lesson is too slow or rushed, or both.	The lesson has a recognizable structure, although it is not uniformly maintained throughout the lesson. Pacing of the lesson is inconsistent.	The lesson has a clearly defined structure around which the activities are organized. Pacing of the lesson is generally appropriate.	The lesson's structure is highly coherent, allowing for reflection and closure. Pacing of the lesson is appropriate for all students.	Not Observed
	Interaction between teacher and students is predominately recitation style, with the teacher mediating all questions and answers.	Teacher makes some attempt to engage students in genuine discussion rather than recitation, with uneven results.	Teacher creates a genuine discussion among students, stepping aside when appropriate.	Students assume considerable responsibility for the success of the discussion, initiating topics and making unsolicited contributions.	
	Teacher's feedback to students is of poor quality and not provided in a timely manner.	Teacher's feedback to students is uneven, and its timeliness is inconsistent.	Teacher's feedback to students is timely and of consistently high quality.	Teacher's feedback to students is timely and of consistently high quality, and students make use of the feedback in their learning.	

DOMAIN 3: Instruction

	Unsatisfactory 1	Basic 2	Proficient 3	Distinguished 4	NA 0
IIICo5 Uses a variety of instructional modes.	Variety of instructional groups or modes is inappropriate or absent. Teacher did not use a variety of instructional modes including whole group, small group, computer-based or independent.	Variety of instructional groups or modes is only partially appropriate or moderately successful in advancing the instructional goals of the lesson.	Variety of instructional groups or modes is fully appropriate and productive in advancing the instructional goals of the lesson.	Variety of instructional groups or modes is fully appropriate and productive in advancing the instructional goals of the lesson. Students take the initiative to influence instructional groups to advance their understanding.	Not observed

66

Instruction	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	NA
	1	2	3	4	0
	A few students dominate the discussion.	Teacher attempts to engage all students in the discussion, but with only limited success.	Teacher successfully engages all students in the discussion.	Students themselves ensure that all voices are heard in the discussion.	Not observed
...ages all students (e.g., encourages ...nt students to participate)	Instructional materials and resources are unsuitable to the instructional purposes of do not engage students mentally.	Instructional materials and resources are only partially suitable to the instructional purposes, or students are only partially mentally engaged with them.	Instructional materials and resources are suitable to the instructional purposes and engage students mentally.	Instructional materials and resources are suitable to the instructional purposes and engage students mentally. Students initiate the choice, adaptation, or creation of materials to enhance their learning	

II. Teacher Interview

The Teacher Interview may be conducted before or after the observation, at a time when the teacher is free to talk with you for about 15 minutes and has his/her teaching records and plans at hand. A different reviewer will be used than the one who conducted the classroom observation. To keep the interview within the allotted time, the greeting must be brief, but friendly, and the questions asked and answered in a quick-paced manner. It may be helpful to begin the interview by reminding the teacher of the documents he/she was to have available. Use the script found below each of the indicator tables. If YES, check box on right hand side of the table. When finished, thank the teacher and move on.

Aligned, Objectives-Based Instruction and Assessment

IIIA01: *"Do you plan your lessons with guidance from a document that aligns the curriculum to state standards?"* If yes, *"please show me the document."* If the teacher demonstrates that his/her daily lesson plans are aligned to standards, then check YES.

IIA01: *"Do you have standards-aligned instructional units for each subject and grade level as a resource for your lesson planning?"* If yes, *"please show me the document."* If available, Check YES.

IIA02: *"Do your instructional units include performance objectives and criteria for student mastery?"* If yes, *"please show me unit descriptions."* If the teacher has instructional units that reference specific standards-based objectives and mastery criteria, then check YES. (Note: if this is the same document shown for previous item, ascertain that it does include performance objectives and then check YES)

IIIA02: *"Are your weekly lesson plans aligned with the units of instruction?"* If yes, ask to see a plan(s) and the corresponding instructional unit. If it is clear from the documents or from the teacher's explanation that alignment is a regular consideration in weekly lesson planning, check YES.

IIC01: *"Are the learning activities in your lesson plan related to standards-based performance objectives?" If yes, "please provide some examples from this lesson plan."* If the teacher demonstrates in his/her lesson plan alignment of activities to performance objectives, then check YES.

IIBO1: *"Do you use a pre-test/post-test to determine each student's readiness for a new unit of instruction and mastery at the completion of a unit of instruction?"* If yes, ask the teacher to show you or describe one of the pre-test/post-tests used. If the pre-test/post-test is aligned with objectives, check YES. Note that a test is not necessarily paper-pencil in early grades, but may be an oral check of each student's readiness and mastery.

IIB04: If YES to IIB01, ask: *"Do you individualize instruction based on pre-test results?"* If yes, ask the teacher to show an example. If there is evidence that instruction is differentiated, check YES.

IIB05: If YES to IIBO1, ask: *"What do you do for students who don't pass the test?"* If the teacher systematically re-teaches, check YES.

IIIA01	Is guided by a document that aligns instruction to a standards-based curriculum	Y	N
IIA01	Uses a standards-aligned unit of instruction for each subject and grade level developed by the Instructional Team	Y	N
IIA02	Uses a unit of instruction that includes standards-based objectives and criteria for Mastery	Y	N
IIIA02	Develops a weekly lesson plan aligned with unit of instruction	Y	N
IIC01	Organizes instruction around learning activities aligned to objectives	Y	N
IIB01	Units of instruction include pre-/post-tests to assess student mastery of standards-based objectives.	Y	N
IIB04	Teacher individualizes instruction based on pre-test results to provide support for some students and enhanced learning opportunities for others	Y	N
IIB05	Re-teaches based on post-test results	Y	N

Classroom Management

IIIC01: Ask *"What do students do if they have completed their assigned work when working independently or when they are waiting for help from the teacher?"* If the teacher indicates that he/she routinely provides students with curriculum-related work to

do if they complete an assignment or are waiting for help, or has a procedure for students to follow in cases of completing an assignment or waiting for help, check YES.

IIICo1	Provides curriculum-related activities for students when they have completed other work or are waiting for assistance	Y N

Homework/Communication with Parents

IIIB06: Ask, *"Do you report to parents how their child is doing in mastering specific objectives?"* If yes, ask to see a sample of a report that parents receive. If the report is systematically sent to parents at least once each grading period and includes indication of mastery of objectives, check YES.

IIIBo6	Systematically reports to parents the student's mastery of specific objectives	Y N

Computer-Based Instruction (Aligned, Objectives-Based Curriculum and Assessment)

Prompt: Ask, *"Do students use computer-based instructional programs in the subject we are observing?"* Clarify that the students receive instruction through a computer program and don't use it only as a tool for word processing or similar tasks. If yes, check YES.

If "NO" to prompt, the interview is completed. If "YES", continue.

IIIA40: Ask, *"What do you do with reports of learning objectives accomplished with the computer program?"* If the teacher explains a system either within the program itself or in his/her documentation that keeps a record of student mastery of subject objectives, check YES.

Notes and Comments Regarding Interview (Reference the indicator code with each comment.

Interview with Teacher   Date: _____   Grade Level: _____   Subject: _____

Teacher Name: _____   Observer(s): _____

Y = Yes - Stated with supporting evidence   *N = no supporting evidence*

Aligned, Objectives-Based Instruction and Assessment		Evidence/Statement
IIIA01 Is guided by a document that aligns instruction to a standards-based curriculum	Y N	
IIA01 Uses a standards-aligned unit of instruction for each subject and grade level developed by the Instructional Team	Y N	
IIA02 Uses a unit of instruction that includes standards-based objectives and criteria for Mastery	Y N	
IIIA02 Develops a weekly lesson plan aligned with unit of instruction	Y N	
IIC01 Organizes instruction around learning activities aligned to objectives	Y N	
IIB01 Units of instruction include pre-/post-tests to assess student mastery of standards-based objectives.	Y N	
IIB04 Teacher individualizes instruction based on pre-test results to provide support for some students and enhanced learning opportunities for others	Y N	

Appendix 4-C (3): Teacher Interview Form   71

Code	Description		
IIIBo5	Re-teaches based on post-test results	Y N	
IIIAo5	Maintains a record of each student's mastery of specific learning objectives	Y N	DO NOT ASK
IIIAo6	Tests frequently using a variety of evaluation strategies and maintains record of results	Y N	DO NOT ASK

Classroom Management

Code	Description		
IIICo1	Provides curriculum-related activities for students when they have completed other work or are waiting for assistance	Y N	

Homework/Communication with Parents

Code	Description		
IIIBo6	Systematically reports to parents the student's mastery of specific objectives	Y N	

Computer-Based Instruction

Code	Description		
IIIA4o	If using computer-based learning, assesses student mastery in ways other than those provided by the computer program	Y N	

Informational

	What is the best part of working at this school?

Appendix 4-D (1): Superintendent Interview Questions
Guidelines:

- The interviewer(s) will meet from 60-90 minutes, depending on the time allotted.
- Timelines will be strictly honored (starting and ending times).
- At least 2 people will conduct the interview.
- The selected interviewers should have had school experience and/or a leadership role.
- One person should ask questions and the other record conversation and observations.

District Context and Support

IA07: The district sets district, school, and student subgroup achievement targets.

"What types of district, school, and student subgroup achievement targets does the district set?"

IA08: The school board and superintendent present a unified vision for school improvement.

"To what degree is your vision for school improvement unified with that of the school board? How do you and the board articulate that to the stakeholders of the district?"

IA09: The superintendent and other central office staff are accountable for school improvement and student learning outcomes.

"Other than through state mechanisms, how are you and others in your central office staff held accountable for school improvement and learning outcomes for all students?"

IA10: The district regularly reallocates resources to support school, staff, and instructional improvement.

"Describe the way in which you reallocate resources to support school, staff, and instructional improvement. What are some specific recent examples of these reallocations?"

IA12: The district intervenes early when a school is not making adequate progress.

"Describe the process that your district uses to intervene when a school is not making adequate progress."

IA13: The district works with the school to provide early and intensive intervention for students not making progress.

> *"In what ways do you and central office staff work with the struggling schools to provide early and intensive intervention for students that are not making progress?" Describe some specific examples.*

IA14: The district recruits, trains, supports, and places personnel to competently address the problems of schools in need of improvement.

> *"Describe what practices, procedures and policies are currently used to recruit, train, support and place qualified and effective personnel to competently address the problems of schools in need of improvement?"*

District and Change Process

IB01: The district operates with district-level and school-level improvement teams.

> *"What district and school-level teams are in place that works to ensure improvement is occurring in areas of need? What is the frequency of meetings and structure or format of these meetings? What is the accountability or evaluation process for these improvement teams?"*

IB02: The district examines existing school improvement strategies being implemented across the district and determines their value, expanding, modifying, and culling as evidence suggests.

> *"How does the district examine existing school improvement strategies that are being implemented across the district to determine their value? What process is in place to expand, modify, or set aside these strategies depending on the results of this process?"*

IB07: The district ensures that the improvement plan includes research-based, field-proven programs, practices, and models.

> *"In what ways does the central office ensure that the district's improvement plan includes research-based, proven programs, practices, and models? How does the district ensure implementation of these research-based programs, practices and models are done with fidelity?"*

IB10: The district ensures that the change agent (typically the principal) is skilled in motivating staff and the community, communicating clear expectations, and focusing on improved student learning.

"To what degree are school leaders skilled in motivating both the staff and the community, communicating clear expectations, and focusing on improved student learning? What do you do when they are not skilled in one of these areas?"

IB12: The district is prepared for setbacks, resistance, and obstacles on the path to substantial improvement.

"How do you handle setbacks, resistance, and/or obstacles on the path to the improvement process in schools?"

District-School Expectations

IC01: The school reports and documents its progress monthly to the superintendent, and the superintendent reports the school's progress to the school board.

"Describe the type and frequency with which schools report and document their progress to you. Similarly, describe the way in which you report schools' progress to the school board."

IC02: The district designates a central office contact person for the school, and that person maintains close communication with the school and an interest in its progress.

"IS there someone from the district designated as a central office contact person for schools in need of improvement, and how does that person maintain close communication with the school and an interest in its progress?"

IC05: The district provides a cohesive district curriculum guide/map aligned with state standards or otherwise places curricular expectations on the school.

"What are the district's curricular expectations for schools both in terms of alignment to state standards and also from one grade level to the next within the district? In other words, describe the degree to which the district has mapped curriculum expectations."

IC07: Professional development is built into the school schedule by the district, but the school is allowed discretion in selecting training and consultation that fit the requirements of its restructuring plan and its evolving needs.

"Describe the ways in which professional development is built into school schedules by the district. To what degree are the schools allowed discretion in selecting training and/or the help of consultants that match identified areas of need?"

IC08: Staff development is built into the schedule for support staff (e.g., aides, clerks, custodians, cooks) as well as classroom teachers.

> *"Describe how staff development is built into the schedule for all types of support staff (e.g., aides, clerks, custodians, cooks)?"*

Appendix 4-D (2): Superintendent Interview Notes Page

District Context and Support

1. **(IA07) -** What types of district, school, and student subgroup achievement targets does the district set?

2. **(IA08) –** To what degree is your vision for school improvement unified with that of the school board? How do you and the board articulate that to the stakeholders of the district?

3. **(IA09) -** Other than through state mechanisms, how are you and others in your central office staff held accountable for school improvement and learning outcomes for all students?

4. **(IA10) –** Describe the way in which you reallocate resources to support school, staff, and instructional improvement.

5. **(IA12) –** Describe the process that your district uses to intervene when a school is not making adequate progress.

6. **(IA13) –** In what ways do you and central office staff work with the struggling schools to provide early and intensive intervention for students that are not making progress?

7. **(IA14) -** Describe what practices, procedures and policies are currently used to recruit, train, support and place qualified and effective personnel to competently address the problems of schools in need of improvement?

District and Change Process

8. **(IB01) –** What district and school-level teams are in place that works to ensure improvement is occurring in areas of need?

9. **(IB02) –** How does the district examine existing school improvement strategies that are being implemented across the district to determine their value? What process is in place to expand, modify, or set aside these strategies depending on the results of this process?

10. **(IB07) –** In what ways does the central office ensure that the district's improvement plan includes research-based, proven programs, practices, and models? How does the district ensure implementation of these research-based programs, practices and models are done with fidelity?

11. **(IB10) –** To what degree are school leaders skilled in motivating both the staff and the community, communicating clear expectations, and focusing on improved student learning? What do you do when they are not skilled in one of these areas?

12. **(IB12) –** How do you handle setbacks, resistance, and/or obstacles on the path to the improvement process in schools?

District-School Expectations

13. **(IC01) –** Describe the type and frequency with which schools report and document their progress to you. Similarly, describe the way in which you report schools' progress to the school board.

14. **(IC02) –** Is there someone from the district designated as a central office contact person for schools in need of improvement, and how does that person maintain close communication with the school and an interest in its progress?

15. **(IC05) –** What are the district's curricular expectations for schools both in terms of alignment to state standards and also from one grade level to the next within the district? In other words, describe the degree to which the district has mapped curriculum expectations.

16. **(IC07) –** Describe the ways in which professional development is built into school schedules by the district. To what degree are the schools allowed discretion in selecting training and/or the help of consultants that match identified areas of need?

17. **(IC08) –** Describe how staff development is built into the schedule for all types of support staff (e.g., aides, clerks, custodians, cooks)?

Appendix 4-E (1): Principal Interview Form
Guidelines:

- The interviewer(s) will meet from 60-90 minutes, depending on the time allotted.
- Timelines will be strictly honored (starting and ending times).
- At least 2 people will conduct the interview.
- The selected interviewers should have had school experience and/or a leadership role.
- One person should ask questions and the other record conversation and observations.

Characteristic #2: High Standards and Expectations for All Students

IIIA01: All teachers are guided by a document that aligns standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

> *"Are teachers guided by a specific document that aligns standards, curriculum instruction, and assessment? If not, what is guiding them?"*
>
> ***Probe: IIC0:*** Units of instruction include specific learning activities aligned to objectives.
>
> > *"How do you support the development of units of instruction that include activities aligned to objectives?"*

IIIA31: All teachers interact instructionally with students (explaining, checking, giving feedback).

> *"How do teachers interact instructionally with students (explaining, checking for understanding, and giving feedback)?"*

IIIA32: All teachers interact managerially with students (reinforcing rules, procedures).

> *"How do teachers interact managerially with students (reinforcing rules, procedures)?"*

IIIC10: All teachers reinforce classroom rules and procedures by positively teaching them.

> *"How do you help teachers reinforce rules and procedures by positively teaching them?"*

Characteristic #3: Effective School Leadership

IE10: The principal celebrates individual, team, and school successes, especially related to student learning outcomes.

> *"How do you celebrate individual, team, and school successes, especially related to student learning outcomes?"*

IE13: The principal offers frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement.

> *"Do you offer frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement? How?"*

Characteristic #4: High Levels of Collaboration & Communication

ID01: A team structure is officially incorporated into the school improvement plan and school governance policy.

> *"How does your school improvement plan address the issue of teachers working together?"*

ID07: A Leadership Team consisting of the principal, teachers who lead the Instructional Teams, and other key professional staff meets regularly (twice a month or more for an hour each meeting).

> *"What is the make-up of the Leadership Team and how often does the Leadership Team meet (i.e. twice a month or more for an hour each meeting)."*

ID08: The Leadership Team serves as a conduit of communication to the faculty and staff.

> *"How does the Leadership Team serve as a conduit of communication to the faculty and staff?"*

ID13: Instructional Teams meet for blocks of time (4 to 6 hour blocks, once a month; whole days before and after the school year) sufficient to develop and refine units of instruction and review student learning data.

> *"What impact has the instructional team had on developing and refining units of instruction and on reviewing student learning data?"*

> **Probe:** *"How is student data utilized in setting goals?"*

Characteristic #6: Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching

IID08: Instructional Teams use student learning data to assess strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and instructional strategies.

> *"How have instructional teams used student-learning data to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and instructional strategies?"*

IID06: Yearly learning goals are set for the school by the Leadership Team, utilizing student learning data.

> *"How are yearly learning goals set for the school by the Leadership Team?"*

> **Probe:** *"How have assessment data informed the development and/or progress of the School Improvement Plan?"*

Characteristic #7: Focused Professional Development

IF03: Professional development for teachers includes observations by the principal related to indicators of effective teaching and classroom management. **AND**

IF04: Professional development for teachers includes observations by peers related to indicators of effective teaching and classroom management.

> *"How do you use classroom observations to inform the professional development you provide your teachers?"*

> **Probe:** *"How does your professional development address effective teaching and classroom management?"*

Characteristic #9: High Level of Family and Community Involvement

IE13: The principal offers frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement.

> *"What opportunities do you offer for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement?"*

IIIB01: All teachers maintain a file of communication with parents.

> *"Do teachers maintain a file of communication with parents?"*

IIIB06: All teachers systematically report to parents the student's mastery of specific standards-based objectives.

"Do teachers systematically report to parents the student's mastery of specific standards-based objectives? How?"

Probe: *"What opportunities are parents given to assist in children's home-based study and their reading/math development and habits?"*

Appendix 4-E (2): Principal Interview Notes

Characteristic #2: High Standards & Expectations for All Students

1. **IIIA01:** Are teachers guided by a specific document that aligns standards, curriculum instruction, and assessment? If not, what is guiding them?

    a. ***Probe: IIC01*** How do you support the development of units of instruction that include activities aligned to objectives?

2. **IIIA31:** How do teachers interact instructionally with students (explaining, checking for understanding, and giving feedback)?

3. **IIIA32:** How do teachers interact managerially with students (reinforcing rules, procedures)?

4. **IIIC10:** How do you help teachers reinforce rules and procedures by positively teaching them?

Characteristic #3: **Effective School Leadership**

5. **IE10:** How do you celebrate individual, team, and school successes, especially related to student learning outcomes?

6. **IE13:** Do you offer frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement? How?

Characteristic #4: High Levels of Collaboration & Communication

7. **ID01:** How does your school improvement plan address the issue of teachers working together?

8. **ID07:** What is the make-up of the Leadership Team and how often does the Leadership Team meet (i.e. twice a month or more for an hour each meeting).

9. **ID08:** How does the Leadership Team serve as a conduit of communication to the faculty and staff?

10. **ID13:** What impact has the instructional team had on developing and refining units of instruction and on reviewing student learning data?

    a. ***Probe:*** How is student data utilized in setting goals?

Characteristic #6: **Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching**

11. **IID08:** How have instructional teams used student-learning data to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and instructional strategies?

12. **IID06:** How are yearly learning goals set for the school by the Leadership Team?

    a. ***Probe****:* How have assessment data informed the development and/or progress of the School Improvement Plan?

Characteristic #7: **Focused Professional Development**

13. **IF03/IF04:** How do you use classroom observations to inform the professional development you provide your teachers?

    a. *Probe:* How does your professional development address effective teaching and classroom management?

Characteristic #9: **High Level of Family and Community Involvement**

14. **IE13:** What opportunities do you offer for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement?

15. **IIIB01:** Do teachers maintain a file of communication with parents?

16. **IIIB06:** Do teachers systematically report to parents the student's mastery of specific standards-based objectives? How?

    a. *Probe:* What opportunities are parents given to assist in children's home-based study and their reading/math development and habits?

Appendix 4-F (1): Leadership Team Focus Group

Guidelines:

- The group will meet for 60 minutes.
- Timeframes will be strictly honored (starting and ending times).
- The group will contain no more than 8 and no fewer 5 members.
- Two team members conduct the group: one to ask questions, the other to record conversation and observations of the group and be a timekeeper.

Characteristic #4: High Levels of Collaboration & Communication

ID07: A Leadership Team consisting of the principal, teachers who lead the Instructional Teams, and other key professional staff meets regularly (twice a month or more for an hour each meeting).

> *"How does the administration develop the leadership capacity of the Leadership Team members?"*

ID08: The Leadership Team serves as a conduit of communication to the faculty and staff.

> "How does the Leadership Team function within the school?"

> *Probe: "How does it communicate with faculty and staff?"*

Characteristic #5: Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Aligned w/State Standards

IIA01: Instructional Teams develop standards-aligned units of instruction for each subject and grade level.

> *"What process does the instructional team follow to develop or implement Standards aligned units of instruction?"*

Characteristic #6: Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching

IID06: Yearly learning goals are set for the school by the Leadership Team, utilizing student learning data.

> *"How are yearly learning goals set for the school by the Leadership Team?"*

Probe: *"How have assessment data informed the development and/or progress of the School Improvement Plan?"*

IID08: Instructional Teams use student learning data to assess strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and instructional strategies.

"How is student learning data used to assess the strengths and weaknesses of curriculum and instructional strategies?"

IID09: Instructional Teams use student learning data to plan instruction. **AND**
IID10: Instructional Teams use student learning data to identify students in need of instructional support or enhancement. **AND**
IID11: Instructional Teams review the results of unit pre-/post-tests to make decisions about the curriculum and instructional plans and to "red flag" students in need of intervention (both students in need of tutoring or extra help and students needing enhanced learning opportunities because of early mastery of objectives).

"What process is used to identify and support students in need of intervention?"

Characteristic #7: Focused Professional Development

IF01: The principal compiles reports from classroom observations, showing aggregate areas of strength and areas that need improvement without revealing the identity of individual teachers.**AND**
IF02: The Leadership Team reviews the principal's summary reports of classroom observations and takes them into account in planning professional development.

"What information/data does the Leadership Team use to plan professional development?"

Appendix 4-F (2): Leadership Team Focus Group Notes

<u>**Characteristic #4: High Levels of Collaboration & Communication**</u>

1. **ID07:** *"How does the administration develop the leadership capacity of the Leadership Team members?"*

2. **ID08:** "How does the Leadership Team function within the school?"

   a. ***Probe:*** *"How does it communicate with faculty and staff?"*

<u>**Characteristic #5:**</u> **Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Aligned w/State Standards**

3. **IIA01:** *"What process does the instructional team follow to develop or implement Standards aligned units of instruction?"*

Characteristic #6: Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching

4. **IID06:** *"How are yearly learning goals set for the school by the Leadership Team?"*

    a. **Probe:** *"How have assessment data informed the development and/or progress of the School Improvement Plan?"*

5.   **IID08:** *"How is student learning data used to assess the strengths and weaknesses of curriculum and instructional strategies?"*

6. **IID09, IID10, IID11:** *"What process is used to identify and support students in need of intervention?"*

Characteristic #7: Focused Professional Development

IF01 and IF02: *"What information/data does the Leadership Team use to plan professional development?"*

Appendix 4-G (1): Instructional Staff Focus Group Questions

Guidelines:

- The group will meet for 60 minutes.

- Timeframes will be strictly honored (starting and ending times).

- Time should be budgeted to allow for answering all questions.

- The group will contain no more than 8 and no fewer 5 members who have instructional responsibilities including paraprofessional staff.

- The selection of group members (random or intentional) needs to be documented in the data analysis.

- The group composition should be representative of the school.

- Two team members conduct the group: one to ask questions, the other to record the conversation and observations of the group and to act as timekeeper.

Characteristic #2: High Standards and Expectations for All Students

IIIA01: All teachers are guided by a document that aligns standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment. **AND**
IIIA02: All teachers develop weekly lesson plans based on aligned units of instruction. **AND**
IIIA05: All teachers maintain a record of each student's mastery of specific learning objectives.

> *"What documents guide your planning and instruction? Please identify them and describe them.*

Characteristic #3: Effective School Leadership

IE06: The principal keeps a focus on instructional improvement and student learning outcomes. **AND**
IE07: The principal monitors curriculum and classroom instruction regularly. **AND**
IE10: The principal celebrates individual, team, and school successes, especially related to student learning outcomes. **AND**
IE13: The principal offers frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement. **AND**

> *"How does your administration demonstrate support for teaching and learning?"*

Characteristic #6: Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching

IIB01: Units of instruction include pre-/post-tests to assess student mastery of standards-based objectives. **AND**
IIB04: Teachers individualize instruction based on pre-test results to provide support for some students and enhanced learning opportunities for others. **AND**
IID08: Instructional Teams use student learning data to assess strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and instructional strategies. **AND**
IID09: Instructional Teams use student learning data to plan instruction.

> *"What types of evaluation practices are used at this school to assess students learning?"*

IIB05: Teachers re-teach based on post-test results. **AND**
IID10: Instructional Teams use student learning data to identify students in need of instructional support or enhancement. **AND**
IID11: Instructional Teams review the results of unit pre-/post-tests to make decisions about the curriculum and instructional plans and to "red flag" students in need of intervention (both students in need of tutoring or extra help and students needing enhanced learning opportunities because of early mastery of objectives).

> *"How is this information used?"*

> ***Probe:*** *"Look at what the administration has put in place to support your classroom practice and what affect that has had on your students."*

Characteristic #7: Focused Professional Development

IF07: Professional development of individual teachers includes an emphasis on indicators of effective teaching. **AND**
IF08: Professional development for the whole faculty includes assessment of strengths and areas in need of improvement from classroom observations of indicators of effective teaching.

> *"What professional development activities (workshops, coaching, mentoring, learning communities, action research, etc.) have you participated in the past year?"*

> *"What impact have they had on student learning and how you provide instruction?"*

> ***Probe:*** *"Give examples of how your principal supports instructional improvement."*

Characteristic #9: High Level of Family and Community Involvement

IE13: The principal offers frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement.

> *"How does leadership in the school communicate with staff and parents? How often?"*

Appendix 4-G (2): Instructional Staff Focus Group Notes

<u>**Characteristic #2: High Standards and Expectations for All Students**</u>

1. **IIIA01**, **IIIA02 IIIA05:** *"What documents guide your planning and instruction? Please identify them and describe them.*

<u>**Characteristic #3: Effective School Leadership**</u>

2. **IE06, IE07, IE10, IE13:** *"How does your administration demonstrate support for teaching and learning?"*

<u>**Characteristic #6: Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching**</u>

3. **IIB01, IIB04, IID08, IID09:** *"What types of evaluation practices are used at this school to assess students learning?"*

4. **IIB05, IID10, IID11:** *"How is this information used?"*

    a. ***Probe: "****Look at what the administration has put in place to support your classroom practice and what affect that has had on your students."*

Characteristic #7: Focused Professional Development

5. **IF07, IF08:** *"What professional development activities (workshops, coaching, mentoring, learning communities, action research, etc.) have you participated in the past year?"*

6. **IF07, IF08:** *"What impact have they had on student learning and how you provide instruction?"*

    a. **Probe:** *"Give examples of how your principal supports instructional improvement."*

Characteristic #9: High Level of Family and Community Involvement

7. **IE13:** *"How does leadership in the school communicate with staff and parents? How often?"*

Appendix 4-H (1): Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group Questions
Guidelines:

- The group will meet for 60 minutes.

- The group can include: dean of students, guidance counselor, school nurse, secretaries, security staff, food services staff, building service staff, technical support staff, and other non-teaching staff.

- Timeframes will be strictly honored (starting and ending times).

- Time should be budgeted to allow for answering all questions.

- The group will contain no more than 8 and no fewer than 5 members.

- The selection of group members (random or intentional) needs to be documented in the data analysis.

- The group composition should be representative of non-teaching staff in the school (e.g. school nurse, secretaries, building services personnel, parent outreach staff).

- Two team members conduct the group: one to ask questions, the other to record the conversation and observations of the group, and to act as timekeeper.

Characteristic #3: Effective School Leadership

IE06: The principal keeps a focus on instructional improvement and student learning outcomes.

> *"How does the administration keep a focus on instructional improvement and student learning outcomes?"*

IE10: The principal celebrates individual, team, and school successes, especially related to student learning outcomes.

> *"How does the administration celebrate individual, team, and school successes?"*

IE13: The principal offers frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement.

> *"What opportunities are you given to voice constructive comments about the school's progress and offer suggestions for improvement?"*

Characteristic #4: High Levels of Collaboration & Communication

IID06: Yearly learning goals are set for the school by the Leadership Team, utilizing student learning data. **AND**
ID08: The Leadership Team serves as a conduit of communication to the faculty and staff.

> *"How are you made aware of the yearly learning goals set for the school?"*

Characteristic #7: Focused Professional Development

IF08: Professional development for the whole faculty includes assessment of strengths and areas in need of improvement from classroom observations of indicators of effective teaching.

> *"How are you involved in professional development for the whole school staff?"*

Characteristic #9: High Level of Family and Community Involvement

IE13: The principal offers frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement.

> *"How does the school staff communicate regularly with parents and community?"*

Appendix 4-H (2): Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group Notes

Characteristic #3: Effective School Leadership

1. **IE06:** *"How does the administration keep a focus on instructional improvement and student learning outcomes?"*

2. **IE10:** *"How does the administration celebrate individual, team, and school successes?"*

3. **IE13:** *"What opportunities are you given to voice constructive comments about the school's progress and offer suggestions for improvement?"*

Characteristic #4: High Levels of Collaboration & Communication

4. **IID06, ID08:** *"How are you made aware of the yearly learning goals set for the school?"*

Characteristic #7: Focused Professional Development

5. **IF08:** *"How are you involved in professional development for the whole school staff?"*

Characteristic #9: High Level of Family and Community Involvement

6. **IE13:** *"How does the school staff communicate regularly with parents and community?"*

Appendix 4-I (1): Parent Focus Group
Guidelines:

- The group will meet for 60 minutes.

- Timeframes will be strictly honored (starting and ending times).

- The group will contain no more than 8 and no fewer 5 members.

- The selection of group members (random or intentional) needs to be documented in the data analysis.

- The group composition should be representative of the student population of the school.

- Two team members conduct the group: one to ask questions, the other to record conversation and observations of the group and be a timekeeper.

Characteristic #3: Effective School Leadership

IE10: The principal celebrates individual, team, and school successes, especially related to student learning outcomes.

> *"Does the principal at this school celebrate the school's successes? If so, how?"*

Parent Involvement Analysis:

> *"How does the principal inform parents about the school's mission and goals?"*

Characteristic #9: High Level of Family and Community Involvement

IE13: The principal offers frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement.

> *"How often does the principal at this school give you opportunities to voice your opinion and provide suggestions about the school's progress?"*

IIIB01: All teachers maintain a file of communication with parents.

> *"What kinds of communication do you receive from this school about ways to help your child succeed in school?"*

IIIB06: All teachers systematically report to parents the student's mastery of specific standards-based objectives.

> *"What opportunities are you given to meet with your child's teachers to discuss your child's progress?"*

Parent Involvement Analysis:

> *"What kinds of practical guidance do you receive from this school to encourage your child's regular reading habits at home?"*

Appendix 4-I (2): Parent Focus Group Notes
<u>**Characteristic #3: Effective School Leadership**</u>

1. **IE10:** *"Does the administration at this school celebrate the school's successes? If so, how?"*

2. **PIA:** *"How does the principal inform parents about the school's mission and goals?"*

<u>**Characteristic #9: High Level of Family and Community Involvement**</u>

3. **IE13:** *"How often does the principal at this school give you opportunities to voice your opinion and provide suggestions about the school's progress?"*

4. **IIIB01:** *"What kinds of communication do you receive from this school about ways to help your child succeed in school?"*

5. **IIIB06:** *"What opportunities are you given to meet with your child's teachers to discuss your child's progress?"*

6. **PIA:** *"What kinds of practical guidance do you receive from this school to encourage your child's regular reading habits at home?"*

Appendix 4-J (1): Student Focus Group
Guidelines:

- The group will meet for 60 minutes.

- Timeframes will be strictly honored (starting and ending times).

- The group will contain no more than 8 and no fewer 5 members.

- The selection of group members (random or intentional) needs to be documented in the data analysis.

- The group composition should be representative of the student population of the school.

- Parent notification and permission is required for each of the group members. Parent notification and getting parental permission is the responsibility of the school/district and necessary documentation must be presented to evaluators prior to participating in the Student Focus Group.

- Two team members conduct the group: one to ask questions, the other to record conversation and observations of the group and be a timekeeper.

Characteristic #2: High Standards and Expectations for All Students

IIIA31: All teachers interact instructionally with students (explaining, checking, giving feedback). **AND**
IIIA33: All teachers interact socially with students (noticing and attending to an ill student, asking about the weekend, inquiring about the family).

   "Does your teacher believe you can learn?"

IIIA13: All teachers explain directly and thoroughly. **AND**
IIIA26: All teachers encourage students to check their own comprehension.

   "Does your teacher expect you to work hard?"

IIIA09: All teachers clearly state the lesson's topic, theme, and objectives.

   "Does your teacher make clear what you are supposed to learn?"

IIB04: Teachers individualize instruction based on pre-test results to provide support for some students and enhanced learning opportunities for others. **AND**
IIIA11: All teachers use modeling, demonstration, and graphics. **AND**
IIIC05: IIIC05 All teachers use a variety of instructional modes.

   "Does your teacher use different ways to help you learn?"

Characteristic #3: Effective School Leadership

IE10: The principal celebrates individual, team, and school successes, especially related to student learning outcomes.

> *"Does your school celebrate the school's success? How?"*

IE13: The principal offers frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement.

> *"Does your teacher listen to your ideas and opinions?"*

Characteristic #9: High Level of Family and Community Involvement

IIIB01: All teachers maintain a file of communication with parents.

> *"Does your teacher tell your family when you are going a good job in school?"*

IIIB06: All teachers systematically report to parents the student's mastery of specific standards-based objectives.

> *"If you are having problems learning, does your teacher talk with your family?"*

Appendix 4-Q: Student Focus Group Notes

<u>**Characteristic #2: High Standards and Expectations for All Students**</u>

1. **IIIA31, IIIA33:** *"Does your teacher believe you can learn?"*

2. **IIIA13, IIIA26:** *"Does your teacher expect you to work hard?"*

3. **IIIA09:** *"Does your teacher make clear what you are supposed to learn?"*

4. **IIB04, IIIA11, IIIC05:** *"Does your teacher use different ways to help you learn?"*

Characteristic #3: Effective School Leadership

5. **IE10:** *"Does your school celebrate the school's success? How?"*

6. **IE13:** *"Does your teacher listen to your ideas and opinions?"*

Characteristic #9: High Level of Family and Community Involvement

7. **IIIB01** *"Does your teacher tell your family when you are going a good job in school?"*

8. **IIIB06:** *"If you are having problems learning, does your teacher talk with your family?"*

Appendix 4-K: List of Requested Documents for Document Review

Note: Schools and teachers should be provided this list in advance and asked to have these documents available on-site, if requested, during the review. Interview questions will relate to the processes and procedures staff use in relation to the instructional core. The SDE recommends that the following be readily available as artifacts during the interview process in order to support the conversation.

AYP Data

Content and Performance Standards

Course Syllabi

Faculty Meeting Agendas

Individualized Learning Plans

Instructional Team Meeting Schedules, Agendas, and Notes

Instructional Units

Pacing Guides

Principal's Calendar

Professional Development Plan, Schedule, and Session Agendas

Sample of newsletters and other communications to external and internal audiences

School Community Council Mission Statement and Membership List

School Events Calendar

School Improvement Plan

Teacher Handbook

Appendix 4-L: Document Review Checklist

Note: The set of documents in Column 1 listed under each of the *Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools* is to be examined in order to complete the checklist for each indicator under that characteristic. If evidence is noted, check the "Yes" box and also indicate the document(s) containing the evidence to assist in report preparation. Twenty nine (29) indicators will be evaluated, in part, on the basis of document review.

Characteristic 2 – High Standards and Expectations for All Students			
Document Set	**Relevant Indicators**	**Yes (evidence of indicator noted)**	**No (evidence of indicator not noted)**
	Classroom Instruction - Preparation		
School Improvement Plan, Instructional units, content and performance standards, pacing guides, Instructional Team meeting notes	**IIIA01**: All teachers are guided by a document that aligns standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment		
Instructional Team meeting schedules and notes, AYP data	**IIIA02:** All teachers develop weekly lesson plans based on aligned units of instruction.		
	IIIA05: All teachers maintain a record of each student's mastery of specific learning objectives.		
	IIIA06: All teachers test frequently using a variety of evaluation methods and maintain a record of the results.		

Characteristic 3 – Effective School Leadership			
Document Set	**Relevant Indicators**	**Yes (evidence of indicator noted)**	**No (evidence of indicator not noted)**
Newsletters and other communications to external and internal	**IE07:** The principal monitors curriculum and classroom instruction		

Characteristic 3 – Effective School Leadership			
Document Set	**Relevant Indicators**	**Yes (evidence of indicator noted)**	**No (evidence of indicator not noted)**
audiences, School events calendar	regularly.		
Principal's calendar, Faculty Meeting agendas	**IE10:** The principal celebrates individual, team, and school successes, especially related to student learning outcomes.		
School Improvement Plan, Instructional units, content and performance standards, pacing guides	**IE13:** The principal offers frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement.		

Characteristic 4 – High Levels of Collaboration & Communication			
Document Set	**Relevant Indicators**	**Yes (evidence of indicator noted)**	**No (evidence of indicator not noted)**
School Improvement Plan, Instructional Team meeting schedules and notes, AYP data	**ID01:** A team structure is officially incorporated into the school improvement plan and school governance policy.		
Instructional units, content and performance standards, pacing guides, Instructional Team meeting notes	**ID08:** The Leadership Team serves as a conduit of communication to the faculty and staff		
Newsletters and other communications to external and internal audiences, School events calendar	**ID13:** Instructional Teams meet for blocks of time (4 to 6 hour blocks, once a month; whole days before and after the school year) sufficient to develop and refine units of instruction and review student learning data.		

Characteristic 5 - Curriculum, Instruction & Assessments Aligned w/ State Standards			
Document Set	**Relevant Indicators**	**Yes (evidence of indicator noted)**	**No (evidence of indicator not noted)**
School Improvement Plan, Instructional units, content and performance standards, pacing guides, Instructional Team meeting notes	**IIA01**: Instructional teams develop standards-aligned units of instruction for each subject & grade level		
	IIA02 Units of instruction include standards-based objectives and criteria for mastery		
	IIC01 Units of instruction include specific learning activities aligned to objectives		
	IIC01 Materials for standards-aligned learning activities are well-organized, labeled, and stored for convenient use by teachers.		

Characteristic 6 – Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching			
Document Set	**Relevant Indicators**	**Yes (evidence of indicator noted)**	**No (evidence of indicator not noted)**
	Classroom Assessment		
	IIB01: Units of instruction include pre-/post-tests to assess student mastery of standards-based objectives.		
	Periodic Assessment		
Course syllabi, Instructional Team meeting agendas and notes, School Improvement Plan, individualized learning	**IID06:** Yearly learning goals are set for the school by the Leadership Team, utilizing student learning data.		

Characteristic 6 – Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching			
Document Set	**Relevant Indicators**	**Yes (evidence of indicator noted)**	**No (evidence of indicator not noted)**
plans			
Instructional units, content and performance standards, pacing guides, Instructional Team meeting notes	**IID08**: Instructional Teams use student learning data to assess strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and instructional strategies.		
Instructional Team meeting agendas and notes, School Improvement Plan, AYP data	**IID09:** Instructional Teams use student learning data to plan instruction.		
	IID10: Instructional Teams use student learning data to identify students in need of instructional support or enhancement.		
	IID11: Instructional Teams review the results of unit pre-/post-tests to make decisions about the curriculum and instructional plans and to "red flag" students in need of intervention (both students in need of tutoring or extra help and students needing enhanced learning opportunities because of their early mastery of objectives).		

Characteristic 7 – Focused Professional Development			
Document Set	**Relevant Indicators**	**Yes (evidence of indicator noted)**	**No (evidence of indicator not noted)**
Professional Development Plan (for school), Professional Development session agendas	**IF05:** Professional development for teachers includes self-assessment related to indicators of effective teaching and classroom management.		

Characteristic 7 – Focused Professional Development			
Document Set	**Relevant Indicators**	**Yes (evidence of indicator noted)**	**No (evidence of indicator not noted)**
	IF08: Professional development for the whole faculty includes assessment of strengths and areas in need of improvement from classroom observations of indicators of effective teaching.		
	IF10: The principal plans opportunities for teachers to share their strengths with other teachers.		

Characteristic 9 – High Level of Family and Community Involvement			
Document Set	**Relevant Indicators**	**Yes (evidence of indicator noted)**	**No (evidence of indicator not noted)**
School Community Council mission statement and membership list, Teacher Handbook, Parent Newsletters	**IE 13:** The principal offers frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement.		
	IIIB01: All teachers maintain a file of communication with parents.		
Newsletters and other communications to external and internal audiences, School events calendar	**IIIB06:** All teachers systematically report to parents the student's mastery of specific standards-based objectives		
Principal's calendar, Faculty Meeting agendas, Newsletters and other communications to external and internal audiences, School events calendar	**PIA:** Parents receive regular communication (absent jargon) about learning standards, their children's progress, and the parents' role in their children's school success.		

Characteristic 9 – High Level of Family and Community Involvement			
Document Set	**Relevant Indicators**	**Yes (evidence of indicator noted)**	**No (evidence of indicator not noted)**
	PIA: Parents receive practical guidance to encourage their children's regular reading habits at home.		
	PIA: Parents are given opportunities to meet with teachers to discuss both their children's progress in school and their children's home-based study and reading habits.		

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 out-of-district resource 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 *School Staff Survey of School Characteristics Information* form on the following 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.

Note: Schools & Districts participating in the Idaho Building Capacity Project will utilize perceptual surveys together as a cohort.

School Staff Survey of School Characteristics Information

District: _____   School: _____   Date: _____

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

   ❒ Elementary School   ❒ Middle/Junior High School   ❒ High School

   ❒ Other: _____

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

3. Your primary role (*check one*):

   ❒ Teacher   ❒ Building Administrator   ❒ Para-educator

   ❒ Other Classified Staff   ❒ Other Certificated Staff

4. Years working in your current role *(include work in other locations)*:

   ❒ 0 - 3   ❒ 4 - 7   ❒ 8 - 15   ❒ 16 or more

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]:

School Staff Survey of School Characteristics

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.

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").

		No Basis to Judge	Don't Agree At All	Agree Moderately		Agree Completely	
1. Vision	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

		No Basis to Judge	Don't Agree At All	Agree Moderately		Agree Completely	
2. Standards/Expectations	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

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117

		No Basis to Judge	Don't Agree At All		Agree Moderately		Agree Completely
3. Leadership	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

		No Basis to Judge	Don't Agree At All		Agree Moderately		Agree Completely
4. Collaboration/Communications	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
	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

		No Basis to Judge	Don't Agree At All		Agree Moderately		Agree Completely
5. Alignment to Standards	a. The school's curriculum is aligned with state standards.	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 standards 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 ISAT results to help plan instructional activities.	0	1	2	3	4	5

		No Basis to Judge	Don't Agree At All		Agree Moderately		Agree Completely
6. Monitoring of Teaching and Learning	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

		No Basis to Judge	Don't Agree At All		Agree Moderately		Agree Completely
7. Professional Development	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

		No Basis to Judge	Don't Agree At All		Agree Moderately		Agree Completely
8. Learning Environment	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 all 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.						

Continue to the last page

		No Basis to Judge	Don't Agree At All		Agree Moderately		Agree Completely
9. Family & Community Involvement	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):

Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools Perception Surveys

Family Perspectives Survey

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 about 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 **0** 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

Please provide some background information about yourself. This information will be used for analysis purposes only, and results will not be reported for categories that have fewer than five (5) responses. *(Mark one box for each question)*

1. Gender: ❐ Male ❐ Female

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

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

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

5. Relationship to children in the school:
   ❐ Parent   ❐ Guardian
   ❐ Relative   ❐ Other

6. Main language spoken at home:
   ❐ English   ❐ Spanish
   ❐ Cambodian   ❐ Chinese
   ❐ Korean   ❐ Russian
   ❐ Ukranian   ❐ Tagalog
   ❐ Vietnamese   ❐ Other

7. Frequency of visits to the school:
   ❐ Never ❐ Rarely ❐ Sometimes ❐ Often ❐ Very Often

8. Provide any comments below or attach them to this survey.

Family Perspectives Survey

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.

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 don't know or the statement does not apply, mark 0 in the first column ("no basis to judge").

District: _____   School: _____   Date: _____

	No Basis to Judge	Don't Agree At All		Agree Moderately		Agree Completely
1. The school has a clearly defined purpose and mission.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have a clear understanding of what the school is trying to accomplish.	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. I support the goals of the school.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. The school's primary emphasis is improving student learning.	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. The school communicates its goals effectively to families and the community.	0	1	2	3	4	5
6. All students in the school are expected to meet high standards.	0	1	2	3	4	5
7. My child understands what needs to be learned.	0	1	2	3	4	5
8. School work is meaningful and made relevant.	0	1	2	3	4	5
9. Teachers do whatever it takes to help my child meet high academic standards.	0	1	2	3	4	5
10. Teachers make adjustments to meet individual student's needs.	0	1	2	3	4	5
11. Classes challenge students to think and solve problems.	0	1	2	3	4	5
12. Students receive detailed information about the quality of the work they do.	0	1	2	3	4	5
13. Teachers give students extra help if it is needed.	0	1	2	3	4	5

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	No Basis to Judge	Don't Agree At All		Agree Moderately		Agree Completely
14. Grades are given in a fair manner.	0	1	2	3	4	5
15. Students respect those who are different from them.	0	1	2	3	4	5
16. The adults in the school show respect for all students.	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. Discipline problems are handled fairly.	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. School leaders act fairly and with integrity.	0	1	2	3	4	5
19. My child feels safe at school.	0	1	2	3	4	5
20. The school environment helps the learning process.	0	1	2	3	4	5
21. School staff listens carefully when I express my opinions and concerns.	0	1	2	3	4	5
22. Teachers are constantly trying to become better teachers.	0	1	2	3	4	5
23. The teachers and other adults in my school show respect for each other.	0	1	2	3	4	5
24. School leaders show they care about all students.	0	1	2	3	4	5
25. The adults in the school work well together.	0	1	2	3	4	5
26. The school contacts the families of students who are struggling academically.	0	1	2	3	4	5
27. There is frequent, two-way communication between school staff and families.	0	1	2	3	4	5
28. I feel welcome when I visit the school.	0	1	2	3	4	5
29. The school works with many community organizations to support its students.	0	1	2	3	4	5
30. Many parents and adults from the community come and help at the school.	0	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for sharing your views with us!

Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools Perception Surveys

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 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 **0** 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

Please provide some background information about yourself. This information will be used for analysis purposes only, and results will not be reported for categories that have fewer than five (5) responses. (Mark one box for each question)

1. What grade are you in?

   ❒ 9th   ❒ 10th   ❒ 11th   ❒ 12th   ❒ Ungraded   ❒ Not sure

2. What is your gender?   ❒ Male   ❒ Female

3. What is your primary race/ethnicity?

   ❒ American Indian/Native Amer.   ❒ African American/Black

   ❒ Asian/Pacific Islander   ❒ Hispanic/Latino

   ❒ White/Caucasian   ❒ Multi-racial

   ❒ Other

4. What is your approximate grade point average (GPA)?

   ❒ Above 3.50   ❒ 3.00 - 3.50   ❒ 2.50 - 2.99   ❒ 2.00 - 2.49   ❒ 1.50 - 1.99

   ❒ 1.00 - 1.49   ❒ Below 1.00   ❒ Ungraded / Don't Know

Comments or Response to Optional Question(s):

High School Student Survey

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.

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 don't know or the statement does not apply, mark 0 in the first column ("no basis to judge").

District: _____   School: _____   Date: _____

	No Basis to Judge	Don't Agree At All		Agree Moderately		Agree Completely
1. My school has specific goals that I understand.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. The main purpose of my school is to help students learn.	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. Teachers make it clear what I am supposed to learn.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. I know why it is important for me to learn what is being taught.	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. My classes challenge me to think and solve problems.	0	1	2	3	4	5
6. Teachers expect all students to work hard.	0	1	2	3	4	5
7. Teachers expect all students to succeed, no matter who they are.	0	1	2	3	4	5
8. My classes are usually interesting.	0	1	2	3	4	5
9. Teachers give me challenging work.	0	1	2	3	4	5
10. My teachers make learning interesting by teaching in different ways.	0	1	2	3	4	5
11. Students feel free to express their ideas and opinions.	0	1	2	3	4	5
12. My teachers help me when I don't understand something.	0	1	2	3	4	5
13. Teachers give students extra help if it is needed.	0	1	2	3	4	5
14. My teachers encourage me.	0	1	2	3	4	5

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	No Basis to Judge	Don't Agree At All		Agree Moderately		Agree Completely
15. Students are given many chances to show what we have learned.	0	1	2	3	4	5
16. Tests and quizzes are related to the material and ideas we are supposed to learn.	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. Grades are given in a fair manner.	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. Discipline problems are handled fairly.	0	1	2	3	4	5
19. The adults in my school work well together.	0	1	2	3	4	5
20. My teachers care about me as a person.	0	1	2	3	4	5
21. The adults in my school show respect for me.	0	1	2	3	4	5
22. Students respect those who are different from them.	0	1	2	3	4	5
23. The teachers and other adults in my school show respect for each other.	0	1	2	3	4	5
24. I feel safe when I am at school.	0	1	2	3	4	5
25. Students can participate in many different school activities (sports, clubs, etc).	0	1	2	3	4	5
26. The school environment makes it easy to learn.	0	1	2	3	4	5
27. I know how to get help from an adult at school if I need it.	0	1	2	3	4	5
28. The adults who work at my school care about all students, not just a few.	0	1	2	3	4	5
29. My teachers contact my family if I am having problems learning.	0	1	2	3	4	5
30. Many parents and adults from the community come and help at the school.	0	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for sharing your views with us!

Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools
Perception Surveys

Middle Grade 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 **0** 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

Please provide some background information about yourself. This information will be used for analysis purposes only, and results will not be reported for categories that have fewer than five (5) responses. (Mark one box for each question)

1. What grade are you in?

    ❐ 6th   ❐ 7th   ❐ 8th   ❐ 9th   ❐ Ungraded   ❐ Not sure

2. What is your gender?   ❐ Male   ❐ Female

3. What is your primary race/ethnicity?

    ❐ American Indian/Native Amer.   ❐ African American/Black

    ❐ Asian/Pacific Islander   ❐ Hispanic/Latino

    ❐ White/Caucasian   ❐ Multi-racial

    ❐ Other

Comments or Response to Optional Question(s):

Middle Grade Student Survey

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.

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 don't know or the statement does not apply, mark 0 in the first column ("no basis to judge").

District: _____   School: _____   Date: _____

	No Basis to Judge	Don't Agree At All		Agree Moderately		Agree Completely
1. My school has specific goals that I understand.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. The main purpose of my school is to help students learn.	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. Teachers make it clear what I am supposed to learn.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. I know why it is important for me to learn what is being taught.	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. My classes challenge me to think and solve problems.	0	1	2	3	4	5
6. Teachers expect all students to work hard.	0	1	2	3	4	5
7. Teachers expect all students to succeed, no matter who they are.	0	1	2	3	4	5
8. My classes are usually interesting.	0	1	2	3	4	5
9. Teachers give me challenging work.	0	1	2	3	4	5
10. My teachers make learning interesting by teaching in different ways.	0	1	2	3	4	5
11. Students feel free to express their ideas and opinions.	0	1	2	3	4	5
12. My teachers help me when I don't understand something.	0	1	2	3	4	5
13. Teachers give students extra help if it is needed.	0	1	2	3	4	5
14. My teachers encourage me.	0	1	2	3	4	5

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	No Basis to Judge	Don't Agree At All		Agree Moderately		Agree Completely
15. Students are given many chances to show what we have learned.	0	1	2	3	4	5
16. Tests and quizzes are related to the material and ideas we are supposed to learn.	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. Grades are given in a fair manner.	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. Discipline problems are handled fairly.	0	1	2	3	4	5
19. The adults in my school work well together.	0	1	2	3	4	5
20. My teachers care about me as a person.	0	1	2	3	4	5
21. The adults in my school show respect for me.	0	1	2	3	4	5
22. Students respect those who are different from them.	0	1	2	3	4	5
23. The teachers and other adults in my school show respect for each other.	0	1	2	3	4	5
24. I feel safe when I am at school.	0	1	2	3	4	5
25. Students can participate in many different school activities (sports, clubs, etc).	0	1	2	3	4	5
26. The school environment makes it easy to learn.	0	1	2	3	4	5
27. I know how to get help from an adult at school if I need it.	0	1	2	3	4	5
28. The adults who work at my school care about all students, not just a few.	0	1	2	3	4	5
29. My teachers contact my family if I am having problems learning.	0	1	2	3	4	5
30. Many parents and adults from the community come and help at the school.	0	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for sharing your views with us!

Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools
Perception Surveys

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 answers will be kept private.*

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

Please provide some background information about yourself. This information will be used for analysis purposes only, and results will not be reported for categories that have fewer than five (5) responses. (Mark one box for each question)

1. What is your grade?

   ❒ 1st ❒ 2nd ❒ 3rd ❒ 4th ❒ 5th ❒ 6th ❒ Not Graded ❒ Not Sure

2. I am a   ❒ Boy   ❒ Girl

   Comments or Response to Optional Question(s):

Primary School Student Survey

Think about your school as you read each of the statements below. 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.)

District: _____   School: _____   Date: _____

	Don't Know No Opinion	Don't Agree At All		Agree Moderately	Agree Completely	
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	☹☹	☹	😐	☺	☺☺
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	☹☹	☹	😐	☺	☺☺

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	No Basis to Judge	Don't Agree At All		Agree Moderately		Agree Completely
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 school 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	☹☹	☹	😐	☺	☺☺

Thank you for sharing your views with us!

Section 5. Preparing and Transmitting the Instructional Core Focus Visit Report

The Instructional Core Focus Visit team leader and team are all involved in preparing the Instructional Core Focus Visit Report. To assist the team in preparing the report, the LEA arranges for workspace and equipment. The LEA also provides editorial and other support services needed for report preparation.

The team leader is responsible for managing the activities related to data analysis and report preparation, and serves as liaison to the LEA regarding this work. It is the team leader's responsibility to schedule and monitor a timeline to complete this phase of the Instructional Core Focus Visit; to this end the team leader schedules and conducts team meetings to review on-site data and determine the nature of findings and recommendations to be included in the report. The team leader makes appropriate assignments to team members. Finally, the team leader, personally or through delegation, assures that the Instructional Core Focus Visit report reflects high standards for analysis and writing.

The team members are responsible for participating in all team meetings, completing all assigned tasks, and providing feedback on the Instructional Core Focus Visit report if requested.

Compiling and analyzing data

The first task is to compile the TICO summary data. Data from the TICO summary sheet for each teacher is entered into the TICO Data Compiler (Appendix 5-B) and totaled. These data provide information, based on the observations and interviews conducted, on the extent to which teachers' preparation and instruction reflect Instructional Core Focus Visit indicators. If there are sufficient numbers of teachers involved (i.e., at least three) the team may consider disaggregating the TICO data by grade level (or cluster i.e., grades 1-3) and/or by subject area (i.e., reading). TICO data will be compiled by individual school and by district. TICO data are to be reported by the percentage of teachers whose practices reflect indicators. Appendix 5-C displays examples of how TICO data may be reported for selected individual indicators.

The analysis task brings together all data sources aligned with the indicators (note: there will be instances where the nature of the data sources requires alignment at the characteristic level instead). A data analysis matrix tool is included in Appendix 5-D. This tool is an adaptation of the Patterns of Practice Matrix that lays out the set of review indicators organized within the nine characteristics. The analysis tool is structured to permit the team to attribute on-site review data, by source, to individual indicators. Working through this tool provides an opportunity for the team to capture what was heard and seen on-site.

Quantitative data includes the TICO information (reported as the percentage of teachers whose practices reflect the indicators). Results of the CEE survey (reported as the number or percentage of respondents agreeing with an item) may also be considered but optional. Qualitative data includes the results of the document reviews as well as the interview and

focus group notes. TICO data and document review results need to be weighted more heavily in the team's analysis process than school personnel's perceptions and/or opinions.

By completing the data analysis tool the team can determine the extent to which the school's practices reflect the indicators. The team is encouraged to reach consensus on each indicator based on the available evidence. This process requires the team to consider the weight of evidence. It may be helpful for the team to ask itself, in ambiguous cases, whether there is enough evidence to discern that "it is raining" (with regard to an indicator). This means that there is a strong enough data-based case supporting the presence of the indicator in the school.

How do we tell if it is raining? If we are indoors and see dark clouds, this might be a clue. Observing people walking with raised umbrellas or cars passing with windshield wipers in motion would increase our belief that it is raining. Seeing puddles might provide stronger evidence. But we'd have the most confidence if we personally could actually feel the rain. This is the standard teams must try to apply in the analysis activity.

Preparing for exit meeting

An exit meeting will be scheduled at the conclusion of the Instructional Core Focus Visit to share a summarized report with the district leadership team. All aspects of the Instructional Core Focus Visit will be reflective within this meeting emphasizing areas of strengths, areas of weaknesses, and recommendations based upon the evidence collected during the Focus Visit. The exit meeting will be facilitated by the team lead and will not exceed 60 minutes. All Focus Team members will be present to be available for questions or clarifications. Team members will also be assigned different agenda items to review and present at the request of the team lead. The LEA is given the latitude to include any and all members from their LEA. The local school board must have representation during the exit meeting.

Agenda topics for this exit meeting will include:

- Introductions of team members and explanation of history, goals and expectations from the Instructional Core Focus Visit
- Review of individual Focus Group meetings
- Review of school/district TICO data collection
- Review of CEE survey data
- Review of Instructional Core Focus Visit Report

A suggested outline for the Instructional Core Focus Visit report is included in Appendix 5-E (2). The team leader oversees the writing of the report and, after reviewing its content, shares the report with the LEA during the exit meeting. The report is drafted from both qualitative and quantitative data collected throughout the Instructional Core Focus Visit and summarized under the Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools and categorized by areas of strengths, areas of concerns and recommendations based on evidence.

The report's Introduction would briefly describe the purpose of the review, how it was conducted, and who participated. It should also acknowledge the cooperation of the school staff. Finally, it should indicate the scope of the review (e.g., number of CEE survey

respondents, number of teachers observed and interviewed, number of persons involved in focus group conversations, and identification of documents reviewed). The Highlights section is an opportunity to emphasize a small number of important findings (and recommendations) and/or strengths identified within the course of the Instructional Core Focus Visit.

For each standard, the report will reflect the results of the team's analysis of the data. Although the recommendations are written for the school's consideration, they are also designed to inform LEA and SEA assistance services. A copy of the Indicator Framework (Appendix 1-A) should be included in the report.

The LEA will review all the information presented during the exit meeting and prioritize how to address the recommendations. The team lead will be in contact with the LEA leadership team within two weeks following the Instructional Core Focus Visit to provide additional technical assistance or guidance and clarification to the review team's recommendations. The team leader will continue to offer technical assistance every two weeks for the duration of the school year. A concerted effort of technical assistance will be provided by Capacity Builders, if applicable. If the LEA is not part of the Idaho Capacity Building Project a temporary Capacity Builder will be provided. Within the first month following the Instructional Core Focus Visit the LEA will submit a prioritized list of Focus Items to the team leader identifying a plan of action of addressing and implementing necessary practice to these Focus Items.

Holding a debriefing meeting for Focus Visit team members (optional)

Within one month following the on-site visit, the SDE may hold a one day meeting to examine all Instructional Core Focus Visit data and determine the report content. This meeting may be scheduled during the planning process (Section 2). Prior to the meeting, note takers for interview/focus group activities should complete their transcription and coding activities (Section 4). The team leader will have all of the copies of TICO forms and Document Review checklists, as well as summary data resulting from the CEE survey. The main objective of this meeting will be to review the procedures of the Instructional Core Focus Visit, identify areas of strengths and concerns, and to evaluate the overall success of the process.

APPENDICES

Section 5. Preparing and Transmitting the Review Report

Appendix 5-A: Preparing the Review Report Timeline

ACTIVITY	COMPLETION DATE
Team meets to review data	on-site
Team prepares report	on-site
Team leader shares report to the LEA	During exit meeting
Team leader follow-up with LEA Presentation to School Board (optional)	2-3 weeks following review
LEA Focus Items identified	1 month following review
Team Leader Technical Assistance	Every 2 weeks following review
Education Northwest Interview	1 month following review
Debriefing for review team	Within 1 month following review
Team leader follow-up with LEA School Board report (optional)	3 months following review 6 months following review
Re-evaluate: - Student Achievement Data - CEE Survey Data - Education Northwest Follow-Up	1 year following review with collection of potential artifacts

Appendix 5-B: TICO Data Compiler

TICO Data Sheet	Teacher Name	Teacher Name	Teacher Name	Teacher Name	Teacher Name	Teacher Name	Teacher Name	Teacher Name
Observation								
IIIA28								
IIIA32								
IIIC01								
IIIC10								
IIIA09								
IIIA11								
IIIA13								
IIIA16								
IIIA21								
IIIA26								
IIIA31								
IIIC05								
IIIC12								
Interview								
IIIA01								
IIA01								
IIA02								
IIIA02								
IIC01								

TICO Data Sheet	Teacher Name	Teacher Name	Teacher Name	Teacher Name	Teacher Name	Teacher Name	Teacher Name	Teacher Name
IIB04 IIB04								
IIB05								
IIIA05								
IIIA06								
IIIC01								
IIIB06								
IIIA40								

Note: Enter rubric score for the observation part. Enter 1 for yes and 0 for no for interview part. The last column provides average for each row. Complete column for each teacher.

Note: Excel worksheet may be prepared for all teachers or for groups of teachers (e.g., by grade level or subject area)

Appendix 5-C : Reporting TICO Data

Teacher Interview and Classroom Observation Instrument (TICO)

Tally Sheet

Data are reported as the percentage of teachers whose practice reflects an indicator. Data may be disaggregated by grade level and/or subject area. Here are examples of tabulation and statement of finding. This would be done for each indicator as part of Focus Visit data analysis task.

School: Date of Review:

TICO Observation

Indicator: IIIC01

When waiting for teacher assistance or finished with assignment, students are occupied with curriculum-related activities.(exclude in # of Teachers Observed any teacher marked as no occasion for the observation)

Grade Level	# of Teachers Observed (Column A)	# of Indicators Observed (Column B)	% of Indicators Observed (B / A)
Whole School	8	4	4/8 = 50%

Fifty percent of observed teachers' classrooms exhibited behavior reflecting this indicator.

Indicator: IIIA35

Students are engaged and on task.

Grade 4 Classes	# of Teachers Observed (Column A)	# of Indicators Observed (Column B)	% of Indicators Observed (B / A)
	3	3	3/3 = 100%

All of the Grade 4 Classes observed had evidence of this indicator.

Indicator: IIIC05

Teacher uses a variety of instructional modes.

Math Classes	# of Teachers Observed (Column A)	# of Indicators Observed (Column B)	% of Indicators Observed (B / A)
	4	1	1/4 = 25%

This indicator was observed in 25% of the math classes observed

TICO Interview

Indicator: IIA02

Uses a unit of instruction that includes standards-based objectives and criteria for mastery.

Whole School	# of Teachers	# of Indicators	% of Indicators
	(Column A)	(Column B)	(B / A)
	10	7	7/10 = 70%

Seventy percent of teachers interviewed had evidence of this indicator.

_____

Indicator: IIIA03/04

 Teacher uses objective-based pre-tests and post-tests.

Reading	# of Teachers	# of Indicators	% of Indicators
	(Column A)	(Column B)	(B / A)
	8	7	7/8 = 87.5%

87.5% of the teachers interviewed regarding reading instruction documented the use of pre-tests and post-tests.

_____

Indicator: IIIC01

Provides curriculum-related activities for students when they have completed other work or are waiting for assistance.

Grade 3	# of Teachers	# of Indicators	% of Indicators
	(Column A)	(Column B)	(B / A)
	4	1	1/4 = 25%

Twenty-five percent of Grade 3 teachers interviewed indicated they provided such activities.

_____

Appendix 5-D: Focus Visit Analysis Matrix Tool

This table arrays specific items appearing on the data collection tools (by item number or other designation depending on the tool) used in the reviews against the set of indicators that will be reported upon. For triangulation purposes there are multiple data sources per indicator.

Indicator	TICO Interview	TICO Observe	Principal Interview	CEE Survey	Instructional Staff Focus Group	Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group	Leadership Instructional Team Focus Group	Student Focus Group	Parent Focus Group	Documents Evidence Tangibles
Characteristic 2 High Standards & Expectations for All Students										Instructional Team meeting schedules and notes, AYP data, School Improvement Plan, Instructional units, content & performance standards, pacing guides, Newsletters and other communications to external and internal audiences, School events calendar, Course syllabi, individualized learning plans
IIIA01: All teachers are guided by a document that aligns standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.	X		X		X					
IIIA02: All teachers develop weekly lesson plans based on aligned units of instruction.	X				X					
IIIA05: All teachers maintain a record of each student's mastery of specific learning objectives.	X				X					
IIIA06: All teachers test frequently using a variety of evaluation methods & maintain a record	X									

Indicator	TICO Interview	TICO Observe	Principal Interview	CEE Survey	Instructional Staff Focus Group	Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group	Leadership Instructional Team Focus Group	Student Focus Group	Parent Focus Group	Documents Evidence Tangibles
of the results.										
IIIA09: All teachers clearly state the lesson's topic, theme, & objectives.		X						X		
IIIA11: All teachers use modeling, demonstration & graphics.		X						X		
IIIA13: All teachers explain directly and thoroughly.		X						X		
IIIA16: All teachers use prompting/cueing.		X								
IIIA21: All teachers re-teach following questions.		X								
IIIA26: Teachers encourage students to check their own comprehension.		X						X		
IIIA28 All teachers travel to all areas in which students are working.		X								

Indicator	TICO Interview	TICO Observe	Principal Interview	CEE Survey	Instructional Staff Focus Group	Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group	Leadership Instructional Team Focus Group	Student Focus Group	Parent Focus Group	Documents Evidence Tangibles
IIIA31: All teachers interact instructionally with students (explaining, checking, giving feedback).		X	X					X		
IIIA32: All teachers interact managerially with students (reinforcing rules, procedures).		X	X							
IIIA35: Students are engaged and on task.			X							
IIIA40: All teachers assess student mastery in ways other than those provided by the computer program.	X									
IIIB06: All teachers systematically report to parents the student's mastery of specific standards-based objectives.	X							X		
IIIC01: When waiting for	X	X								

Indicator	TICO Interview	TICO Observe	Principal Interview	CEE Survey	Instructional Staff Focus Group	Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group	Leadership Instructional Team Focus Group	Student Focus Group	Parent Focus Group	Documents Evidence Tangibles
assistance from the teacher, students are occupied with curriculum-related activities provided by the teacher.										
IIIC05: All teachers use a variety of instructional modes.		**X**						**X**		
IIIC10: All teachers reinforce classroom rules and procedures by positively teaching them.		**X**	**X**							
IIIC12 All teachers engage all students (e.g., encourage silent students to participate).		**X**								
Characteristic 3 Effective School Leadership										Newsletters and other communications to external and internal
IE06: The principal keeps a focus on instructional improvement and					**X**	**X**				

Indicator	TICO Interview	TICO Observe	Principal Interview	CEE Survey	Instructional Staff Focus Group	Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group	Leadership Instructional Team Focus Group	Student Focus Group	Parent Focus Group	Documents Evidence Tangibles
student learning outcomes.										audiences, Principal's calendar, Faculty Meeting agendas, School events calendar, School Improvement Plan
IE07: The principal monitors curriculum and classroom instruction regularly.					X					
IE10: The principal celebrates individual, team, and school successes, especially related to student learning outcomes.			X		X	X		X	X	
IE13: The principal offers frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement.			X		X	X		X		
Characteristic 4 High Levels of Collaboration & Communication										School

Indicator	TICO Interview	TICO Observe	Principal Interview	CEE Survey	Instructional Staff Focus Group	Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group	Leadership Instructional Team Focus Group	Student Focus Group	Parent Focus Group	Documents Evidence Tangibles
ID01: A team structure is officially incorporated into the school improvement plan and school governance policy.			X		X					Improvement Plan, Instructional Team meeting schedules and notes, AYP data, Newsletters and other communications to external and internal audiences, School events calendar
ID07: A Leadership Team consisting of the principal, teachers who lead the Instructional Teams, and other key professional staff meets regularly (twice a month or more for an hour each meeting).			X		X		X			
ID08: The Leadership Team serves as a conduit of communication to the faculty and staff.			X		X	X	X			
ID13: Instructional Teams meet for blocks of time (4 to 6 hour blocks, once a month; whole days before and after the school year)			X		X					

Indicator	TICO Interview	TICO Observe	Principal Interview	CEE Survey	Instructional Staff Focus Group	Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group	Leadership Instructional Team Focus Group	Student Focus Group	Parent Focus Group	Documents Evidence Tangibles
sufficient to develop and refine units of instruction and review student learning data.										
Characteristic 5 Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments Aligned with State Standards										School Improvement Plan, Instructional units, content and performance standards, pacing guides Individualized learning plans, AYP data
IIA01: Instructional Teams develop standards-aligned units of instruction for each subject and grade level.	X						X			
IIA02: Units of instruction include standards-based objectives and criteria for mastery.	X									
IC01: Units of instruction include specific learning activities aligned to objectives.	X		X							
IC03: Materials for standards-aligned										

Indicator	TICO Interview	TICO Observe	Principal Interview	CEE Survey	Instructional Staff Focus Group	Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group	Leadership Instructional Team Focus Group	Student Focus Group	Parent Focus Group	Documents Evidence Tangibles
learning activities are well-organized, labeled, and stored for convenient use by teachers.										
Characteristic 6 Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching										Instructional Team meeting agendas and notes, School Improvement Plan, AYP data Course syllabi, Instructional Team meeting agendas and notes, individualized learning plans
IIB01: Units of instruction include pre-/post-tests to assess student mastery of standards-based objectives.	X				X					
IIB04: Teachers individualize instruction based on pre-test results to provide support for some students and enhanced learning opportunities for others.	X				X			X		
IIB05: Teachers re-teach based on post-test results.	X				X					

Indicator	TICO Interview	TICO Observe	Principal Interview	CEE Survey	Instructional Staff Focus Group	Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group	Leadership Instructional Team Focus Group	Student Focus Group	Parent Focus Group	Documents Evidence Tangibles
IID06: Yearly learning goals are set for the school by the Leadership Team, utilizing student learning data.			X		X	X	X			
IID08: Instructional Teams use student learning data to assess strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and instructional strategies.			X		X		X			
IID09: Instructional Teams use student learning data to plan instruction.					X		X			
IID10: Instructional Teams use student learning data to identify students in need of instructional support or enhancement.							X			
IID11: Instructional Teams review the					X		X			

Indicator	TICO Interview	TICO Observe	Principal Interview	CEE Survey	Instructional Staff Focus Group	Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group	Leadership Instructional Team Focus Group	Student Focus Group	Parent Focus Group	Documents Evidence Tangibles
results of unit pre-/post-tests to make decisions about the curriculum and instructional plans and to "red flag" students in need of intervention (both students in need of tutoring or extra help and students needing enhanced learning opportunities because of their early mastery of objectives).										
Characteristic 7 Focused Professional Development										
IF01: The principal compiles reports from classroom observations, showing aggregate areas of strength and areas that need improvement without							X			Professional Development Plan (for school), Professional Development session

Indicator	TICO Interview	TICO Observe	Principal Interview	CEE Survey	Instructional Staff Focus Group	Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group	Leadership Instructional Team Focus Group	Student Focus Group	Parent Focus Group	Documents Evidence Tangibles
revealing the identity of individual teachers.										agendas School Improvement Plan, Instructional Team meeting schedules and notes, AYP data
IF02: The Leadership Team reviews the principal's summary reports of classroom observations and takes them into account in planning professional development.							X			
IF03: Professional development for teachers includes observations by the principal related to indicators of effective teaching and classroom management.	X		X							
IF04: Professional development for teachers includes observations by peers related to indicators of effective teaching and	X		X							

Indicator	TICO Interview	TICO Observe	Principal Interview	CEE Survey	Instructional Staff Focus Group	Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group	Leadership Instructional Team Focus Group	Student Focus Group	Parent Focus Group	Documents Evidence Tangibles
classroom management.										
IF05: Professional development for teachers includes self assessment related to indicators of effective teaching and classroom management.	**X**		**X**							
IF06: Teachers are required to make individual professional development plans based on classroom observations.	**X**		**X**							
IF08: Professional development for the whole faculty includes assessment of strengths and areas in need of improvement from classroom observations of indicators of effective teaching.						**X**				

Indicator	TICO Interview	TICO Observe	Principal Interview	CEE Survey	Instructional Staff Focus Group	Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group	Leadership Instructional Team Focus Group	Student Focus Group	Parent Focus Group	Documents Evidence Tangibles
IF10: The principal plans opportunities for teachers to share their strengths with other teachers.										
Characteristic 9 High Level of Family and Community Involvement										School Community Council mission statement and membership list, Teacher Handbook, Parent Newsletters Principal's calendar, Faculty Meeting agendas, School events calendar Newsletters and other communications to external and internal audiences,
IE 13: The principal offers frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement.			X		X	X			X	
IIIB01: All teachers maintain a file of communication with parents.			X					X	X	
IIIB06: All teachers systematically report to parents the student's mastery of specific standards-based objectives	X		X		X			X	X	

157

Indicator	TICO Interview	TICO Observe	Principal Interview	CEE Survey	Instructional Staff Focus Group	Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group	Leadership Instructional Team Focus Group	Student Focus Group	Parent Focus Group	Documents Evidence Tangibles
PIA: A majority of the members of the School Community Council are parents of currently enrolled students and are not also employees of the school.			X		X				X	
PIA: Parents receive regular communication (absent jargon) about learning standards, their children's progress, and the parents' role in their children's school success.			X		X				X	
PIA: Parents receive practical guidance to encourage their children's regular reading habits at home.			X		X				X	
PIA: Parents are given opportunities to meet with teachers to discuss both their children's			X		X				X	

Indicator	TICO Interview	TICO Observe	Principal Interview	CEE Survey	Instructional Staff Focus Group	Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group	Leadership Instructional Team Focus Group	Student Focus Group	Parent Focus Group	Documents Evidence Tangibles
progress in school and their children's home-based study and reading habits.										

Appendix 5-E (1): Instructions for Compiling Data from All Sources by Indicator

Items Needed

- Patterns of Practice (Focus Visit) Analysis Tool Matrix
- Instructional Staff Online Survey Results
- Teacher Interview and Classroom Observation (TICO) Tally Sheet
- Document Review Checklist
- Principal Interview Notes
- Instructional Staff Focus Group Notes
- Non-Instructional Staff Focus Group Notes
- Leadership Team Focus Group Notes
- Parent Focus Group Notes

Process Steps

1. Team leader ascertains that all of the items listed above have been completed (e.g., all team members have entered their TICO summary data onto a single tally sheet; all documents available at the school have been examined with results recorded on the Document Review Checklist)

2. Using the Patterns of Practice Analysis Tool Matrix as a framework, the team records data (by source) for each indicator. It may be possible (and advisable) for the Team leader to begin the recording process by entering the data from the Instructional Staff Online Survey, the TICO Tally Sheet (if completed by the team), and the Document Review Checklist prior to the team meeting. Data from the principal interview and the various focus groups is recorded at the team meeting. The note takers for the interview/focus groups discuss the content of their notes, and the team agrees on the salient points to be recorded in the Matrix.

3. Instructional Core Focus Visit findings (and resulting recommendations) are based on various types of data. While all data need to be considered, stronger weight should be given to the evidence from Instructional Core Focus Visiters' observations and from written documents.

4. The TICO Tally Sheet provides the number of teachers rated by reviewers as exhibiting individual indicators. These data are based either on

   - actual observation of a particular behavior in the classroom or

- what the teacher says and/or documents as shown to the reviewer during the teacher interview.

5. The Document Review Checklist data indicate, in the judgment of reviewers, whether indicators are addressed within one or more of the documents the school provides.

6. The results of the CEE Perceptional Survey are quantitative (i.e., number of respondents selecting particular response category). As a rule of thumb consider grouping responses from the "to a great extent" and "to a moderate extent" as those agreeing with the statement. Either percentages or numbers responding may be used in the Instructional Core Focus Visit Report. These data reflect the opinions of those responding to the survey.

7. Notes from the five interview/focus groups reflecting the opinions of those participating.

8. Because the notes from the five interview/focus groups may be extensive, it is important to identify the most salient points with regard to the indicators.

9. Once the Focus Visit Analysis Tool Matrix has been filled out to reflect all data sources, the team will be able to identify findings as well as reach conclusions upon which recommendations and statements of strengths will be based.

10. The next step will be writing the Instructional Core Focus Visit Final Report.

Appendix 5-E (2): Review Report Outline

Introduction:

Highlights:

Characteristic 2 – High Standards and Expectations for All Students
    Strengths:

    Concerns:

    Evidence:

    Recommendations to school:

Characteristic 3 – Effective School Leadership
    Strengths:

    Concerns:

    Evidence:

    Recommendations to school:

Characteristic 4 – High Levels of Collaboration & Communication
    Strengths:

    Concerns:

    Evidence:

    Recommendations to school:

Characteristic 5 - Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments Aligned with State Standards

      Strengths:

      Concerns:

      Evidence:

      Recommendations to school:

Characteristic 6 – Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching

      Strengths:

      Concerns:

      Evidence:

      Recommendations to school:

Characteristic 7 – Focused Professional Development

      Strengths:

      Concerns:

      Evidence:

      Recommendations to school:

Characteristic 9 – High Level of Family and Community Involvement

      Strengths:

      Concerns:

      Evidence:

      Recommendations to school:

Appendix 5-E (3): Sample Review Report Outline

Introduction:

Clear that the district leadership is open and ready to benefit from a variety of opportunities.

Highlights:

Focus Group participation

Approachable Leadership

Sense of Community

Characteristic 2 – High Standards and Expectations for All Students

    Strengths: Deep commitment to students/ Know their students

    Concerns: Disparity in terms of expectations (ELL)

    Evidence: Interviews/ Assessment Data

    Recommendations to school: Standards-based report card?
Horizontal agreement on standards taught/ grading policy

Characteristic 3 – Effective School Leadership

    Strengths: Approachable, emphasis on standards, TIA project

    Concerns: Certain amount of resistance for horizontal alignment.

    Evidence: Teacher Focus groups

    Recommendations to school: Consider mandating a certain % of agreement.

Characteristic 4 – High Levels of Collaboration & Communication

    Strengths: Sense of teaming – support each other

    Concerns: Media/ Communication, Time to collaborate (time on task a good start)

    Evidence: Parent focus groups/ teach interviews

    Recommendations to school: Shared collaboration time (PLCs)/ Strategy

Characteristic 5 - Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments Aligned with State Standards

    Strengths: Leadership clearly wants to see instruction aligned to standards

    Concerns: EOCs and course curriculum vary by teacher

    Evidence: Teacher observations, instructional focus groups, teacher interviews

    Recommendations to school: move forward on TIA

Characteristic 6 – Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching

    Strengths: Elementary does a lot of progress monitoring – Comprehensive Assessment Plan

    Concerns: Need for formative assessments at the secondary level. Overreliance on ISAT data.

    Evidence: Few teachers could answer questions on interview.

    Recommendations to school: Implement a Comprehensive Assessment Plan K-12

Characteristic 7 – Focused Professional Development

    Strengths: Professional Development Committee focus - district wide

    Concerns: Teachers' desire for differentiated opportunities

    Evidence: Interviews/ Focus Groups

    Recommendations to school: IDLA Online Professional Development

Characteristic 9 – High Level of Family and Community Involvement

    Strengths: Total commitment of community

    Concerns: More communication wanted by secondary parents.

    Evidence: Parent Focus Groups

    Recommendations to school: Progress Reports – mailed
Email system
Parent Advisory Committee

Idaho Building Capacity
Statewide System of Support for School Improvement

Instruction/Curriculum Alignment Resources

Books

Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching by Charlotte Danielson

Five Big Ideas by Lisa Carter 🖉 *TIA Presentation and Handouts by the Pocatello School District Team

Instructional Rounds in Education by Elizabeth A. City, etc. 🗒

The Mega System by Sam Redding 🖉 *Training for Idaho Instructional Leaders & Mega System Webinars

Total Instructional Alignment: From Standards to Student Success by Lisa Carter 🖉
*TIA Presentation and Handouts by the Pocatello School District Team

Working on the Work: An Action Plan for Teachers, Principals, & Superintendents by Phillip C. Schlechty

Bound Resources & Archived Webinars

Note: To receive a bound copy of the publications listed in this section, contact the Statewide School Improvement Office by phone at (208) 426-4852 or by email at katherineweatherspoon@boisestate.edu.

IBC District Improvement Guide

IBC Planning Process Guide

Mega System Webinars 📙
   Webinar #2: Executive Function
   Webinar #3: It's A Big World Out There

Monthly School Improvement Webinars 🖉 *Connected to the Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools
   Section: High Standards & Expectations for All Students
                  Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments Aligned with State Standards
                  Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching

Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools 🖉 *Monthly School Improvement Webinars

Professional Teaching & Learning Coaching Book 🖉 *Other Resources: PTL Resources

Training for Idaho Instructional Leaders 📙
   Session #3: Instructional Planning
   Session #4: Instructional Delivery

CB Resources Binder

Note: An electronic version of the CB Resources Binder can be found at http://csi.boisestate.edu/improvement/CBResourceBinder.html

Student Engagement Resource (Tab #13)

Other Resources

The Instructional Core: Instructional Rounds in Education PowerPoint 📙

PTL Resources 📙
   Powerful Questions "Cheat Sheet"
   Student Learning Protocols

Symbol Key
🖤 Link to Book
✏️ Link to Outline
✂️ Link to Activity
🗒 Link to PowerPoint
🖉 Link to Other

Appendix 5-F (2): Communication Resources

Idaho Building Capacity
Statewide System of Support for School Improvement

Communication Resources

Books

Anatomy of Peace: Resolving the Heart of Conflict by The Arbinger Institute

How to Deal With Teachers Who Are Angry, Troubled, Exhausted, or Just Plain Confused
by Elaine K. McEwan-Adkins

Influencer: The Power to Change Anything by Kerry Patterson, etc.

The Mega System by Sam Redding *Training for Idaho Instructional Leaders & Mega Systems Webinars

Why Don't You Want What I Want? By Rick Maurer

Bound Resources & Archived Webinars

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IBC District Improvement Guide

IBC Planning Process Guide

Mega System Webinars
   Webinar #4: The School As Community

Monthly School Improvement Webinars *Connected to the Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools
   Sections: Clear & Shared Focus (Also contains Roles & Alignment & Change Conversation)
             High Levels of Family & Community Involvement

Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools *Monthly School Improvement Webinars

Professional Teaching & Learning Coaching Book *Other Resources: PTL Resources

CB Resources Binder

Note: An electronic version of the CB Resources Binder can be found at http://csi.boisestate.edu/improvement/CBResourceBinder.html

Initial Conversation With The Leader (Tab #4)

Other Resources

How to Deal With Teachers Who Are Angry, Troubled, Exhausted, or Just Plain Confused Outline

PTL Resources
   Powerful Questions "Cheat Sheet"
   Student Learning Protocols

Symbol Key
  Link to Book
  Link to Outline
  Link to Activity
  Link to PowerPoint
  Link to Other

Appendix 5-F (3): Comprehensive Assessment Planning Resources

Idaho Building Capacity
Statewide System of Support for School Improvement

Comprehensive Assessment Planning Resources

Books

Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching by Charlotte Danielson
  *Teacher Evaluation Professional Development by Bruce Boyd, Kathleen Hanson, and Joanie Peterson

The Data Coach's Guide to Improving Learning for All Students by Nancy Love, etc.

Getting Excited About Data by Edie L. Holcomb

Leadership for Learning: How to Help Teachers Succeed by Carl D. Glickman

The Mega System by Sam Redding *Training for Idaho Instructional Leaders & Mega Systems Webinars

Bound Resources & Archived Webinars

Note: To receive a bound copy of the publications listed in this section, contact the Statewide School Improvement Office by phone at (208) 426-4852 or by email at katherineweatherspoon@boisestate.edu.

IBC District Improvement Guide

IBC Planning Process Guide

Mega System Webinars
   Webinar #2: Executive Function
   Webinar #3: It's A Big World Out There

Monthly School Improvement Webinars *Connected to the Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools
   Section: Curriculum, Instruction & Assessments Aligned with State Standards
            Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching

Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools *Monthly School Improvement Webinars

Professional Teaching & Learning Coaching Book *Other Resources: PTL Resources

Training for Idaho Instructional Leaders
   Session #2: Collegial Learning
   Session #3: Instructional Planning
   Session #4: Instructional Delivery

Other Resources

The Data Coach's Guide to Improving Learning for All Students Activity

Getting Excited About Data Activity

PTL Resources
   Powerful Questions "Cheat Sheet"
   Student Learning Protocols

Symbol Key
- Link to Book
- Link to Outline
- Link to Activity
- Link to PowerPoint
- Link to Other

Appendix 5-F (4): Collaboration Resources

Idaho Building Capacity
Statewide System of Support for School Improvement

Collaboration Resources

Books

The Art of Possibility: Transforming Professional and Personal Life by Rosamund Stone Sander 📎
   *Note: IBC Video and Professional Development Materials available for checkout

Beyond the Walls of Resistance by Rick Maurer 🗔

Connecting Leadership with Learning by Michael A. Copland & Michael S. Knapp 📎
   *Presentation and Handouts by Authors

District Leadership That Works: Striking the Right Balance by Robert Marzano

Leadership and Self Deception: Getting Out of the Box by The Arbinger Institute

Learning by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work by Richard DuFour, etc.

The Mega System by Sam Redding 📎 *Training for Idaho Instructional Leaders & Mega Systems Webinars

The Power of Protocols: An Educator's Guide to Better Practice by Joseph P. McDonald, etc. ✘

Transforming School Culture: How to Overcome Staff Division by Anthony Muhammad 🗔

Turnaround Leadership by Michael Fullan ✎

Bound Resources & Archived Webinars
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IBC District Improvement Guide

IBC Planning Process Guide

Monthly School Improvement Webinars 📎 *Connected to the Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools
   Sections: Clear & Shared Focus (Also contains Roles & Alignment & Change Conversation)
               Effective School Leadership
               High Levels of Collaboration & Communication

Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools 📎 *Monthly School Improvement Webinars

Mega System Webinars 📙
   Webinar #2: Executive Function

Professional Teaching & Learning Coaching Book 📎 *Other Resources: PTL Resources

Training for Idaho Instructional Leaders 📙
   Session #1: Effective Teaming

Symbol Key
📙 Link to Book
✎ Link to Outline
✘ Link to Activity
🗔 Link to PowerPoint
📎 Link to Other

CB Resources Binder

Note: An electronic version of the CB Resources Binder can be found at http://csi.boisestate.edu/improvement/CBResourceBinder.html

Beyond the Walls of Resistance PowerPoint (Tab #14)

Coaching for Academic Success (Tab #12)

Turnaround Leadership Outline (Tab #15)

Other Resources

The Power of Protocols: An Educator's Guide to Better Practice Activity

PTL Resources
  Powerful Questions "Cheat Sheet"
  Student Learning Protocols

Transforming School Culture PowerPoint

Appendix 5-G: Potential Artifact Collection for Follow-up Accountability

Curriculum/Instruction	Comprehensive Assessment
Curriculum	**General Information:**

Curriculum/Instruction

Curriculum

- Pacing Calendars
- Curriculum Map linking State Standards
- Lesson Plans
- Team Unit Plans
- Instructional Focus Process for Intervention Decisions (small grouping)
- Protocols for RTI-like behaviors
- Decisions behind curriculum and material choices – scientific based research
- 3-Tier Curriculum Design Chart

Instruction

- Walk-Through Forms
- Professional Development Calendar

Communication

General Information:

- Meeting agendas with minutes
- Staff Bulletins
- School Newsletters
- School and District Websites
- Newspaper Articles
- Staff and Student Handbook(s)
- List of Professional Learning Communities with roles and responsibilities
- Copies of presentations to staff of student achievement data and progress monitoring
- Evidence of CEE survey data

Comprehensive Assessment

General Information:

- List of Services at each of the Tiers of Instruction
- Mastery Scale with Descriptors for ISAT sub-categories
- Criteria of Differentiated Instruction
- Grading Scale
- Report Card Format
- Promotion/Retention Policy

Yearly Assessment Data:

- Current ISAT Scores for all sub populations and gap analysis
- 3 year Longitudinal Cohort ISAT scores for all sub populations and gap analysis
- 3 year Curriculum Analysis by Grade Level by ISAT scores for all sub populations and gap analysis
- K-3 IRI Proficiency Scores with achievement gap analysis and trend analysis by all sub populations
- K-12 Diagnostic Formative Assessment and Summative Assessment Data
- 7-12 End of Course Assessment with achievement gap analysis and trend analysis by all sub populations
- 9-12 GPA/Grade Distribution
- Graduation/Drop Out Rates
- Discipline Referrals
- Attendance/ADA Percentages

Section 6 - Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Instructional Core Focus Visit?

The Instructional Core Focus Visit is an examination of a school's activities in relation to a set of research-based indicators associated with schools demonstrating proficient levels of academic achievement. The Instructional Core Focus Visit considers a set of 51 indicators (district and school) related to the following nine characteristics of high performing schools:

- Clear and Shared Focus
- High Standards and Expectations for all students
- Effective School Leadership
- High Levels of Collaboration and Communication
- Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment aligned with State Standards
- Frequent Monitoring of Learning and Teaching
- Focused Professional Development
- Supportive Learning Environment
- High Levels of Family and Community Involvement

The Instructional Core Focus Visit process looks for evidence of the presence of indicators associated with substantial school improvement. It includes collecting detailed information on the quality of instruction, assessment, curriculum, planning, and parent involvement. Data collection activities include classroom observation, surveys and interviews with staff, and the review of documents related to the educational program. Review teams will be composed of consultants selected for their expertise in the area of educational administration and pedagogy.

What is the source of the indicators upon which the Instructional Core Focus Visit is based?

The Instructional Core Focus Visit is based on indicators included in *Handbook on Restructuring and Substantial School Improvement* created by the Center on Innovation & Improvement (CII) and published by Information Age Publishing, Inc. (2007), and adapted to Idaho's Rapid School Improvement Indicators and the Nine Characteristics of Highly Effective Schools. CII is one of five national content centers under the federal Comprehensive Centers Program. This handbook has received the approval of the U.S. Department of Education; in addition, it received the honor of being designated Best Publication of the Year by Division H of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) in 2008.

Nine states and the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) are now using the handbook as the backbone of a major effort to provide training and technical assistance to districts and schools identified as in need of improvement under both state and No Child Left Behind accountability provisions. Virginia's effort began in 2007 with an assistance program for divisions designated as in probation status and continues this year at both division and school levels. This year Virginia has begun to coordinate various activities conducted by elements of its statewide system of support within this indicators-based framework.

Why are Instructional Core Focus Visits being conducted?

Under provisions in the federal Title 1 program (Section 1117 of P.L. 107-110 No Child Left Behind Act of 2001), the SEA is required to provide a Statewide System of Support to assist Title I districts and schools that are in need of improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The Statewide System of Support extends beyond the SEA's own resources, including organizational partners, distinguished educators, support teams, and other consultants to assist districts and schools with expertise appropriate to the needs of the district or school.

The results of Instructional Core Focus Visits will help the SEA deliver appropriate service through its statewide system of support. It is expected that the results of these reviews will also inform LEA's technical assistance efforts. Finally, schools that undergo Instructional Core Focus Visits will receive valuable feedback about the extent to which their operations related to the nine standards reflect a set of processes and practices identified with successful schools. Schools will be able to use this information in their school improvement planning.

How many LEAs will have Instructional Core Focus Visits each year?

Currently, there are plans to conduct Focus Reviews of approximately five school districts each year. During the 2009-2010 school year the SDE conducted five Instructional Core Focus Visits.

How have these LEAs been selected?

The SEA selected the LEAs in which Instructional Core Focus Visits will take place based upon an analysis of their accountability status, graduation rate, academic achievement and demographic risk factors.

When will the Instructional Core Focus Visits be conducted?

Instructional Core Focus Visits during the (school year) school year will take place between (fill in period).

Who will conduct the Instructional Core Focus Visits?

The SDE, as part of its statewide system of support, will to conduct the Instructional Core Focus Visits in schools during the 2010-2011 school year. The SDE will partner

with the Regional School Improvement Centers to provide additional consultants as needed to participate on the Instructional Core Focus Visit team. All consultants have strong backgrounds in education. They include former principals, teachers, and district-level administrators. Most have had experience in conducting Instructional Core Focus Visits in schools. They have participated in a series of training events related to the process and procedures of a Instructional Core Focus Visit.

How are Instructional Core Focus Visits conducted?

In general, Instructional Core Focus Visits are on-site visits to schools and include a variety of data collection activities. The only data collection activity outside the period of the on-site visit is conducting an on-line survey to which all staff within the school are encouraged to respond. Responses to the survey will be collected in the week leading up to the on-site visit.

During the on-site visit the Instructional Core Focus Visit team will gather data from multiple sources including:

- classroom observation in a sample of classrooms
- interviews with teachers and school leadership
- focus groups with instructional and non-instructional personnel as well as with parents
- review of key documents requested from the principal prior to the on-site visit

The Instructional Core Focus Visit team leader will work with the principal prior to the on-site visit to establish a schedule for the data collection activities. Using a staff roster, the team leader will select the teachers whose classrooms will be visited; this sample is intended to represent the grade levels within the school. To ensure the integrity of the review process which seeks to obtain a profile of the school during its normal operations, teachers whose classrooms will be visited will not notified in advance. Staff invited to participate in focus groups will be notified in advance to facilitate scheduling. Key documents will be examined during the on-site visit; principals will not be burdened with photocopying or mailing requirements.

How many days does the Instructional Core Focus Visit team spend on-site in schools for a Instructional Core Focus Visit?

The Instructional Core Focus Visit team will spend 2-3 days in each district. The number of classroom observations, interviews and focus groups will be determined by factors including school enrollment and/or presence of special programs.

How are the results of the Instructional Core Focus Visit reported?

Following the on-site visit, the Instructional Core Focus Visit team will synthesize the information it collected. The team will structure its analysis using the set of nine

characteristics and 51 indicators that constitute the Instructional Core Focus Visit framework. The Instructional Core Focus Visit team will come to consensus regarding the nature of the findings and recommendations to include in the report. A written Instructional Core Focus Visit report will be prepared by the team and shared to the LEA during an exit meeting.

Do the Instructional Core Focus Visit reports contain the names of the schools, school staff, and other persons involved in the review?

No. while the SDE reserves the right to make aggregate data and the final report public, Instructional Core Focus Visit reports will not include the names of individual teachers who have been observed nor will there be any kind of summative 'grade' for schools in the sample. The review team will simply report what they observed and what data they gathered for each of the standards and associated indicators in the framework.

Do the Instructional Core Focus Visit reports contain any student names or academic data regarding individual students?

No. Instructional Core Focus Visit reports will NEVER contain the names of students or academic data regarding individual students.

It is important to point out that, in the conducting of interviews with teachers whose classrooms have been observed, the Instructional Core Focus Visiter will be asking how the teacher differentiates instruction and maintains records of student mastery, but the teacher will not be asked to provide information identifying individual students.

Who will get to see and use the Instructional Core Focus Visit reports?

The main purpose of the review is to provide input to the LEA related to its systemic improvement efforts. However, participating schools should find the reports valuable to inform their own internal discussions about professional development and school improvement at the building level. School districts involved in Instructional Core Focus Visits may also find that the reports provide useful information about professional development and other technical assistance needs.

How do Instructional Core Focus Visits differ from other examinations of schools and/or classrooms?

There are differences in purpose and design. The Instructional Core Focus Visit's main purpose is to inform the LEA's decision-making efforts related to improving the instructional core and attaining substantially improved student outcomes. To do this the LEA will be most interested in identifying themes and critical needs that emerge in the Instructional Core Focus Visit findings across multiple schools settings. The Instructional Core Focus Visit is NOT for the purpose of evaluating the quality of individual schools or individual school staff.

The Instructional Core Focus Visit's design reflects two major principles:

- using multiple data sources to triangulate the determination of areas that may need to be addressed, and
- maximizing the review's objectivity by having external reviewers observe classrooms and review documents used by the school.