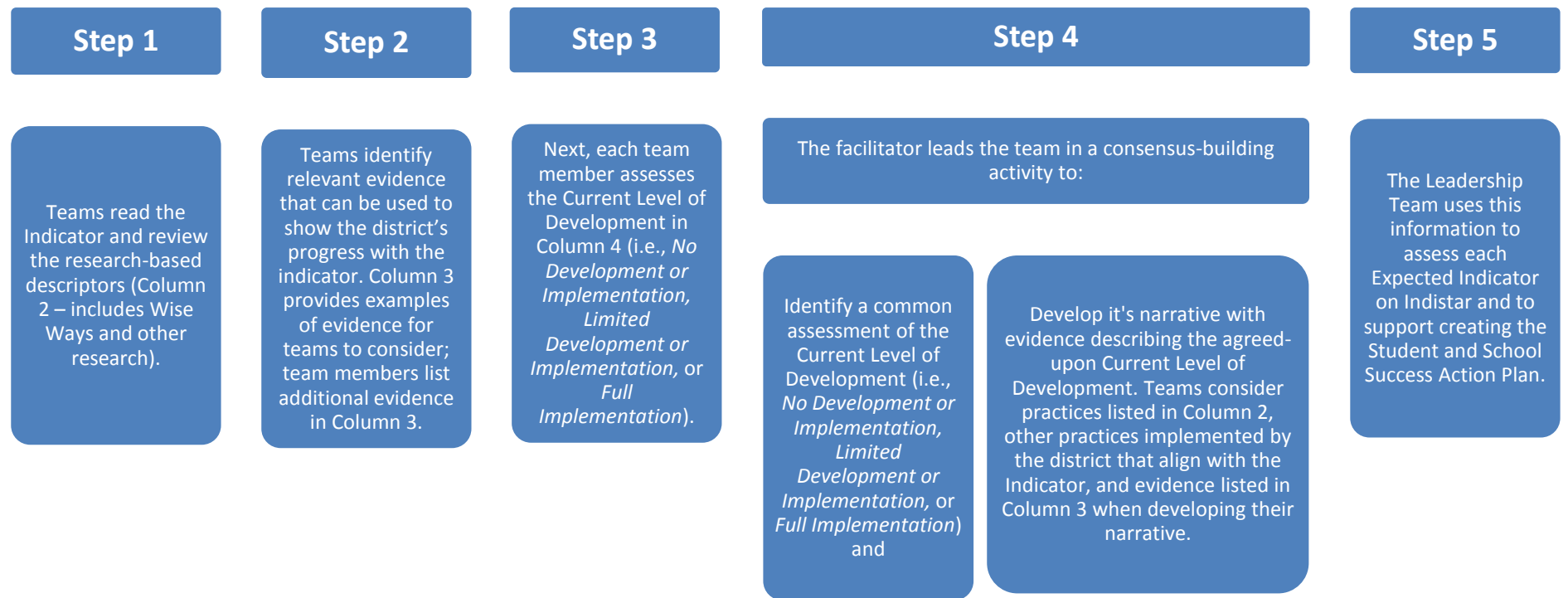# Current Level of Development (CLD) Guidance for DISTRICT-LEVEL EXPECTED INDICATORS

District Leadership Team members and other stakeholders use the *Current Level of Development Review* to assess their district's progress with respect to each District-Level Expected Indicator (Column 1). These Expected Indicators align directly with the Student and School Success Principles, also known as "turnaround principles" in federal ESEA Guidance.

Steps in the process:

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Teams read the Indicator and review the research-based descriptors (Column 2 – includes Wise Ways and other research).	Teams identify relevant evidence that can be used to show the district's progress with the indicator. Column 3 provides examples of evidence for teams to consider; team members list additional evidence in Column 3.	Next, each team member assesses the Current Level of Development in Column 4 (i.e., *No Development or Implementation, Limited Development or Implementation,* or *Full Implementation*).	The facilitator leads the team in a consensus-building activity to:	The Leadership Team uses this information to assess each Expected Indicator on Indistar and to support creating the Student and School Success Action Plan.

Step 4 (consensus-building activity):

Identify a common assessment of the Current Level of Development (i.e., *No Development or Implementation, Limited Development or Implementation,* or *Full Implementation*) and	Develop it's narrative with evidence describing the agreed-upon Current Level of Development. Teams consider practices listed in Column 2, other practices implemented by the district that align with the Indicator, and evidence listed in Column 3 when developing their narrative.

Note: Column 2 includes *suggested* research-based best practices for each Expected Indicator; these are informed by the "Wise Ways" research documents found on the Indistar® tool and other research. Lists in Column 2 are **not intended to serve as a "menu"** that includes all possible research-based best practices for each Expected Indicator. Rather, district teams are encouraged to consider both the practices listed in Column 2 as well as evidence of other research-based practices when describing their current level of development (Column 4).

Moreover, **districts are NOT expected to implement *each* research-based practice listed in Column 2** for every Expected Indicator. Rather, teams consider the full range of research-based practices, as well as school- and district-level data, when assessing their district's current level of development and creating their District-Level Plan on Indistar®.

Principle 1: Provide strong leadership.			
P1-A: The district reviews capacity of principals in schools required to Implement turnaround plans and determines whether an existing principal has the necessary competencies to lead the turnaround effort.	• District considerations for retaining/selecting principal to lead effort: 　o Turnaround leadership requires different competencies than managing a good school. 　o Principals fairly new to the school who demonstrate strong change leadership may be ideal for continuing to lead the school. 　o Changing principals signals need for dramatic improvement. • District considers competencies for turnaround principals when reviewing capacity of principal/selecting new principals: 　o Driving for results (achievement, initiative and persistence, monitoring and directiveness, planning ahead) 　o Influencing for results (impact and influence, team leadership, developing others) 　o Problem solving (analytical thinking, conceptual thinking) 　o Showing confidence to lead • District examines additional attributes 　o Analyzes data to identify high-priority problems that can be fixed quickly (quick wins) 　o Creates plans that clarify expectations and responsibilities 　o Concentrates on smaller number of changes that can be achieved quickly to provide impetus for the bigger changes to take place 　o Willing to deviate from "usual way we do business" 　o Leads staff to focus on student academic and social needs 　o Makes sure all stakeholders are aware of positive changes; helps those who doubt process to see progress	*Required Evidence for All Districts with Priority and Focus Schools: Principle I: Letter of Assurance showing that district reviewed the capacity of the current principal and determined if he/she has the competencies to lead turnaround effort* *Sample evidence:* • Relevant board/district policies, procedures, and/or practices describing principal evaluation process • Evidence of competencies used to review capacity of principals expected to lead turnaround effort in challenged and low-achieving schools • Documentation showing how principal evaluation system, including district's chosen Leadership Framework, was used in decision-making *Questions to consider:* • What process does district use to evaluate and assign principles to its neediest schools? • How does district hold schools accountable for student learning and provide feedback to principals? • How does district communicate high expectations for adult performance, particularly around eliminating inequitable learning outcomes and the educator practices impacting those outcomes?	○ **No Development** ○ **Limited development** ○ **Full Implementation**
P1-B: The district ensures that an empowered change agent (typically the principal) is appointed to head each school that needs rapid improvement.	• District recognizes that successful restructuring generally requires a new principal, most likely from outside the school; promoting someone from within the school is not necessarily the correct move, since he/she is already familiar with the school. • District empowers turnaround leaders to (a) concentrate on a few very important changes with big, fast payoffs, and (b) act to implement practices proven to work with previously low-achieving students. If these practices do not align with district policies, district and school leaders collaborate to identify next steps. • District supports principal actions contributing to success, including: 　o Communicates a positive vision of future school results 　o Collects and analyzes school and student performance data 　o Collaboratively creates an action plan based on data 　o Helps staff understand challenges students face from the student's perspective 　o Gets key influencers in district/school to support major changes 　o Relentlessly pursues goals; measures and reports progress frequently and publicly 　o Funnels time and money into practices and strategies that get results; halts unsuccessful practices and strategies	*Sample evidence:* • Relevant board/district policies, procedures, and/or practices for assigning principals to challenged and low-achieving schools • Documentation showing how district balances school-level autonomy/flexibility with accountability for increases in educator capacity and student learning • Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) • Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) *Questions to consider:* • What processes does district use to ensure assignment of leaders demonstrating turnaround competencies to its neediest schools? • How does district communicate high expectations for building educator capacity to close gaps and eliminate inequities in student outcomes? • What processes does district use to ensure principal and school-level autonomy/flexibility within a districtwide framework of accountability for increased student achievement? • How does district assign and support central office leaders to	○ **No Development** ○ **Limited development** ○ **Full Implementation**

	o Models, insists, endorses, and supports instructional or procedural change in the best interest of students • District collaborates with principal to establish process for balancing autonomy/flexibility and accountability for significant improvements in educator practice and student learning. District provides principal with reasonable flexibility to implement necessary changes, as well as ongoing support (e.g., with student data, funding, communications), and assistance. District holds school accountable for quick improvement and engaging stakeholders in the process. • District recognizes that reassignment of the whole staff is not usually needed; it is essential to have staff that support change. The district works closely with the educator association regarding assignment and transfer of highly effective teachers to challenged schools.	facilitate growth of principals as instructional leaders? • How are these central office leaders held accountable for helping principals grow as instructional leaders?	

P1-C: District examines its policies and makes modifications as needed to provide operational flexibility for principals in order to support school turnaround plans in key areas.	• District gives turnaround principals flexibility and reasonable latitude to change course (e.g., staff changes and changes in school schedule).
	• District recognizes that greater autonomy brings close district oversight of the progress of turnaround effort.
	• District and school leadership collaborate and agree on decision-making powers granted principal and school's Leadership Team. Autonomy/flexibility is balanced by accountability for significant changes in educator practice and student learning.
	• Focus of school efforts toward district goals is nonnegotiable; district determines and clearly communicates to school personnel:
	   o Process to review district policies, procedures, and practices related to school-level decision making and principal authority
	   o Reasonable latitude provided to turnaround principals as compared to other school principals in the district
	   o Information considered by district in granting greater authority to turnaround principals
	• District recognizes that if change made due to increased freedom or flexibility is not showing gains or improvement, then that change must be revised or eliminated. District judges success by measuring outcomes and tracking results.
	• District collaborates with principal and school to determine timeline for creating, implementing, and monitoring school improvement plan, allowing sufficient time for leader to make substantial changes. District holds school to timeline, making adjustments as needed to ensure improved educator practice and increased student learning result from implementation of the school's plan.
	• District leaders understand urgency for rapid improvement for challenged schools.
		Sample evidence:
		• Relevant board/district policies, procedures, and/or practices
		• Evidence showing student and school success office and/or assignment of school improvement/turnaround specialist to support challenged and low-achieving schools
		• Documentation showing how district balances school-level autonomy/flexibility and accountability (including types of data used to determine increases in educator capacity and student learning)
		• Evidence of alignment between district and school goals
		
		Questions to consider:
		• How does district establish parameters for school-level autonomy/flexibility within a districtwide context of accountability for improved educator practice and student learning?
		• How does district maintain pressure for improved student learning while providing school-level autonomy/flexibility?
		• How does district enable schools to set goals within the context of district vision, strategic plan, and goals?
		• How does district differentiate expectations, supports, and services for individual schools – within context of district vision, priorities, and strategic plan?
		• How are different roles for central office and schools developed, communicated, and monitored?
			○ **No Development**
			
			○ **Limited development**
			
			○ **Full Implementation**

Principle 2: Ensure that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction.			

P2-A: District policy and practices ensure highly qualified teachers are recruited, placed, and retained to support the transformation and turnaround efforts.	• Consistent with district/educator association agreements (e.g., CBA, MOU), district protects schools in greatest need of quality teachers from allowing ineffective teachers based on the district's chosen Instructional Framework and district policies, procedures, and practices from being assigned to or transferring into these schools.
	• District aggressively recruits talented teachers for turnaround schools, places high standards for the qualifications of teachers in these schools, and provides incentives for teachers who accept positions and succeed in transformation and turnaround schools.
	• District partners with local universities and colleges of education.
	• Consistent with district/educator association agreements (e.g., CBA, MOU), district implements some or all of the following to retain staff:
	  o Provides professional development for teachers specifically based on data (e.g., classroom observations and walkthroughs, staff surveys) around school and individual needs.
	  o Trains leaders to provide staff with support in instruction and discipline matters.
	  o Provides opportunities for growth (e.g., career ladders).
	  o Provides monetary or professional learning incentives (e.g., participation in educator conferences).
	  o Includes induction or mentoring for new teachers in PD plan.
		Sample Evidence:
		• Relevant board/district policies, procedures, and/or practices
		• Documentation showing teacher certification levels for both district and challenged and low-achieving schools
		• CBA and/or MOU
		
		Questions to consider:
		• What processes does district use to ensure the assignment of highly qualified teachers to its neediest schools?
		• What competencies does district consider when recruiting and placing teachers in its neediest schools?
		• How does district hold adults accountable for improving educator practice, closing opportunity and achievement gaps, and increasing student learning?
		• How does district demonstrate that its goals and initiatives, including central office changes, will lead to improvements in student learning?
			○ **No Development**
			○ **Limited development**
			○ **Full Implementation**

P2-B: The district has policies and practices in place that prevent ineffective teachers from transferring to schools required to implement turnaround plan.	• Consistent with district/educator association agreements (e.g., CBA, MOU), district ensures that the turnaround school is able to select and retain the teachers ready to perform.
	• District has policies, procedures, and/or practices in place that remove barriers to dismissing ineffective teachers. These include::
	  o Having high-quality evaluation systems in place
	  o Creating a rigorous tenure procedure not based only on length of time served
	  o Working with schools and teacher unions to create a process, and if needed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or similar agreement, for removing chronically low-performing or ineffective teachers
		Sample evidence
		• Relevant board/district policies, procedures, and/or practices for teacher evaluation
		• CBA or MOU
		
		Questions to consider:
		• How does district ensure ineffective teachers are not assigned to its neediest schools?
		• What instructional competencies does district consider when assigning teachers and leaders?
		• How does district communicate its commitment to identify and address educator practices impacting inequities in student outcomes?
			○ **No Development**
			○ **Limited development**
			○ **Full Implementation**

P2-C: 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	• District develops strong professional development (PD) programs anchored in district's chosen Leadership and Instructional Frameworks and research-based best practices. PD attributes follow.
	  o PD content and focus emphasize depth over breadth.
	  o PD choices are informed by student outcomes, classroom observations, school action plans, and district goals.
	  o PD aligns to research-based best practices for sound instruction.
	• District provides training for principals in providing good feedback to teachers to improve instructional skills; training is consistent with district's chosen Leadership and Instructional Frameworks.
	• District implements the following to support job-embedded PD:
		Sample evidence
		• Relevant board/district policies, procedures, and/or practices for identifying instructional and leadership needs and delivering PD/TA consistent with chosen Leadership and Instructional Frameworks
		• Documentation showing allocation of resources to support PD/TA aligned with school improvement plans
		• Calendar with job- embedded professional development opportunities
		• Assignment of instructional coaches
			○ **No Development**
			○ **Limited development**
			○ **Full Implementation**

requirements of its Student and School Success Action Plan and evolving needs.	○ Makes continued learning a part of the teacher contract, memorandum of understanding, district's performance system and employment policies, school handbooks and policies, etc. ○ Offers incentives and supports for schools to provide and evaluate job-embedded PD opportunities for their teachers. ○ Helps principals to plan and support implementations and to monitor implementation through school walk-throughs. ○ Helps principals align teacher evaluation with job-embedded PD. ○ Helps principals provide teacher collaborative learning time. ○ Implements policies, procedures, and/or practices that allow teachers to advance as instructional leaders, master teachers, and job-embedded PD facilitators.	*Questions to consider:* • How does district build district- and school-level capacity to improve instruction and student learning? • How does district support school to deliver job-embedded PD aligned with its unique needs – within the context of district priorities and PD system? • How does district ensure PD reflects research-based practices? • How does district ensure coherence across PD and teaching and learning practices within school? Across district?	

Principle 3: Redesign the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration.

P3-A: The district allocates resources to support additional learning time for students and staff in schools required to implement turnaround principles.	• District implements strategic plan that includes allocating resources to challenged schools and supporting expanded learning opportunities for students and staff. • District and school leaders make strategic resource allocation decisions in order to implement and sustain initiatives for expanded learning time (e.g., giving schools a fixed amount of funds for expanded learning time programs, allowing schools to design programs to fit their budgets). • District supports/facilitates school-level decision-making about who provides expanded time and how it is structured (i.e., increased classroom time in core academic subjects, increased time for enrichment activities, and/or increased time for targeted academic support). • District and school implement processes to assess effectiveness of extended learning programs for students and staff and to make adjustments as needed to improve their impact on educator practice and student learning.	*Sample evidence:* • Relevant board/district policies, procedures, and/or practices • District and school budgets and other evidence showing resources allocated to schools to support improvement plans (e.g., expanding student and staff learning time) • School's master schedule • CBA and/or MOU *Questions to consider:* • How does district allocate resources that support schools to redesign schedule to include additional time for student learning? For teacher collaboration? • How does district assess effectiveness of extended learning programs and strategies and make adjustments to improve educator capacity and student learning? • How does district provide opportunities for peer support, collaboration, and professional learning communities?	○ **No Development** ○ **Limited development** ○ **Full Implementation**

Principle 4: Strengthen the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensure that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with State academic content standards.			
P4-A: The district ensures that school improvement initiatives include rigorous, research-based, field-proven instructional programs, practices, and models.	District utilizes variety of sources when researching efficacy of school improvement models. District selects source that aligns with the unique needs of each school. Sample resources follow. • What Works Clearinghouse provides reports of rigorously screened research on programs in elementary and middle school mathematics, character education, dropout prevention, early childhood education, English language learning, and beginning reading. • Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory maintains a catalog of school reform models. • Northwest Center for Educational Accountability, a collaborative effort of University of Texas at Austin, Education Commission of the States, and Just for the Kids, includes a self-audit, the Best Practice Framework, for comparing instructional and organizational practices with those of consistently higher performing districts and schools.	• Annotated literature review of research-based programs, *e.g.,* multi-tiered student support system (RTI, PBIS) • Evidence showing alignment of curriculum with Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and other state standards *Questions to consider:* • How does district ensure school's instructional programs, practices, and models are research-based and rigorous? • How does district establish fidelity of school-level implementation of programs, practices and models? • How does district ensure its learning standards align with CCSS and other state standards, and assessments? • What are district processes for coordinating curriculum district-wide and for ensuring school-level curriculum aligns with CCSS and other state standards?	○ **No Development** ○ **Limited development** ○ **Full Implementation**

P4-B: The district works with the school to provide early and intensive intervention for students not making progress.	• District ensures tight alignment between intervention and other aspects of instructional process.
	• District develops or adapts data system to ensure early and intensive intervention for students. Critical elements of this system follow:
	  o Enables analysis of student outcomes at multiple levels.
	  o Includes district-wide plan for collecting, interpreting, and using data.
	  o Includes dedicated time and structures that support district, schools, and teachers to use data to alter instruction.
	  o Includes training for teachers and principals in how to interpret and use data to change instruction.
	  o Uses annual state testing performance data to evaluate the overall effectiveness of instructional services provided by district.
	  o Conducts deep analysis to determine areas in need of improvement.
	• District develops and administers periodic benchmark assessments, analyzes results to establish instructional needs, and provides special services to students in need.
		• District policies, procedures, and/or practices describing multi-tiered support system and how special services will be provided to students in need, including ELLs and students with disabilities
		• Early warning data system
		• Intervention specialists and instructional coach schedules
		• Master schedule with intervention time
		• District comprehensive assessment plan, including schedule for administering assessments and providing analysis of results to school for decision making
		
		Questions to consider:
		• How does district support school to effectively implement multi-tiered support system so students not making progress receive early, intensive interventions?
		• How does district use data to identify instructional needs and to provide special services to students in need?
		• How does district support and hold school accountable for providing early and intensive interventions for students not making progress?
			○ **No Development**
			
			○ **Limited development**
			
			○ **Full Implementation**

P4-C: The district has a comprehensive plan that includes testing each student at least 3 times each year to determine progress toward	• District established a timeline to monitor the progress of each student (at least 3 times per year) and to allow teachers to make adjustments to instruction before it is too late. • District and school collaboratively set goals for instruction and achievement. District holds school accountable for these goals, monitors goals for achievement and instruction through a variety of assessment and other data, and uses its resources to support goals for achievement and instruction. • District determines the purpose of each type of assessments (i.e., summative,	• District comprehensive assessment plan, including expected outcomes for collecting data and timeline for administering formative and summative assessments and providing analysis of results to school staff • Interim assessment plan and master assessment schedule, *e.g.,* Measures of Academic Progress, Smarter Balance, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills. • District learning goals at school and subgroup level	○ **No Development** ○ **Limited development** ○ **Full Implementation**

standards-based objectives.	formative), the timing of the assessments, distribution of results, how quickly results will be available for teachers and administrators, and expected outcomes from collecting these data.	*Questions to consider:* • How does district's assessment system ensure school monitors progress at least 3 times per year? • How does district support school to use variety of data to monitor progress, surface gaps, identify students for intervention, and make instructional decisions?	
Principle 5: Use data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data.			
P5-A: The district provides schools with technology, training, and support for integrated data collection, reporting, and analysis systems.	• District collects, organizes, and provides technology, training, and support for teachers and leaders to use a variety of formative and summative data to make instructional decisions at the school, classroom, and individual student levels. • District ensures effective integration and implementation of educational technology critical to making a difference in the academic achievement of all students. • District employs use of educational technology for collecting, reporting, and analyzing data as part of its overall coherent education approach.	• District technology plan describing system for providing student-level data to schools for decision making • Documentation describing how district PD supports staff to utilize data in making instructional decisions (e.g., district data systems, assignment of support staff) *Questions to consider:* • How does district train leaders and teachers to use multiple measures to identify students for intervention and to surface inequities that will inform continuous improvement planning and implementation? • How does district use data to monitor reform and change and to maintain pressure for improved learning? • How does the district provide opportunities for peer support and collaboration around use of data to inform instruction and continuous improvement?	○ **No Development** ○ **Limited development** ○ **Full Implementation**

Principle 6: Safety, discipline, social, and emotional , physical health/School and Classroom Culture			

P6-A The district implements state and federally aligned policies and procedures which guide, promote and assist school communities with academic, physical, social, emotional and behavioral programs and practices that ensure a safe and supportive school culture and climate.	• District has developed policy and procedures related to school safety that reflect and align with current state and federal laws.
	• District researches, set norms, values and expectations that support students, families and staff to be socially, emotionally and physically safe.
	• District provides training to staff regarding safety and positive school culture initiatives.
	• District leaders have communicated the school's safety and culture plan to the school community.
	• District ensures that school-level programs promote a positive, caring, and supportive school climate that is respectful of all learners.
	• District promotes professional development related to best practices around classroom management and positive school culture.
	• District has researched and actively worked toward implementation of multi systems of support (MTSS) within schools.
		• Board policies/procedure and practices as it relates to school safety, and promotion of positive school culture
		• District web or handbook has annual updated distribution to school community/families (and available to non-English speaking families) which outline district policies and procedures as it relates to student safety including anti-bullying prevention.
		• District has evidence of compliancy with state/federal laws and reporting guidelines to CEDARS regarding school safety initiatives.
		• Districts/schools provide and distribute perceptive surveys for parents, students and staff on a yearly basis.
		• Professional development regarding safe and supportive schools is aligned with findings from staff, student, and parent perceptual surveys.
		• Evidence showing alignment between district/school initiatives and the district's chosen Instructional framework
		• Evidence is available of professional development regarding multi systems of support (MTSS) to implement structures within schools.
		
		Questions to consider:
		    • Does the district and school(s) mission and vision statements establish the development of social, emotional, ethical and civic as well as well as intellectual skills as a district/school priority?
		    • How does the district and schools routinely evaluate school climate? Is this done with surveys to the stakeholders (students, staff, and parents) on an annual basis? How are the results shared? How does it inform the district and school action plan?
		    • Do administrators, professional staff development activities explicitly address school climate?
		    • Are policies in place that consider all school activities, including those outside of the classroom to support the desired norms of fostering mutual respect, caring and safety and well-being of the students and community
			○ **No Development**
			
			○ **Limited development**
			
			○ **Full Implementation**

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Principle 7: Provide ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.			

P7-A: The LEA/School has announced changes and anticipated actions publicly, communicated urgency of rapid improvement, and signaled the need for rapid change.	• District has developed a framework/strategic plan to describe how it will engage in rapid and sustainable improvement; plan articulates a set of variables and relationships among them.
	• District communicates need for rapid change to community and next steps in continuous improvement process, including steps to engage parents and community in the process.
	• District has established systems, policies, and procedures to support effective implementation of the following:
	   o **Core District Functions** including Management and Operations and Teaching and Learning.
	   o **Improvement Capacities** consisting of district structures, policies, processes, and programs intentionally designed to improve overall organizational capacity and quality of instruction.
	   o **Rapid Improvement Pathway** depicting how district initiates and sustains improvement efforts, including strategies used to cultivate improvement capacities and improve core functions.
		• Family notification letter regarding school's designation as Priority, Focus, or Emerging and plan to address needs and engage parents/families in change effort
		• Family and community section of website with relevant information for parents, families, and community
		• District goals and/or strategic plan outlining strategies and initiatives for building educator and system capacity
		
		Questions to consider:
		• How do district and school communicate need for rapid change, improvement process used by school, and strategies to engage parents and community?
		• How does district use data to support stakeholders in understanding need for rapid change?
		• How does district communicate its commitment to hold adults in the school accountable for closing gaps, removing barriers to learning, and raising achievement?
			○ **No Development**
			
			○ **Limited development**
			
			○ **Full Implementation**

P7-B: The LEA/School has engaged parents and community in the transformation process.	• District supports schools to develop systems to address needs of whole child—physical, social, emotional, and academic—in order to create fulfilling environments and necessary conditions for learning.
	• District supports school in coordinating non-school community and family resources with existing school services. Co-locating these services at school can have a positive, synergistic effect on outcomes for students, families, schools, and communities.
	• District implements the following strategies to support school in building partnerships and increasing access to community:
	   o Including municipal and civic leaders, community and faith-based organizations, and parent groups in schools reform and planning; maintaining regular communication with them.
	   o Assisting school leaders to network with potential partners and to develop partnerships.
	   o Providing PD for school leaders around effective collaboration.
	   o Directing extra resources to support innovative partnerships between community partners and schools and allowing the kind of flexibility in policies that partnerships may require.
		• Relevant board/district policies, procedures, and/or practices related to engaging families/community in district and school improvement and change efforts and developing and coordinating partnerships with community-based organizations
		• Documentation showing district allocation of resources that support schools to build partnerships with community-based organizations
		• Family and community section of website with calendar of family and community meetings
		• Agendas and minutes of family and community meetings
		
		Questions to consider:
		• How do district and school leaders engage stakeholders, (i.e., staff, union leadership, business leaders, families and community, in implementing reform initiatives?
		• How does district support school to build partnerships, access community resources, and coordinate community and family resources to support school-level efforts?
			○ **No Development**
			
			○ **Limited development**
			
			○ **Full Implementation**