State Review Panel
District Site Visit Protocol

2015-16

COLORADO
Department of Education

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Part I: Introduction

The State Review Panel (SRP, or the Panel) was created by the Education Accountability Act of 2009 to provide a critical evaluation of the state's lowest-performing schools' and districts' plans for dramatic action and provide recommendations to the Commissioner and the State Board of Education. The SRP's work is informed by a review of documents (e.g., Unified Improvement Plan) and, in some cases, by a site visit. The site visit component was added in 2014 to strengthen Panelists' understanding of the conditions in the schools and districts that are further along on the accountability clock. The expectation is that the site visit will inform their recommendations to the Commissioner and the State Board of Education about required actions at the end of the accountability clock.

What is the Colorado Department of Education SRP Site Visit?

The SRP site visit is a process that Panelists can use to understand and explain the extent to which schools/districts have the capacity to plan and implement the dramatic change required to exit the accountability clock (i.e., Priority Improvement, Turnaround). The SRP site visit process was designed in partnership with SchoolWorks – an education consulting organization with the mission to build the capacity of educators to advance all aspects of student achievement and well-being. The SRP site visit places a team of experienced educators (including education experts from Colorado) in a school/district for one day to collect and analyze data related to the school's/district's capacity on specific criteria and indicators.

What are the Colorado District and School Criteria and Indicators?

The SRP site visit is based on the criteria outlined in the Education Accountability Act of 2009. This includes determining whether:

- Leadership is adequate to implement change;
- Infrastructure is adequate to support school improvement;
- Readiness and capacity of district, institute, or school's personnel to plan effectively and lead appropriate actions is present;
- There is readiness and capacity to engage productively with the assistance provided by an external partner;
- There is a likelihood of positive returns on state investments of assistance and support to improve the performance in the current management and staffing; and
- It is necessary that the district, institute, or school remain in operation.

See Part IV for complete a list of the SRP Key Questions and Part V for their corresponding criteria and indicators. The site visit activities will be aligned to collect evidence in relation to these criteria.

What is the purpose of a SRP district site visit?

The purpose of the reviews is to gather on-site evidence on a district's program and operations in the areas outlined in the Education Accountability Act. The site visit builds on the document review process previously conducted by the SRP for each district. This is the one chance that the SRP has to interact with the district to determine capacity and solicit staff and School Board input. However, it is just one source of evidence that the SRP considers to better understand where improvement efforts are successful or lagging as recommendations are made to the Commissioner and State Board of Education.

What does the SRP district site visit entail?

The SRP utilizes multiple sources of evidence to understand how well a district is performing related to the six criteria it is charged with examining. It extends beyond standardized measures of student performance and enables Panelists to observe and collect evidence about the effectiveness of the district's processes.

Prior to arriving on site, Panelists will conduct a document review aligned to the six key areas in the Education Accountability Act. The results of this review are shared with all members of the site visit team and help inform the team's work during the visit. On site at the district, the site visit team uses evidence collected through focus groups, interviews, and document review to come to consensus on capacity levels in relation to the six key areas. The team will prepare a written report that it will submit to the Commissioner and State Board of Education, which becomes part of a larger body of evidence regarding the district's performance.

The process will benefit most from open, frank, professional dialog between the district and the site visit team. The professionalism of the district and team is essential. Both the district staff and the team have clear roles and responsibilities that are designed to promote good rapport and clear communication. All team members are governed by a code of conduct. Honesty, integrity, objectivity, and a focus on the best interests of students are essential.

What are the general steps in the SRP process?

Pre-visit Planning and Analysis
SchoolWorks will provide all district leaders with an orientation on the SRP site visit process. In addition, SchoolWorks will work with each district leader to begin collecting documents that the site visit team will review prior to arriving on site. These key documents include the district's most recent Unified Improvement Plan, curricula and related instructional documents, and professional development records. The purpose of this review is to gather evidence in relation to the protocol's criteria and indicators. The site visit team will also review the results of the SRP's previous document review of the district.

This pre-visit analysis provides the team with initial information about the district's programs and the students it serves. Site visit team members will work with SchoolWorks to organize the schedule for the site visit. Team members review documents and record their initial questions about the district's performance according to protocol standards.

Evidence Gathering On Site and Coming to Consensus on Capacity Levels
While on site, evidence collection continues through additional document reviews and interviews with key district stakeholders. After collecting evidence, the site visit team meets to confirm, refute, and modify its hypotheses about district performance and communicates its observations to the district leadership. The site visit team listens to the district's responses and makes every effort to follow up on evidence that the district indicates the team should collect.

Site Visit Report
The site visit team's primary objective is to come to consensus on capacity levels in relation to six key areas identified in the Education Accountability Act. To come to consensus on a set of capacity levels, the team works to collate and discuss available evidence collected throughout the SRP process. While on

site, the site visit team communicates with district leadership to keep the district informed of the team's progress in the process and to seek input on that progress. At the end of the SRP site visit, a report will be developed that will be submitted to the Commissioner and State Board of Education; it will then become part of a larger body of evidence regarding the school's performance.

Notes

Part II: Process and Results

How does the site visit team go about its work?

The site visit team is guided in its work by a code of conduct. Adherence to the code of conduct improves the quality of the site visit because districts do not provide reliable evidence under unnecessary stress. Adherence to the code of conduct also creates a frank, professional tone in which the site visit team and the district may discuss key strengths and areas for improvement.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR REVIEWERS*

1. **Carry out work with integrity**.
   a. Treat all those you meet with courtesy and sensitivity. Try to minimize stress.
   b. Allay anxiety through mutual respect and valuing opinions. Show an interest in what is said.
   c. Focus attention and questions on topics that will reveal how well students are learning.
   d. Assure confidentiality.

2. **Act in the best interests of students and staff.**
   a. Do not put staff in a position where they may have conflicting loyalties.
   b. Emphasize that students come first and are at the center of the review.
   c. Wherever possible, work to others' convenience.
   d. Be supportive and enabling. Evidence given under undue stress is unreliable.
   e. Under no circumstances, criticize the work of a teacher or others involved with the district.
   f. Classroom and school visits, should they take place, are confidential. Classroom and school visits are not evaluations. Individual staff members will not be provided feedback and information will not be shared with any school personnel.
   g. Staff interviews and focus groups are confidential. Any information reported to the team will remain anonymous in both oral and written reports.
   h. Try to understand what staff members are doing and why. Be supportive.

3. **Be objective; base capacity levels on evidence, not opinion.**
   a. An individual's perception can be evidence, especially if supported by others' observations.
   b. Capacity levels must be fully supported by evidence, must be defensible and inform the key questions.
   c. Capacity levels must be reliable in that others would make the same finding from the same evidence.
   d. Be prepared to ask questions to establish whether a view is based on opinion or evidence.
   e. Discussion with staff and team members is part of the process to create a fair and secure evidence based on which capacity levels are determined.
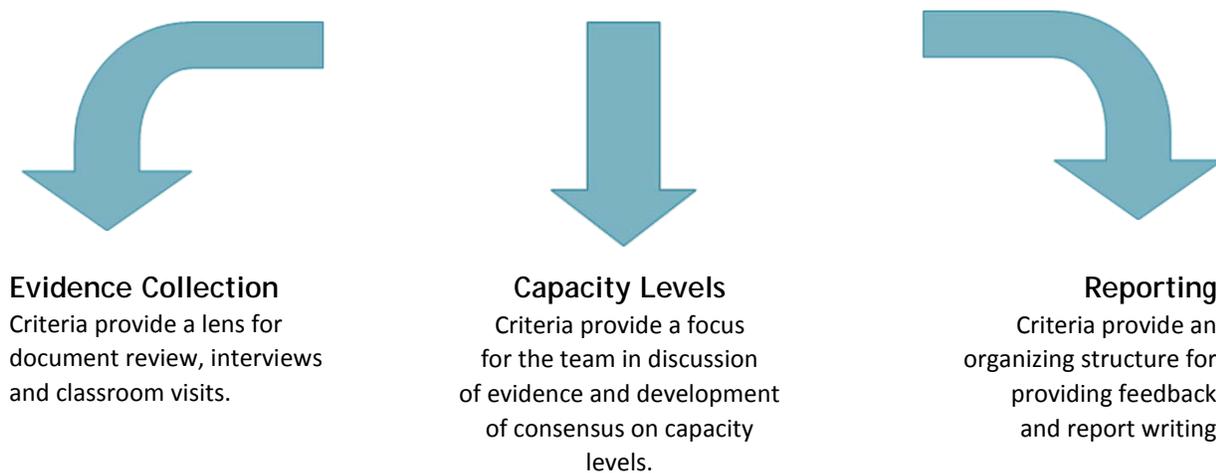   f. If a given piece of evidence is not affecting students' learning or experience, it is then irrelevant.

Acknowledgement of Massachusetts Charter School Office Site Visit Protocol and the OFSTED code of conduct.

How does the site visit team come to consensus on capacity levels based on a collection of documents, interviews and classroom visits?

The SRP process is built on four core components that drive the work of the team throughout the site visit.

- *The process is criterion-driven.* The SRP process is built on a set of criterion and indicators. Throughout the site visit, the site visit team collects evidence through document reviews and interviews, in relation to each of the criterion and indicators to come to consensus on capacity levels that indicate how well district programs and practices are serving students. The site visit team uses the criterion and indicators during team meetings to identify trends that emerge from the evidence and to come to consensus on capacity levels. A criterion-driven process ensures that the work of the site visit team is grounded in the standards. The protocol's criteria also serve as a basis for professional dialogue and reporting.

Figure 1: Criterion-driven

Evidence Collection
Criteria provide a lens for document review, interviews and classroom visits.

Capacity Levels
Criteria provide a focus for the team in discussion of evidence and development of consensus on capacity levels.

Reporting
Criteria provide an organizing structure for providing feedback and report writing

- *The process is an evidence-based system.* The capacity levels – which come from document reviews and interviews – are based on evidence collected during the process. The site visit team builds a base of evidence for each capacity level that would reasonably lead any set of individuals to come to similar conclusions about the district's programs and practices. Moving from evidence to capacity level is a cyclical process that depends on an open exchange of information between the team and the district. While the team is required to address the protocol standards and base all capacity levels on evidence, the process is not mechanical and requires some professional judgment by the site visit team.

- ***The process is iterative, repeatedly checking on and testing the quality of the capacity level and the evidence that supports them.*** Site visit team members use a four-step process to move from pieces of evidence to capacity level about the district. First, the team records *evidence* by reviewing documents and conducting interviews. The team reviews evidence to identify initial *trends* in the evidence. For example, the team would note a trend if all staff describe the curriculum in similar ways and if the description matched the documents reviewed by the team. When possible, the team presents preliminary trends to district leadership during the visit so that the district can support and/or challenge the team's analysis by presenting additional evidence. This ensures that the district has an opportunity to present additional evidence before capacity levels are finalized. This process is represented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: An iterative process

4. **Capacity Levels:** Determinations based on **evidence** and **trends** and grounded in the protocol criteria.

1. **Evidence**: Documents and interviews
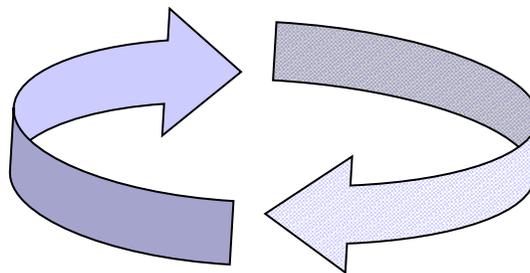
3. **Feedback**: **Trends** provided to the school for comment and redirection and, eventually, **capacity levels** documented in a written report.

2. **Trends**: Developing themes, based on **evidence** that is collected. Trends are based on criteria and indicators in the protocol.

- ***The team uses its professional judgment to come to consensus on capacity levels.*** To be useful, the site visit team must produce a focused report. Focusing on key strengths and areas for improvement requires discerning only what is important and merits comment. This process is called "data reduction." Within the protocol, team members use their professional judgment in a process called moderation to distill the key factors that deserve comment from the wealth of evidence available to them. This use of professional judgment is represented in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Moving from evidence to capacity levels

Evidence   Trends   Capacity Levels   Final Report

Data reduction: Focusing on what is most important
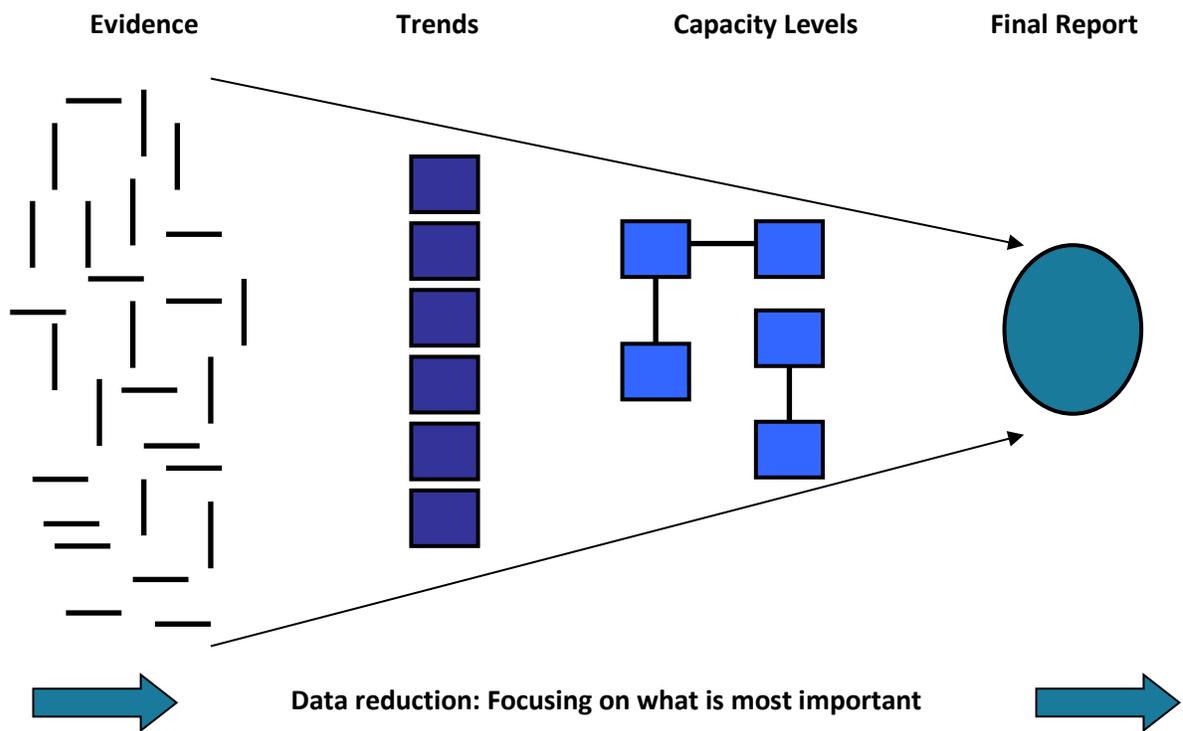
DETAILED STEPS IN THE PROCESS

How do the site visit team and the district prepare for the site visit?

Below is an overview of the responsibilities of each party. A detailed explanation is available in the following section, Roles and Responsibilities.

1. SchoolWorks communicates with the district to determine site visit dates and introduces district leadership to the SRP site visit protocol.

2. The SchoolWorks project manager works with the district to begin establishing a specific schedule for the site visit. The project manager remains available to answer any questions and to work with the district to ensure that documents needed for the SRP are available in a timely manner.

3. The project manager creates a draft schedule of interviews, finalizes the schedule with the district's input, and sends a copy of the schedule to the district and members of the team.

4. The school uses the District Task Checklist (see Appendix A) to ensure that all preparation has been completed prior to the site visit.

5. The project manager sends a copy of the protocol, the schedule, interview questions, and documents (including the State Review Panel's document review) for pre-visit analysis to the team members.

What does the process look like when the team is on site?

Time on site moves from a fixed structure designed to ensure good coverage of the district to a more flexible schedule that allows the site visit team to follow up on emerging trends and capacity levels. Since it is not possible to predict what will emerge from the evidence collected, the team requires flexibility
to move about the district and observe any aspect of the district without notice. However, as a matter of courtesy and in the spirit of developing and maintaining a good working relationship, the team works with the district to define as much of the schedule as possible without restricting its ability to pursue important evidence.

On-site review and feedback

1. The site visit team reviews documents and conducts interviews in accordance with the visit schedule. The team meets regularly during the visit to share evidence.

2. The site visit team keeps the district's leadership informed of its progress throughout the visit. This ensures that the district has every opportunity to present evidence to address the team's questions.

3. The site visit team will formulate consensus-based capacity levels that respond to the criteria and indicators in the SRP protocol. This is based on evidence provided to the team during interviews and document reviews while on site.

Sample Daily Site Visit Schedule

Below is a sample daily schedule. Schedules will vary, depending on the size of the district and the number of site visit team members. The team leader will work to construct a daily schedule for the site visit, based on schedule documents and guidance provided by school/district leadership. Where the school under review is a virtual school, the SRP site visit team will coordinate classroom observations, interviews, and document review in advance of the SRP site visit process that takes place on site.

Sample Daily Site Visit Schedule		
Time	**Team Member #1**	**Team Member #2**
7:00–8:00 AM	Team arrives at district and morning meeting	
8:00–9:00 AM	Interview with District Leadership	Principal focus groups
9:00–11:30 AM	Document review	School Board focus group
11:30–12:00 PM	Principal focus groups	Document review
12:00–1:00 PM	Lunch; Mid-day meeting and site visit team debrief	
1:00–2:30 PM	District stakeholder focus groups	
2:30–3:00 PM	Interview School Administrators	Document review
3:00– 5:00 PM	Team debrief and moderation; evidence sorting	
5:30-5:45 PM	Check-out meeting with district leadership	
6:00 PM	Team departs	

Written Report

1. The site visit team member responsible for completing the written report gathers all notes and other key evidence that have been collected by the team during the SRP visit to use in drafting the report.
2. The writer develops a draft report that documents the evidence for the capacity levels. This report provides a written record of the capacity levels.
3. Before it is sent to CDE, all team members provide comments on the draft written report according to pre-established timelines.
4. The report is finalized and submitted to the Commissioner and State Board of Education, and then becomes part of a larger body of evidence regarding the district's performance.

Part III: Roles and Responsibilities

In order to develop an accurate portrait of a district, all participants have key roles in preparing for, and conducting, the SRP visit. This section explains the roles and responsibilities of the project manager and/or team members and the district. Participants should read this section carefully to learn how to prepare for the site visit.

Project Manager

Roles and responsibilities for the project manager include:

1. *Modeling and enforcing the code of conduct*
   - Project managers should exhibit the highest professional standards and are responsible for ensuring that their team does so, as well.

2. *Coordination with the district*
   - Before the visit, the project manager contacts the district to ensure that documents are made available in a timely manner.
   - The district is likely to have questions about the process. The project manager should serve as the contact person to address these questions.
   - The project manager ensures that the district has secured meeting space for the team.
   - The project manager ensures that lunch will be provided (at the team's expense) each day.

3. *Coordination of materials and assignment of team members*
   - Before the site visit, team members are selected and provided with materials (e.g., SRP visit protocol, school documents) to review.
   - Once the site visit schedule has been established, the project manager assigns team members to conduct interviews.

4. *Facilitation and management of logistics for the site visit days*
   - Once on site, the team members are responsible for facilitating all team meetings.
   - The team members ensure that all interviews and focus groups are attended and go smoothly.

5. *Communication with the district while on site*
   - The team is responsible for maintaining good channels of communication with the district at all times.

6. *Reporting*
   - The team writer writes the site visit report, ensuring that the report contains sufficient evidence and reflects the consensus of the team.

Team Members

Success of the visit relies heavily on team members':

1. *Adherence to the code of conduct*
   - Staff interviews and focus groups are confidential. Any information reported to the team will remain anonymous.
   - Classroom and school visits, should they take place, are confidential. Classroom and school visits are not evaluations. Individual staff members will not be provided feedback and information will not be shared with any school personnel.

2. *Preparation for the site visit*
   - Team members review the SRP protocol in its entirety. This is critical because the protocol guides all activities while on site.
   - Team members review documents and formulate questions for the initial team meeting prior to arriving on site.

3. *Collection of evidence*
   - Team members complete the site visit schedule according to the SRP protocol.
   - Team members secure their evidence in notes and provide all necessary data at each team meeting:
     - All notes are in order and completed in a timely manner for all meetings.

4. *Collaborating with others*
   - Team members actively participate in team meetings and support others' efforts to reach unified capacity levels based on evidence.

5. *Reporting*
   - Team members provide feedback on the draft of the site visit report in accordance with pre-established timelines, ensuring that the report contains sufficient evidence and reflects the consensus of the team.

Schools and Districts

To be an effective partner in the process, the district and its school(s):

1. *Act as essential partners in the site visit process*
   - The district makes the purpose and process of the review team's visit clear to all stakeholders.
   - The district welcomes the site visit team and recognizes its efforts on behalf of the district staff.
   - The district works with the team to ensure that the visit runs smoothly and that appropriate and adequate access to all brick and mortar and online resources, infrastructure, and courses is given.
   - The district engages principals and other stakeholders to reflect on the district's performance.

2. *Designate a meeting room*
   - The site visit team will need a meeting space during the day. The space should allow for confidential meetings and should be available to team members for the full visit.
   - To the extent possible, interviews should not be scheduled in this space but planned for elsewhere in the building.

3. *Communicate with the site visit team*
   - District leadership works collaboratively with the project manager prior to the site visit to ensure that documents are provided in a timely manner and that school staff are aware of the visit and its purposes (See Appendix A).
   - District leadership works collaboratively with the team during the site visit to provide any additional documents requested, including the coordination of the stakeholder surveys.
   - District leadership maintains good communication with the team throughout the process, honestly expressing concerns and feedback from staff.

Notes

Part IV: State Review Panel Key Questions

The following key questions reflect the required components of review as outlined in the Education Accountability Act of 2009. These key questions guide the site visit team's work in the district. All evidence is collected in response to these key questions and their respective standards. The complete list of corresponding criteria and indicators for each key question can be found in the next section, Part V.

Key Questions

1. *Is district leadership adequate to implement change to improve results?*

2. *Is the district infrastructure adequate to support school/district improvement?*

3. *Is there readiness and apparent capacity of district personnel to plan effectively and lead the implementation of appropriate action to improve student academic performance?*

4. *Is there readiness and apparent capacity to engage productively with, and benefit from, the assistance provided by an external partner?*

5. *Is there a likelihood of positive returns on state investments of assistance and support to improve the performance within the current management structure and staffing?*

6. *Is there a necessity that the district remain in operation to serve students?*

Notes

Part V: State Review Panel Criteria and Indicators

This section contains the complete list of the CDE State Review Panel Criteria and Indicators. These criteria and indicators are used to guide evidence collection, team deliberation, and development of capacity levels during the site visit.

Key Question 1: Leadership

Is district leadership adequate to implement change to improve results?

Criterion 1.1.: Leadership acts as a change agent to drive dramatic achievement gains.
- Leadership communicates a relentless commitment to the district turnaround.
- Leadership makes data-driven changes to the academic program and organization to promote dramatic achievement gains.
- Leadership conveys clear expectations for performance for all stakeholders, including district staff, school leadership, teachers, district accountability committee, parents and community members.

Criterion 1.2: Leadership establishes clear, targeted, and measurable goals designed to promote student performance.

- Leadership communicates clear and focused goals that are understood by all district and school personnel.
- District and school staff understand their responsibilities for achieving goals.
- Leadership maintains district-wide focus on achieving established goals.
- Leadership has established systems to measure and report interim results toward goals.

Criterion 1.3.: Leadership analyzes data to identify and address high priority challenges, and to adjust implementation of the action plan.
- Leadership communicates data trends and issues, ensures timely access to data, and models and facilitates data use.
- Leadership openly shares results and holds staff accountable for results and effective use of data.
- Leadership first concentrates on a limited number of priorities to achieve early, visible wins.
- There is regular progress monitoring of performance and implementation data and, as appropriate, results lead to elimination of tactics that do not work.
- Benchmarks are used to assess progress toward goals; goals are adjusted as progress is made.
- Data on progress toward goals drives organizational and instructional decision making

Is the district infrastructure adequate to support school improvement?

I. Organizational Infrastructure and Sustainability

Criterion 2.1: The district leads intentional, strategic efforts to ensure the effectiveness of the academic program and the sustainability of the organization.

- Leadership ensures ongoing development for emerging and current school leaders with a focus on building leadership capacity to lead turnaround efforts and sustain improvement.
- Leadership provides adequate oversight in schools' work to deliver the curriculum, monitors instruction on a regular basis, and provides adequate support and feedback to principals to improve instruction.
- The district provides adequate systems by which to capture and store data, report it to schools, and make it accessible for instructional staff to utilize.

Criterion 2.2.: District leadership has a strong focus on recruiting and retaining talent; creates and implements systems to select, develop, and retain effective leaders, teachers, and staff who can drive dramatic student gains; evaluates all staff; and dismisses those who do not meet professional standards and expectations.

- Leadership has created and/or implemented an organizational and staffing structure that will drive dramatic student gains.
- Leadership recruits and hires leaders, teachers, and staff members with commitment to, and competence in, the district's philosophy, design, and instructional framework (e.g., trained and experienced with curriculum, certified/licensed to teach, qualified to teach subject area).
- Leadership ensures the evaluation of all staff, and dismisses those who do not meet professional standards and expectations.
- Leadership provides leaders, teachers, and staff members with active, intense, and sustained professional development (PD), including guidance on data analysis and instructional practice, aligned to school improvement efforts.
  - PD is informed by ongoing analysis of student performance, instructional data, and educators' learning needs.
  - PD requires leaders, teachers, and staff members to demonstrate their learned competency in a tangible and assessable way.
  - PD engages leaders, teachers, and staff members in active learning (e.g., leading instruction, discussing with colleagues, observing other teachers, developing assessments) and provides follow-up sessions and ongoing support for teachers' continued learning.
  - The quality of professional development delivery is regularly monitored, evaluated, and improved.

Criterion 2.3: District leadership ensures that the district has sound financial and operational systems and processes.

- District leadership ensures that the organizational structure supports essential district and school functions, and that roles and responsibilities of all individuals at the school are clear.
- District leadership has established effective means of communicating with district and school staff.
- District leadership ensures that all compliance requirements and deadlines set by the state are met, including the submission of school improvement plans, financial statements, school audit, calendar, and student attendance.
- District leadership effectively manages the budget and cash flow, and there is a plan for long-term financial sustainability.
- District leadership effectively manages operations (e.g., food services, transportation, school facilities).

II. Instruction

Criterion 2.4: District leadership provides effective instructional leadership.

- District leaders ensure that schools implement a coherent, comprehensive, and aligned curriculum.
  - District leaders ensure that schools' curriculum, instruction, and assessments are aligned with state standards, aligned with each other, and coordinated both within and across grade levels.
  - District leaders ensure that instructional materials are selected and/or developed in accordance with a district-wide instructional framework and aligned with established curriculum standards.
  - District leaders ensure the curriculum is periodically reviewed and revisions are made accordingly.
- The district ensures that school leaders provide meaningful feedback on teachers' instructional planning and practice.
  - The district ensures that leaders regularly provide meaningful feedback on instructional planning.
  - The district ensures that leaders regularly observe instruction and provide meaningful, timely feedback that helps teachers improve their practice.
- District leaders provide conditions that support school-wide data cultures.
  - Staff, school leaders and teachers have easy access to varied, current, and accurate student and instructional data.
  - Staff, school leaders, and teachers are provided time to collect, enter, query, analyze, and represent student data and use tools that help them act on results.
  - District leaders ensure that all staff, school leaders, and teachers receive professional development in data use (e.g., how to access, read, and interpret a range of data reports; frame questions for inquiry; analyze data, assessment literacy; use data tools and resources).

Key Question 3: Staff Capacity

Is there readiness and apparent capacity of district personnel to plan effectively and lead the implementation of appropriate action to improve student academic performance?

Criterion 3.1: Educators' mindsets and beliefs reflect shared commitments to students' learning.

- District personnel convey shared vision and values about teaching and learning and reference these to guide their instructional decision making.
- District personnel convey a shared commitment to the learning of all students in the district.
- District personnel convey a belief that students' learning is their collective responsibility, regardless of students' personal or home situations.
- District personnel convey that it is important not to give up on any students, even if it appears that they do not want to learn.
- District personnel convey commitment to, and hold each other accountable for, collaboratively established improvement goals and tasks.

Criterion 3.2: The district has established conditions that support educators' learning culture.

- Communications among all stakeholder groups are constructive, supportive, and respectful.
- Communications between leadership and district/school staff are fluid, frequent, and open.
- District leaders model and convey well-defined beliefs about teaching and learning, and convey value for innovation, learning from mistakes, and risk-taking.
- District leaders participate in formal and informal professional learning, including their own leadership development about how to improve curriculum and instruction in a leadership context (i.e., high- or low-poverty; urban or rural district).

Criterion 3.3: District personnel collaborate regularly to learn about effective instruction and students' progress.

- District personnel meet frequently during regularly scheduled, uninterrupted times to collaborate, establish improvement goals, and make data-informed instructional decisions.
- District personnel's collaborative meetings have a clear and persistent focus on improving student learning and achievement.
- District personnel describe sharing knowledge and expertise among colleagues as essential collaborative activity for job success.
- District staff and school leaders are willing to talk about their own practice, to actively pursue and accept feedback from colleagues, and to try new leadership strategies.
- The district has created a performance-driven culture in which district staff, school leaders, and teachers effectively use data to make decisions about daily instruction and the organization of students.

Criterion 3.4: District personnel demonstrate the capacity to implement appropriate action to support student achievement and school improvement.

- School staff, with district support, use results from interim or summative assessments to make adjustments to the organization of students in the classroom, pace of instruction, or content being taught.
- School staff, with district support, use results from interim or summative assessments to identify students in need of remediation or acceleration, and assign students to appropriate supports.
- Qualified district representatives provide oversight and support to ensure that schools deliver instruction and provide the necessary supports for English language learner (ELL) students or students with special needs.
- District leaders involve school leaders and district staff in planning and implementation of district policies.
- District leaders provide opportunities for school leaders and district staff to make or provide input on important decisions.

Criterion 3.5: The district engages the community and families in support of students' learning school improvement efforts.

- The district includes parents/guardians in cultivating a culture of high expectations for students' learning and their consistent support of students' efforts.
- The district invites family participation in district activities (e.g., volunteering in on committees; attendance at organizational meetings) and regularly solicits their input.
- The district offers workshops and other opportunities for parents/guardians to learn about home practices that support student learning.
- District personnel communicate with parents/guardians about instructional programs and overall student progress within the district.

Key Question 4: Partnerships

Is there readiness and apparent capacity to engage productively with, and benefit from, the assistance provided by an external partner?

Criterion 4.1: The district collaborates effectively with existing external partners.

- The district seeks expertise from external partners, as appropriate (i.e., for professional development, direct support for students).
- The district ensures that roles and responsibilities of existing partners are clear.
- There are designated district personnel to coordinate and manage partnerships.

Criterion 4.2: The school/district leverages existing partnerships to support of student learning.

- The district maximizes existing partners' efforts in support of improvement efforts.
- All externally provided professional development is aligned to improvement efforts.

Criterion 4.3: Leadership is responsive to feedback.

- District leadership seeks feedback on improvement plans.
- District leadership seeks feedback from key stakeholders
- District leadership integrates feedback into future improvement efforts.

Key Question 5: Return on Investment

Is there a likelihood of positive returns on state investments of assistance and support to improve the performance within the current management structure and staffing?

Criterion 5.1: Leadership monitors the return on investment of specific improvement initiatives, and uses that data to inform decision-making.

- Leadership identifies turnaround strategies and implements programs/initiatives designed to improve student performance.
- Leadership assesses the cost and impact (effect on student achievement and number of students served) of each program/initiative to determine its academic return on investment.
- Leadership makes decisions regarding continuation or discontinuation of programs/initiatives based on this analysis.
- Leadership establishes systems and structures to support regular and ongoing monitoring.

Criterion 5.2: Leadership has demonstrated an ability to produce positive returns on state investment and uses resources effectively

- Programs and initiatives are designed to support turnaround efforts and have demonstrated results.
- Leadership seeks resources aligned to its improvement efforts and programs/initiatives with high academic return on investment.
- Any additional resources received (i.e., specialized grant funding) are aligned, strategic, and showing evidence of results.
- Leadership treats resources flexibly, and implements focused improvement efforts with a focus on early wins.

Criterion 5.3: Students demonstrate academic progress over time.

- Students demonstrate progress on internal measures linked with the district's promotion or exit standards.
- The performance of student subgroups on state assessments demonstrates that the district is making progress toward eliminating achievement gaps.
- Students meet proficiency and grade-level targets across subjects and grade levels on norm-referenced benchmark assessments and state assessments.
- Matched cohorts of students who score proficient or advanced (or equivalent) on state assessments maintain or improve performance levels across continuous enrollment years.
- The percentage of all students performing at proficient or advanced (or equivalent) on state assessments increases over time.
- Students demonstrate academic growth as measured by value-added or state growth percentile measures.
- Students demonstrate progress toward attaining expected knowledge and skills as measured by interim assessments.

Key Question 6: Need to Serve Students

Is there a necessity that the district remain in operation to serve students?

Criterion 6.1: The district is mission-driven and its mission and vision meet a unique need.
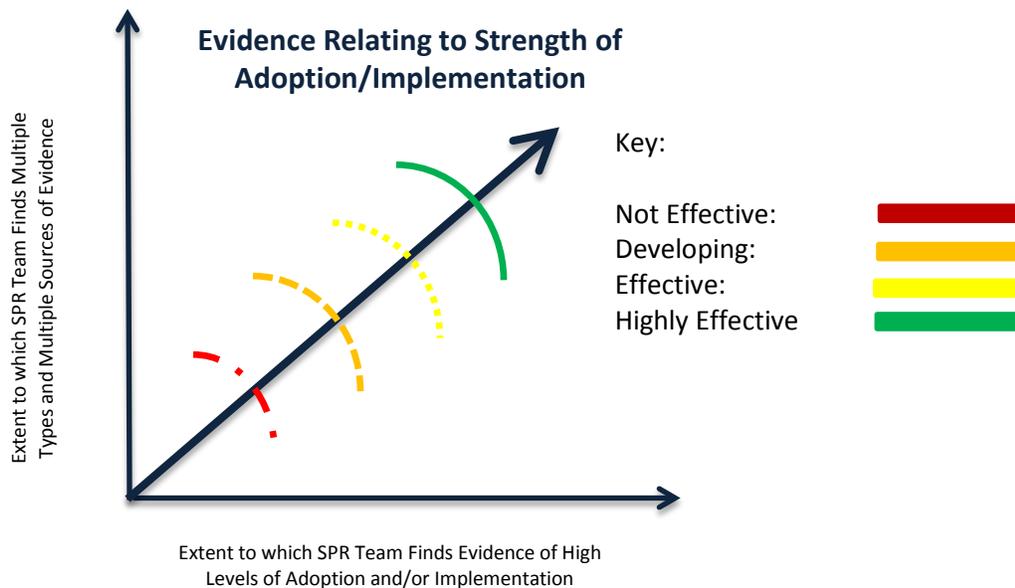
- All stakeholders share an understanding of, and commitment to, the mission and vision.
- District programs reflect the mission and vision.
- The mission and vision guide decisions about teaching and learning.
- The mission and vision meet the needs of an identified student population.

Criterion 6.2: There are no other viable options for enrolled students that will likely lead to better outcomes.

- The district serves an isolated and/or remote community.
- Closure or consolidation of district would have a significant negative impact on the community.
- Comparison districts do not promote better student outcomes.

Notes

Part VI: Capacity Level Rubric

The site visit team will use the following guidance to select a capacity level for each key question. Note that the quality standard for each capacity level is based on the extent to which the site visit team finds multiple types[1] and multiple sources[2] of evidence related to the adoption and/or implementation of a practice or system AND the extent to which the site visit team finds evidence of high levels of adoption and/or implementation of a practice or system.

Evidence Relating to Strength of Adoption/Implementation

Extent to which SPR Team Finds Multiple Types and Multiple Sources of Evidence

Key:

Not Effective:
Developing:
Effective:
Highly Effective

Extent to which SPR Team Finds Evidence of High Levels of Adoption and/or Implementation

Capacity Level	Quality Standard
Not Effective	**Evidence indicates that the key question is not a practice or system that has been adopted and/or implemented at the district, or that the level of adoption/implementation does not improve the district's effectiveness.**
Developing	**Evidence indicates that the key question is a practice or system that is developing at the district, but that it has not yet been implemented at a level that has begun to improve the district's effectiveness, OR that the impact of the key action on the effectiveness of the district cannot yet be determined.**
Effective	**Evidence indicates that the key question is a practice or system that has been adopted at the district, and is implemented at a level that has begun to improve the district's effectiveness.**
Highly Effective	**Evidence indicates that the key question is a practice or system that has been fully adopted at the district, and is implemented at a level that has had a demonstrably positive impact on the district's effectiveness.**

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[1] "Multiple types of evidence" is defined as evidence collected from two or more of the following: document review, stakeholder focus groups and/or interviews; and classroom observations.
[2] "Multiple sources of evidence" is defined as evidence collected from three or more stakeholder focus groups and/or interviews; two or more documents; and/or evidence that a descriptor was documented in 75% or more of lessons observed at the time of the visit.

Notes

Appendix A: District Task Checklist

The District Task Checklist can be used by the school to prepare for the SRP. It includes key tasks that the school leader should complete prior to the site visit, including the list of materials the site visit team is requesting prior to the visit and upon arrival on site. The following task list is an example and may be modified and sent separately to a district in advance of the visit.

ITEMS TO BE SENT BY CDE TO THE PROJECT MANAGER BEFORE THE SRP SITE VISIT	
1. District performance framework	
2. Most recent version of the district's Unified Improvement Plan (UIP)	
3. State Review Panel reports from previous reviews	
4. Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) feedback from the Colorado Department of Education	
5. Leadership staffing chart	
6. Access to data dashboard	
ITEMS TO BE SENT BY DISTRICT TO THE PROJECT MANAGER BEFORE THE SRP SITE VISIT	
7. Roster of district personnel, titles and roles.	
8. Organizational chart for district, including list of schools and school leaders.	
9. The district mission and key program elements	
10. Student enrollment and demographic information for three years (accessible through the data dashboard link below) (District) http://www.schoolview.org/dish/dish.asp	
11. Professional development calendar for this academic year and the previous academic year	
ITEMS TO BE PREPARED BY THE DISTRICT BEFORE THE SRP SITE VISIT	
12. District personnel and school leaders are aware of the visit and its purpose; focus groups are coordinated and participation confirmed	
13. Private meeting space for site visit team secured	
14. Delivery menus available for team to select lunch (Team will pay for its own lunch.)	

Supplemental Documents for Review

As part of the site visit, the SRP will also review supplemental documents provided by the district that are aligned to the six key areas. Districts can submit supplemental documents electronically and/or in hard copy to the site visit team. **All documents should be organized by critical factor**. The school can reference the key questions, criteria and indicators located on pages 17-25 to guide them as they align and organize their supplemental documents. Supplemental documents should include:

	SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS TO BE AVAILABLE ON SITE FOR SRP SITE VISIT	
KQ1	1. Student, parent and faculty handbooks	
	2. District-wide strategic plan, if applicable.	
	3. Any other documents that the school believes would help the team to better understand **leadership's role in setting expectations or driving change.**	
KQ2	**4.** Professional development calendar for this school year and the previous school year	
	5. Sample curricular documents that link standards to school/classroom instructional practices (e.g., scope and sequence, pacing guides, textbooks) from varied grade levels and subject areas	
	6. Sample evaluation forms for principals and key district personnel (WITHOUT names)	
	7. Any other documents that the school believes would help the team to better understand the **district's infrastructure, staff development, and instructional leadership.**	
KQ3	8. Examples of leadership-level data monitoring systems or processes (e.g., meeting agendas, dashboards, action plans)	
	9. Evidence of community outreach and family engagement (e.g., flyers, calendars, newsletters)	
	10. Any other documents that the district believes would help the team to better understand the **capacity of personnel to plan effectively and involve community stakeholders**	
KQ4	11. Any documents that the school believes would help the team to better understand the school's **engagement with external partners**	
KQ5	12. Any documents that the school believes would help the team to better understand the likelihood of **positive return on investment.**	
KQ 6	13. Mission and vision of the school (this may be included within another document, such as a handbook)	
	14. Student enrollment and demographic information for three years (accessible through the data dashboard links below) http://www.schoolview.org/dish/schooldashboard.asp	
	15. Any other documents that the school believes would help the team to better understand the need for the school to remain in operation.	

Frequently asked questions from school/district leaders

1. *What do we tell staff about the visit?*
   Staff should know the purpose of the visit and their role within the visit. A first step in communicating these things might be distributing the Introduction, as well as the Process and Results sections (Parts I & II) of the SRP site visit protocol.

2. *Space is very tight in our building. We do not have a conference room that can house the team.*
   The site visit team is made up of educators who understand space constraints. They respect the need to protect instructional space and will adapt to what you can offer. Please focus on trying to provide a space with privacy.

3. *How much flexibility do we have in adapting the example schedule?*
   The site visit team recognizes that each district is unique and that the process needs to be adapted. The team has specific tasks that must be completed during the visit. However, the project manager will work collaboratively with district leadership to create a schedule that minimizes disruptions to the typical school day.

Notes

Appendix B: Interview Guidance and Worksheets

During the SRP, a series of interviews and/or focus groups will be conducted to gather information about the district. Interview data, similar to classroom visits, are intended to provide information about the implementation of the district's program and operations. The site visit team leader, with guidance from district leadership, will work to establish a schedule that is appropriate for the district. Depending on the visit, the number and length of interviews conducted varies. The following are examples only.

DISTRICT-WIDE INTERVIEWS		
Interviews/ focus groups	**Description**	**Approximate Time Needed**
School Board	This interview is conducted with a representative group of the district's oversight body (e.g., school board).	**1 hour**
District Leadership	District leadership includes the superintendent and key assistants (e.g., assistant superintendent, curriculum director). In addition to an interview, district leadership may be asked to provide further guidance and insight throughout the visit.	**1 hour**
School Leadership	Groups of school leaders make up focus groups. In some cases, the team may request a focus group meeting with assistant principals, directors of instruction, or other personnel to discuss their roles in the delivery of the academic program. The team makes an effort to speak to as many of the schools' leadership staff as possible.	**1 hour** interview/ focus group
District Staff	When applicable, the team may request to meet with district staff charged with carrying out district initiatives or overseeing school operations. These may include district level coaches, human resources staff, data analysts, or other staff members the district deems appropriate.	**1 hour** interview/ focus group
***External Partners (if applicable)**	Interviews with external partners, when available, will take place. District leaders are asked to identify partners who play a significant role in district functioning and organize them into one focus group.	**45-60 minutes**
****Teachers (optional)**	Groups of teachers within the district from multiple grade levels and subject areas.	**1 hour**
Check-out meeting with superintendent	At the end of Day One, site visit team members will hold a brief check-out meeting with the superintendent to ask any lingering questions, ensure all relevant documents have been provided, and to answer any questions about next steps.	**15 minutes**

*Recommended but not required.

**Optional

What is the purpose of the interview worksheet?

Interview worksheets are provided to:

1. Enable the interviewer to easily identify questions consistent with the criteria and indicators in the SRP site visit protocol, in order to gather appropriate evidence;

2. Ensure uniformity across interviews conducted; and,

3. Provide multiple sources of evidence to support the site visit team's capacity levels.

The interview worksheet provides a template for the site visit team to use during interviews and focus groups. This ensures that questions are being asked in accordance with the SRP protocol and that all team members are asking uniform questions. While on site, the team may develop additional, district-specific interview questions that are based on the team leader's judgment of what must be learned to come to consensus-based capacity levels on the protocol's key questions.

An interview worksheet exists for each type of focus group (e.g., district leadership, district staff, school leadership) that the site visit team will interview while on site. Interview questions might look slightly different since interviews conducted with district leadership might include slightly different content than what the team would ask school leadership. In addition, question delivery might vary slightly.

How do I use the interview worksheet?

The interview worksheets contain possible interview questions. The column on the left may be used to check the most relevant questions. The right column may be used to insert any additional questions that the site visit team, during team meetings, decides are important to ask in order to gather the required evidence. Interview notes are recorded by the site visit team for use during team deliberations and to provide the report writer with a record of interviews to ensure a sound and accurate evidence base.

District Leadership Interview Guide

Key Question 1: Leadership	School/District-specific questions
1. Please describe your role in the district's improvement efforts. ❑ Change agent ❑ Organizational/programmatic changes to improve student achievement (specific examples)	
2. What are the district's priority performance challenges and how have they been identified? ❑ Data analysis ❑ Identified priorities (i.e., performance challenges, strategies) ❑ Role of school leaders/teachers/other staff in decision making ❑ Alignment of resources	
3. What are your expectations for stakeholders? ❑ Communication of expectations to and by district staff ❑ Academic and behavioral expectations for students	
Key Question 2: Infrastructure	**School/District-specific questions**
4. Describe the School Board's role with regard to district leadership and oversight of the district's academic program. ❑ Building district leadership capacity ❑ Monitoring curriculum, instruction, assessment ❑ Guidance and feedback to district leadership	
5. In what ways do you monitor and work to continuously improve the academic program? ❑ Review of curriculum and curriculum revisions; selection of new curricula ❑ Guidance to leaders and teachers on planning documents (lesson plans, unit plans) ❑ Feedback to school leaders on instruction (informal walkthroughs) ❑ Routines and expectations for analysis of data and determining next steps (leadership) ❑ Professional development (focus/how identified, leader/teacher/staff collaboration, effectiveness)	
6. How do you ensure effective operations at the school and district levels? ❑ District budgeting process and spending priorities ❑ School budgeting process and spending priorities ❑ Communication systems ❑ Recruitment and hiring of teachers and leaders ❑ Staffing and deployment of human resources	

7.	Describe the district's approach to working with families. ❑ Communication and input ❑ Activities, workshops	
Key Question 3: Action Plan		**School/District-specific questions**
8.	Describe the district's action plan. ❑ Goals ❑ Monitoring and communicating progress ❑ Adjustments	
Key Question 4: Partnerships		**School/District-specific questions**
9.	What is the district's approach to partnerships? ❑ Existing partnerships and/or external supports ❑ Alignment to priorities	
Key Question 5: Return on Investment		**School/District-specific questions**
10.	In what ways to you monitor improvement initiatives? ❑ Systems for monitoring ❑ Impact of specific initiatives ❑ Responsiveness to analysis and feedback	
Key Question 6: Need to Serve Students		**School/District-specific questions**
11.	Describe the impact of the district. ❑ Mission and vision ❑ Student need ❑ Availability and performance of other district options	
12.	Which of the required actions is the right solution for this district? Please describe your rationale.	

District Staff Interview Guide

Key Question 1: Leadership	School/District-specific questions
1. How would you describe district leadership's role in the district's improvement efforts. ❑ Change agent ❑ Organizational/programmatic changes to improve student achievement (specific examples)	
2. What are the district's priority performance challenges and how have they been identified? ❑ Data analysis ❑ Identified priorities ❑ Role of school leaders/teachers/others in decision making ❑ Alignment of resources	
3. What are the district's expectations for you and your students? ❑ Communication of expectations to and by district leaders ❑ Academic and behavioral expectations for students ❑ Roles and responsibilities of district staff	
Key Question 2: Infrastructure	**School/District-specific questions**
4. In what ways do district leaders monitor and work to continuously improve the academic program? ❑ Review of curriculum and curriculum revisions; selection of new curricula ❑ Guidance to leaders and teachers on planning documents (lesson plans, unit plans) ❑ Feedback to school leaders on instruction (informal walkthroughs) ❑ Routines and expectations for analysis of data and determining next steps ❑ Professional development (focus/how identified, leader/teacher/staff collaboration, effectiveness)	
5. How does the district approach district staffing? ❑ Staffing and deployment of human resources (sufficient staff to support schools) ❑ Recruitment and evaluation ❑ Support for district staff	
6. Can you describe ways in which district resources are targeted toward improving student learning and achievement? ❑ District and school budgeting processes (district staff participation) and priorities ❑ Opportunities to development leadership skills	

7.	Describe the district's approach to working with families. ❑ Communication and input ❑ Activities, workshops	
Key Question 3: Action Plan		**School/District-specific questions**
8.	Describe the district's action plan. ❑ Goals ❑ Monitoring and communicating progress ❑ Adjustments	
Key Question 4: Partnerships		**School/District-specific questions**
9.	What is the district's approach to partnerships? ❑ Existing partnerships and/or external supports ❑ Alignment to priorities	
Key Question 5: Return on Investment		**School/District-specific questions**
10.	In what ways to you monitor improvement initiatives? ❑ Systems for monitoring ❑ Impact of specific initiatives ❑ Changes in response to analysis and feedback	
Key Question 6: Need to Serve Students		**School/District-specific questions**
11.	Describe the impact of the district. ❑ Mission and vision ❑ Student need ❑ Availability and performance of other district options	
12.	Which of the required actions is the right solution for this district? Please describe your rationale.	

School Leadership Interview Guide

Key Question 1: Leadership	School/District-specific questions
1. How would you describe district leadership's role in the district's improvement efforts? ❑ Change agent ❑ Organizational/programmatic changes to improve student achievement (specific examples)	
2. What are the district's priority performance challenges and how have they been identified? ❑ Data analysis ❑ Identified priorities ❑ Role of school leaders/teachers/others in decision making ❑ Alignment of resources	
3. What are the district expectations for you, for your teachers, and for students? ❑ Communication of expectations by district leaders ❑ Academic and behavioral expectations for students ❑ Roles and responsibilities of district staff	
Key Question 2: Infrastructure	**School/District-specific questions**
4. In what ways do district leaders monitor and work to continuously improve the academic program? ❑ Review of curriculum and curriculum revisions; selection of new curricula ❑ Guidance to leaders and teachers on planning documents (lesson plans, unit plans) ❑ Feedback to school leaders on instruction (informal walkthroughs) ❑ Routines and expectations for analysis of data and determining next steps (leadership and teachers) ❑ Professional development (focus/how identified, leader/teacher/staff collaboration, effectiveness)	
5. How does the district approach district staffing? ❑ Staffing and deployment of human resources (sufficient staff to support schools) ❑ Recruitment and evaluation of school leaders ❑ Support for school leaders	
6. Can you describe ways in which district resources are targeted toward improving student learning and achievement? ❑ District and school budgeting processes (school leader participation) and priorities ❑ Opportunities to develop leadership skills	

7.	Describe the district's approach to working with families. ☐ Communication and input ☐ Activities, workshops	
Key Question 3: Action Plan		**School/District-specific questions**
8.	Describe the district's action plan. ☐ Goals ☐ Monitoring and communicating progress ☐ Adjustments	
Key Question 4: Partnerships		**School/District-specific questions**
9.	What is the district's approach to partnerships? ☐ Existing partnerships and/or external supports ☐ Alignment to priorities	
Key Question 5: Return on Investment		**School/District-specific questions**
10.	In what ways does leadership monitor improvement initiatives? ☐ Systems for monitoring ☐ Impact of specific initiatives ☐ Changes in response to analysis and feedback	
Key Question 6: Need to Serve Students		**School/District-specific questions**
11.	Describe the impact of the district. ☐ Mission and vision ☐ Student need ☐ Availability and performance of other district options	
12.	Which of the required actions is the right solution for this district? Please describe your rationale.	

School Board Interview Guide

Key Question 1: Leadership	School/District-specific questions
1. Please describe district leadership's role in the district's improvement efforts. ❑ Change agent ❑ Organizational/programmatic changes to improve student achievement (specific examples) ❑ Expectations for stakeholders	
2. What are the district's goals (priority performance challenges) and how have they been identified? ❑ Data analysis ❑ Identified priorities ❑ Role of school board in decision making ❑ Alignment of resources	
Key Question 2: Infrastructure	**School/District-specific questions**
3. Describe the Board and district's role with regard to district leadership and oversight of the district's academic program. ❑ Building capacity at district level ❑ Guidance and feedback to district leadership	
4. In what ways does the Board ensure leadership monitors and works to continuously improve the academic program? ❑ Monitoring of district-wide academic results ❑ Systems and expectations for analysis of data and determining next steps (regular review of academic progress, academic sub-committee overview) ❑ Reporting to the Board	
5. How do Board and district leadership ensure effective operations at the district level? ❑ District budgeting process and spending priorities ❑ Communication systems (district leadership to Board) ❑ Recruitment and accountability of district leaders ❑ Board's role	
6. Describe the district's approach to working with families. ❑ Communication and input ❑ Activities, workshops	

School Board Interview Guide

Key Question 3: Action Plan	School/District-specific questions
7. Describe the district's action plan. ☐ Goals ☐ Monitoring and communicating progress (district leadership to Board) ☐ Adjustments	

Key Question 4: Partnerships	School/District-specific questions
8. What is the district's approach to partnerships? ☐ Board's role ☐ Existing partnerships and/or external supports ☐ Alignment to priorities	

Key Question 5: Return on Investment	School/District-specific questions
9. In what ways does the board and leadership monitor improvement initiatives? ☐ Systems for monitoring ☐ Impact of specific initiatives ☐ Responsiveness to analysis and feedback	

Key Question 6: Need to Serve Students	School/District-specific questions
10. Describe the mission and vision of the district. ☐ Student need ☐ Availability and performance of other school options	
11. Which of the required actions is the right solution for this district? Please describe your rationale.	

Partner Interview Guide

Key Question 1: Leadership	School/District-specific questions
1. Please describe the role of district leadership in the district's improvement efforts. ❑ Change agent ❑ Organizational/programmatic changes to improve student achievement (specific examples) ❑ Expectations for stakeholders	
2. What are the district's goals and how have they been identified? ❑ Priority improvement challenges ❑ Data analysis ❑ Identified priorities ❑ Role partners in decision-making ❑ Alignment of resources	
Key Question 3: Action Plan	**District/School-specific questions**
3. Describe the district's action plan. ❑ Goals ❑ Monitoring and communicating progress ❑ Adjustments	
Key Question 4: Partnerships	**District/School-specific questions**
4. Describe your role within the district. ❑ Responsibilities ❑ Frequency ❑ Serving specific student needs	
5. Why did the district identify you as a partner? ❑ Selection of partners ❑ Alignment to priorities	
6. How do you know what is expected of you as a partner? ❑ Contracts ❑ Communication ❑ Feedback	
7. How are you held accountable for your contribution to the district? ❑ Criteria set in advance ❑ Formal evaluation process	

Partner Interview Guide

Key Question 5: Return on Investment	District/School-specific questions
8. In what ways does the school board and/or district leadership monitor improvement initiatives? ❑ Systems for monitoring ❑ Impact of specific initiatives ❑ Responsiveness to analysis and feedback	
Key Question 6: Need to Serve Students	**District/School-specific questions**
9. What are the mission and vision of the district? ❑ Student need ❑ Availability and performance of other school options	

Teacher Interview Guide

Key Question 1: Leadership	School/District-specific questions
1. How would you describe the district's role in the school's improvement efforts? ❑ Change agent ❑ Organizational/programmatic changes to improve student achievement (give examples)	
2. What are the district's goals and how have they been identified? ❑ Priority improvement challenges ❑ Data analysis ❑ Identified priorities ❑ Role of teachers in decision-making ❑ Alignment of resources	
3. What are the district's expectations for you and for students? ❑ Communication of expectations to and by teachers ❑ Academic and behavioral expectations for students	

Key Question 2: Infrastructure	District/School-specific questions
4. In what ways do district leaders monitor and work to continuously improve the academic program? ❑ Review of curriculum and curriculum revisions ❑ Feedback to teachers on planning documents (lesson plans, unit plans) ❑ Feedback to teachers on instruction (informal walkthroughs) ❑ Routines and expectations for analysis of data and determining next steps (leadership and teachers) ❑ Professional development (focus/how identified, teacher collaboration, effectiveness)	
5. What is the district's approach to instruction? ❑ Specific strategies ❑ Components of the district's curriculum	
6. How does the district approach school staffing? ❑ Staffing and deployment of human resources (sufficient staff to support schools) ❑ Recruitment and evaluation of teachers	
7. Can you describe ways in which district resources are targeted toward improving student learning and achievement? ❑ Opportunities to develop leadership skills	

8.	Describe the district's approach to working with families. ❑ Communication and input ❑ Activities, workshops	
Key Question 3: Action Plan		**District/School-specific questions**
9.	Describe the district's action plan. ❑ Goals ❑ Monitoring and communicating progress ❑ Adjustments	
Key Question 4: Partnerships		**District/School-specific questions**
10.	What is the district's approach to partnerships? ❑ Existing partnerships and/or external supports ❑ Alignment to priorities	
Key Question 5: Return on Investment		**District/School-specific questions**
8.	In what ways does leadership monitor improvement initiatives? ❑ Systems for monitoring ❑ Impact of specific initiatives ❑ Changes in response to analysis and feedback	
Key Question 6: Need to Serve Students		**District/School-specific questions**
9.	What are the mission and vision of the district? ❑ Student need ❑ Availability and performance of other school options	

Appendix C: State Review Panel Process and Decision-making Framework

The State Review Panel (SRP) was created by the Education Accountability Act of 2009 to conduct a critical evaluation of the state's lowest-performing schools and districts. The evaluation is focused on the areas outlined in the Education Accountability Act:

- Whether leadership is adequate to implement change to improve results;
- Whether the infrastructure is adequate to support school improvement;
- The readiness and capacity of personnel to plan effectively and lead the implementation of appropriate actions to improve student performance;
- The readiness and capacity of personnel to engage productively with an external partner;
- The likelihood of positive returns on state investments; and,
- The necessity to remain in operation to serve students.

The SRP evaluation process includes a robust document review, as well as an on-site review for school/districts approaching the end of the accountability clock. As a result of the review, the SRP is charged with recommending an action regarding each school/district to the Commissioner and the State Board of Education. The actions include: management by a private or public entity other than the district; converting to a charter school; converting to Innovation School status; closure; for charter schools, replacing the current operating entity or Governing Board with a different operating entity or Governing Board; or district reorganization (districts only).

After the on-site review, the SRP will reconvene to review the body of evidence for each school/district and come to consensus on recommended action.

SRP Decision-making Framework

The State Review Panel will consider the body of evidence for each school/district and come to consensus on a recommendation. Given that the State Board Actions are not self-defining, the SRP uses a set of general guidelines to further refine and define what evidence a school/district must present during the evaluation process, as well as how to evaluate and weigh the various sources of evidence gathered during the evaluation process. In particular, a recommendation will be based on the totality of evidence gathered during the evaluation process. Broadly speaking, the evaluation process seeks to determine where the school/district stands in relation to the six areas outlined in the Education Accountability Act.

SRP General Guidelines and Approach

- The SRP will consider the capacity of the leadership and staff in place in the school/district, as well as early indicators of change, such as the establishment of instructional and operational systems that support student learning and holding all students to high academic and behavioral expectations.
- The SRP will also review evidence from: the school/district's SRP site visit, the school/district performance framework; the Unified Improvement Plan; the school/district's state report card; and school/district stakeholder input on preferred actions.

SRP Recommended Actions Overview

1. Innovation School Status

The Innovation Schools Act of 2008 (Article 32.5) establishes a process to waive certain local and state statutory and regulatory rules for public schools to gain autonomies that allow for more flexible and effective practices to meet the needs of students in a school. The SRP may recommend a school/district for Innovation Status if the document and on-site review indicate that the school/district is interested in the option and is demonstrably effective in most of the six areas outlined in the Accountability Act, particularly with regard to leadership and personnel capacity, and that there are positive early indicators of change, as described above.

2. Management by a private or public entity other than the district

The SRP may recommend a school/district for management by a private or public entity other than the district if the document and on-site review indicate that the school/district may be effective in some of the six areas outlined in the Accountability Act, but is demonstrably lacking leadership and personnel capacity. In addition, there may be some evidence of positive early indicators of change. The district must be in agreement. For charter schools, this may mean replacing the current operating entity or Governing Board.

3. Conversion to a charter school

A district might convert a district school to a charter school to provide more autonomy and flexibility to a school from statutory and regulatory requirements that may have created obstacles in the past. The SRP may recommend a school/district for conversion to a charter school if the document and on-site review indicate that the school/district is not effective in most of the six areas outlined in the Accountability Act, is demonstrably lacking leadership and personnel capacity, and shows limited evidence of positive early indicators of change. However, there is a compelling need for the school/district to remain open to serve students and a charter school may meet the needs of the community.

4. Closure

The SRP may recommend one or more school closures (multiple schools for closure if the district is on the accountability clock) if the document and on-site review indicate that the school/district is not effective in most of the six areas outlined in the Accountability Act, is demonstrably lacking leadership and personnel capacity, and shows limited evidence of positive early indicators of change. Further, there is not a compelling need for the school to remain open to serve students.

5. District reorganization (Districts only)

District reorganization might be pursued to intervene in a district where persistent low achievement may be caused by ineffective governance or leadership by a district Board of Directors or by district leadership. The SRP may recommend district reorganization, including consolidation with a neighboring district, if there is agreement by the parties involved (e.g., community support, neighboring district).

Stakeholder Input Form

This form should be completed by district leadership and the Governing Board. Submit the form to Beth Friedman or Georgia Lieber <u>at</u> SchoolWorks (<u>bfriedman@schoolworks.org</u> or glieber@schoolworks.org) within one week of the SRP site visit. The Panel will take the district's preferences into consideration in making recommendations to the Commissioner and State Board of Education.

District Name:		Date:	
Names & roles of district leaders/Governing Board members completing form:			

Possible State Action	Reason(s) this option may provide benefit for students	Reason(s) this option may not provide benefit for students
Innovation Status for School(s) *Please list names of schools to which this option may apply*		
Management by a Public or Private Entity *Please list names of schools to which this option may apply*		
Convert School(s) to a Charter School *Please list names of schools to which this option may apply*		
School(s) Closure *Please list names of schools to which this option may apply*		
District Reorganization		

In the space below, identify your preferred action(s), from the options above, and provide a brief explanation.