



# **School Improvement Plan Overview**

## **Introduction and Purpose**

The School Improvement (SI) Plan answers the question, "How are we going to get to where we want to be?" It is different from typical, annual plans that are written to close a gap or achieve a couple goals. The SI Plan is written to achieve the vision of the school and is about keeping the entire system together and moving forward.

The primary purpose of the plan is to identify the strategies, practices, or programs (referred to collectively as "strategies" in this document) based on the root-cause analysis, the system can implement with the highest likelihood of success. Schools should select strategies that are informed by research as having a desired impact in addressing root causes for the intended student population.

Under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the district or charter—in partnership with stakeholders (including principals and other school leaders, teachers and parents)—must locally develop and implement a school improvement plan for the school to improve student outcomes.

For schools identified under ESSA, the plan must:

- a) Improve student outcomes.
- b) Be informed by all indicators in the accountability system, including student performance in Minnesota's long-term goals.
- c) Based on a school level comprehensive needs assessment.
- d) Include at least one strategy or evidence-based intervention that:
  - Is aligned to the accountability indicator(s) for which the school was identified
  - Is supported by the strongest level of evidence available
  - Is appropriate to the needs of the schools in the student populations

- May be selected from a state provided list
- e) Include strategies to increase access to experienced, qualified and effective teachers for underserved students at the school and classroom levels.
- f) Identifies resource inequities, which may include a review of district and school level budgeting, to be addressed through implementation of this plan.
- g) Be resourced appropriately.
- h) Describe how early stakeholder input was solicited and used plan development, and how stakeholders will participate in plan implementation.
- i) Be approved by the school, the district or charter, and the state (comprehensive support and improvement schools only).
- j) Are made publicly available, such as on a school or district website, with required materials under World's Best Workforce.
- k) Upon approval and implementation, is monitored and periodically reviewed by the state.

A school improvement (SI) plan is required for *each school* identified for support and improvement.

- Schools identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement are required to submit a SI Plan to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) [submit PDF to MDE.schoolsupport@state.mn.us] no later than March 1, 2019. Your Regional Center of Excellence team member should be copied on this submission. This plan should already have been reviewed and approved by the district or charter prior to submitting to the state. Note: if the district or charter has a school improvement plan template they would prefer to use, they may do so provided the local template meets all of the state plan requirements as determined by a Regional Center Director or the Director of School Support at MDE.
- Schools identified for *Targeted* Support and Improvement (TSI) are not required to submit a CNA Summary Report to MDE. The district or charter has the sole oversite role for school improvement activities under Minnesota's ESSA plan. The state may conduct periodic audits of district and charter TSI activities including the SI Plan. Use of this SI Plan is encouraged but not required.

# Outcome

The SI Plan identifies what will be done, how it will be done, when it will be done, why it will be done, and who will do it is at the heart of an action plan. Aligned with the existing strengths and resources within a district/school, and their readiness, the action plan will have a high likelihood of success.

## **Preparation and Materials**

In advance, a full review of the process, protocols, and supporting documents is important. This includes:

- "School Improvement Plan Template"
- "Hexagon Tool"
- Determining a stakeholder communication/engagement plan

## Who Should Be Involved

A school level school improvement team should be established that includes voices of educators, staff and community. District or charter staff should be represented on this team or have clear communication links established between the school and its district or charter. The school improvement team is accountable for making the school improvement work happen, including the development and implementation of the SI plan.

## Time

To do this process with fidelity

- Preparing: includes the time to review all documentation, and identification of stakeholders outside of the system to engage in the process. 1-2 hours
- Strategy, practice, program research: includes the time to research all possible options that can be used to remove the identified/hypothesized root-cause(s) and support the vision of the system. Depending on the time of year and availability of leadership/staff, the research should take from one to two weeks.
- Strategy, practice, program selection: Using the hexagon tool, find which option(s) the system is most ready to implement. 2-8 hours.
- Creating the SI Plan: 4-8 hours.

• It is important to note that there may be time needed (possibly multiple days) between steps to allow for any work or research needed to inform the next step.

## **Directions Overview**

### Preparing

• Review all documents associated with the SI Plan and strategy selection. Determine how to communicate with and engage all stakeholders, within and outside of the school system.

#### Strategy, practice, program research

- Research all possible options that can be used to remove the identified/hypothesized root-cause(s) and support the vision of the system.
- Where possible, compare research of similar school systems with similar demographics and student groups.

#### Strategy, practice, program selection

• Using the Hexagon tool from NIRN (see citation below), select the strategy, practice, or program that is identified as being the best fit for the system.

Creating the SI Plan

- Ideally, the plan will be written to meet goals over a two to three year cycle, with the plan being updated or modified annually.
- The SI Plan consists of the baseline data, goals, objectives, selected strategy, activities to implement, person(s) responsible for each activity, how the success of each activity will be measured, what resources are needed, due dates, and when activities will take place on the timeline.
  - In the "Plan for Strategy" sections, be sure to consider and include all actions that will be associated with successful implementation of the strategy. To add rows in this section, place the curser on the right side of the bottom row and click the "return" or "enter" button on your keyboard.
- The plan must include the activities for implementing and monitoring fidelity of the strategy.
- The plan must include stakeholder communication and engagement strategies and plans.

## Leading the Conversation

- Using the SI Plan Template, leadership will ensure that all parts are completed, including all items under the "Plan for Strategy" section.
- Facilitating the process can be done in many ways. It is important to use protocols that allow for all stakeholder voices to be shared when determining all actions to implement a strategy.

# **Modifications or Variations**

Describe options for use:

- Ideally, the plan will be written to meet goals over a two to three year cycle, with the plan being updated or modified annually. However, it may be written for an initial one year cycle if:
  - There was not enough data to complete a root-cause process. In this case, a strategy may be used based on the best hypothesis and additional data collected to revisit the root-cause process.
  - Due to other factors within the system, a one year goal is in the best interests of the system.
- Delegating strategy research to multiple people can save time on the research step of the process.
- A system may select only one strategy to implement, but may select up to three. It is recommended that a system not try to implement more than three strategies in a given year.

# Citations

- Bernhardt, V. L. (2018). Data analysis for continuous school improvement. New York, NY: Routledge.
- NIRN The National Implementation Research Network. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/

## School Improvement (SI) Plan

The purpose of the school improvement (SI) plan is to lay out the vision, including strategies and actions, person(s) responsible, measurement, costs/funding sources, timelines, and anything that must be considered. The SI Plan will move the system forward to the vision. The SI Plan is work done in the <u>INSTALLATION</u> stage. Using what is learned through the <u>EXPLORATION</u> stage, the leadership team can acquire or repurpose needed resources for implementation.

### **Contact Information**

District or Charter Information	District Phone, Fax, Email
Name of Charter or District: West Central Education District ALC	Supt/Director Phone: 320-352-2284 ext 4121
Superintendent: Laurie Fevig (Executive Director and Director of Special Education)	Supt/Director Email: Ifevig@wced6026.com
District Address: 903 State Road Sauk Centre, MN 56378	District/Charter Fax: 320-352-3404

### Who is the main contact at the district or charter level for the ESSA school support and improvement work?

Name of Main Contact: Tara McLellan	Role in District/Charter: Principal
Phone Number: 320-256-7836	E-mail Address: tmclellan@wced6026.com

School Information	School Phone, Fax, Email
School Name, Number and Grade Span: West Central Education District 6026, Area Learning Center grades 6-12	Phone: 320-256-7836
School Address: 9 West 2nd Street South Melrose, MN 56352	Fax: 320-256-7812
Principal: Tara McLellan	Email: tmclellan@wced6026.com

### Who is the main contact at the school for the ESSA school support and improvement work?

Name of Main Contact: Tara McLellan	Role in School: Principal
Phone Number: 320-256-7836	E-mail Address: tmclellan@wced6026.com

### **Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Plan**

#### Describe your stakeholder engagement activities and how you will communicate with stakeholders.

Students and parents are interviewed during a mandatory individual enrollment meeting prior to attending any classes. Students share their educational history and what they believe are their barriers to academic success.

Student complete a survey during advisory in October to identify any barriers to school attendance and the ability to work on academic work outside of school. Survey results are shared with staff.

Students will complete the Clear Path assessment of their academic resiliency that covers the following areas:

- Importance of Education refers to the degree to which students perceive education and college as being valuable to their future success
- **Confidence** refers to the student's academic self-efficacy, or the degree to which a student feels capable of successfully performing a variety of school-related tasks.
- **Connections** refers to perceived availability of social support.
- Stress refers to one's ability to conserve emotional, psychological, and behavioral resources.
- Well-being refers to the level of psychological and emotional distress experience by a student. Living in situations characterized by high cumulative risk can result in chronic stress and health concerns.
- Intrinsic Motivation refers to the degree which a student is self-determined.

Parent are asked to complete a survey at fall conferences to identify the following:

- Parent(s) primary contact information, including preferred method of contact (phone, text, email).
- Parent availability to help their student with school work.
- Parent understanding of how credit is earned at the Area Learning Center.
- What the parent identifies as what their student does well.
- What the parent's number one concern is for their student.

When will the communication take place	What is the message	Who is the audience	How will it be communicated
March 2019	The improvement plan was shared with the school board.	School Board	The plan was shared along with a brief verbal summary
Fall 2019	The ALC has an improvement plan specific to increasing graduation rates.	Parents, member districts, community	Form letter sent to families in the fall of 2019, letter posted on our website under ALC
Spring 2020	The ALC shifted to distance learning in March 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Communication shifted to maintaining student engagement and parental/guardian updates on programming.	Parents/Guardians/Students/ Member Districts and Communities	Emails, Text Messages, REMIND system
Summer/Fall of 2020	Three Learning Models (Distance, Hybrid and In-Person) were created and discussed with the 4 member districts participating in this ALC. These plans were then shared with families and students to prepare for the upcoming school year.	Parents/Guardians/Students/ Member Districts and Communities	Emails and Web-site
2020-21 SY	As directed by the Governor's Executive Order, all schools were required to monitor local and regional COVID-19 data to determine which Learning model to implement. These changes took place at different times throughout the year.	<ul> <li>Exec. Director/Board of Education</li> <li>Participating District Leadership</li> <li>School Staff</li> </ul>	Presentations Emails Calls/Text Messages

Use the following table to outline a communications plan for the ESSA support and improvement work.

	Ongoing communication was a necessity in these transitions,	<ul> <li>Community/Families/ students</li> </ul>	REMIND system
June 2021	Update the 2020-21 SY SIP to reflect the 4th year of identification goals and action steps	Executive Director and Staff	
July 2021	Update the School Board on plans for the 2021-22 SY	School Board	
August/Septemb er 2021	Individual family and student surveys will be introduced. Results will be shared with the member districts and staff.	Staff /Parents/Students Member Districts	
November 2021		Executive Director and Staff	
February 2022		Executive Director and Staff	
May 2022		Executive Director and Staff	

## School Improvement Strategy(ies)--Summary

Identify the strategies, practices, or programs team has selected for implementation. This will be the focus of the school improvement effort the identification cycle (three years). It is strongly recommended that schools focus their school improvement effort and seek deep, consistent implementation of one or two strategies.

Strategy #1	Click here if the strategy is an Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)
The <b>Strategy</b> we are going to implement is	Collect data to inform the local conditions of the root causes in the logic model for dropout prevention.
	Root Cause A: Students are disengaged from school and from curriculum that doesn't seem relevant to their lives. Root Cause B: Students lack positive adult relationships ( inside and outside of school) and caring environments. Students feel disconnected.
to address (inform) these Root-Causes	This strategy aims to further identify root causes in order to better inform strategies. We'll work to take it a step further and use data to inform not only root causes (the "but why") , but also local conditions (the "but why here").
Which will help us meet this <b>Goal</b>	Our goal is to have enough valid and reliable data in order to articulate local conditions for our logic model.

#2	Click here X if the strategy is an Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)
The <b>Strategy</b> we are going to implement is	Check and Connect
to address the <b>Root Cause</b>	Students lack positive adult relationships (inside and outside of school) and caring environments. Students feel disconnected.
Which will help us meet this student outcome Goal*	Our first goal is to, through Check and Connect, increase our support under the following protective factors for high school dropout:

<ol> <li>Promote a sense of belonging, caring and connection between students and school staff through restorative discipline policies, mentorship, and a positive school climate.</li> <li>Respond to the non-academic factors that influence school participation. Offer support, or connections to the professional support students may need</li> </ol>
Our secondary goals are to increase attendance rates, decrease discipline instances, and increase students course grades.

\*SMART (strategic, measurable, ambitious, rigorous and time-sensitive) goal template example: The three year average for ACCOUNTABILITY INDICATOR at SCHOOL NAME will increase from BASELINE DATA to TARGET DATA within THIS TIME PERIOD.

# Plan for Strategy #1

**Strategy #1:** Collect data to inform local conditions for our identified root causes.

**Goal:** Our goal is to have enough valid and reliable data in order to articulate local conditions for our logic model.

Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Additional Details	Timeline for completion	Completed (check when complete)
Conduct the Minnesota Student Survey (MSS)	Tara McLellan	The survey will be given to all students in all grades at WCED.	Survey will be conducted in April.	April 2019
Organize the results of the MSS survey in order to present them for initial analysis by the leadership team.	Naomi Miranowski and Tara McLellan	Team will analyze results to inform local conditions	We'll wait for the state to send back the results. We're hoping to have them early summer and will have the presentation ready for the leadership by September 30th.	September 2019
Identify data gaps. Team will determine what data is still needed to further inform local conditions that wasn't gleaned from MSS.	Members of the leadership team	Decided to gather information on Attendance Behavior Incidents Course Completion - Pass/Fail numbers	Team will aim to complete this in the fall, prior to November 1st.	November 2019
Identify what data collection methods are needed to fill data gaps (i.e. additional surveys, focus	Members of the leadership team	Surveys/spreadsheet to organize data for review		December 2019

groups, or key informant interviews).				
Organize additional data collection efforts TBD	Tara		Teams will aim to complete this in the fall, prior to February 1st.	Feb 2020
Analyze additional data from additional data collection efforts in order to identify local conditions.	Tara and Staff -collaboration at Staff meetings	Pandemic Interrupted- Parent/Guardian and Student Surveys done for distance learning were completed.	Team will aim to complete this prior to March 1st. Process started and then entire school shifted to Distance Learning in March 2020	March 2020
Define local conditions and begin to identify strategies to combat those local conditions.	Tara and Staff	Student Data reviewed. Multiple staff members assigned to make personal connections with particular students.	Assigned staff members will aim to complete this process by November 1st. These efforts will continue throughout the SY. The focus will shift to the needs of the students.	Pandemic interrupted these efforts in March 2020- Resumed work on this in October 2020 and will be on-going
Complete logic model and record the results of the intervention. Revise the spreadsheet to track the progress of each meeting with students. Discuss with staff on a monthly basis.	Tara, Staff	Multiple assigned staff Tara and Loretta focused on basic needs and SEL Staff focused on engagement academics and engagement	Check and Connect is part of this process and not a stand alone program at this point. It has been embedded in the work.	ongoing through the SY
Update the School Improvement Plan	Tara, Staff and RCE Advocate			December 2020 and June 2021

Year 4 of Identification Goals developed	Tara and RCE Advocate	Continue to move forward with the original goals, with review and adjustments made on a quarterly basis.	CI Model in place, data reviews will be done on a quarterly basis with all staff during the 2021-22 SY	Goals reviewed and updated in June 2021
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### Progress Toward Goal #1: (To be reviewed and completed at the end of each year)

To what extent has the Strategy been implemented? What about the process went well, or not? What is the adult fidelity evidence of this?

- Due to the pandemic and our shift to Distance Learning this goal was impacted in a variety of ways. We continued to monitor student attendance data, student engagement data, student credit completion data and behavior incidents. As we shifted between distance learning, hybrid learning and in-person learning we narrowed our focus on attendance, credit completion and the SEL needs of our students and staff. We also explored, installed and have followed through with the initial implementation of a new Reading Intervention, Reading Plus. The online platform was a great match to our shift to distance learning and allowed students to engage in new technology to support growth in their literacy scores.
- All staff members review the data at staff meetings on a quarterly basis and adjustments are made as needed to support students to be successful. The Principal monitors the data on a daily/weekly basis and connects with individual staff as needed to address any immediate needs or concerns. One noticeable difference we observed this year was the less frequent behavior incidents when in-person learning took place. This may be connected to the changes we made in scheduling, staff rotating rooms or the fact we focused on the SEL needs of students with more personalized instruction (Reading Intervention and paras check and connect efforts) and incorporating community building events for the students (tournaments). Students also ate lunch and interacted with teachers on a daily basis. These were all relationship building opportunities we felt impacted our school climate in a positive way.
- How has student achievement been impacted? What is the evidence?
  - Due to the pandemic this is hard to measure. Overall there was less success in credit completion but we had excellent gains in the area of literacy during the initial implementation of our new Reading Intervention, Reading Plus. This will continue into the 2021-22 SY.
- How will implementation be adjusted and/or supported moving into the next year?

- We are looking forward to a full year of in-person learning next year to continue things that went well this year. We plan to continue many of the community building and shifts we made last year to continue the focus on SEL and relationship building between students and staff.
- We will continue to monitor data on a routine basis and make adjustments as needed to support and respond to student needs.

### Plan for Strategy #2

#### Strategy #1: Check and Connect

**Goal:** Our first goal is to, through Check and Connect, increase our support under the following protective protective factors for high school dropout: Promote a sense of belonging, caring and connection between students and school staff through restorative discipline policies, mentorship, and a positive school climate. Respond to the non-academic factors that influence school participation. Offer support, or connections to the professional support students may need. Our secondary goals are to increase attendance rates, decrease discipline instances, and increase students course grades.

Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Additional Details	Timeline for completion	Completed (check when complete)
Review indicators of disengagement	MEIRS Team		August 2019, 2020 and 2021	See above
Identify students at risk of disengagement	MEIRS Team	Reviewed on a monthly basis	Ongoing	
Review resources for interventions	MEIRS Team		September; ongoing	
Get to know students/parents	ALC Staff		1st 6 weeks of enrollment	
Use the "check" procedures	MEIRS		Ongoing	
Implement "connect"	Identified Mentors		Ongoing and as needed	

Strengthen family-school relationship	ALC Staff	Ongoing	
Monitor match, provide mentor support	Mentors and ALC staff	Ongoing	
Evaluate program implementation	MEIRS	Ongoing	

### **Progress Toward Goal #2:** (To be reviewed and completed at the end of year0

See details above under Goal #1

# December 2020 and June 2021 Updates

Additional Initiatives focused on SI	Strategy to implement	Evidence of Progress	Timeframe to check progress
Trauma Informed Practices	Raising Awareness as a collective staff	Help for Billy by Heather Forbes Whole Staff Book Study Staff Meeting Notes	Weekly- staff meetings Complete by June 2021 Completed in May 2021 Next Steps: Taking the lead from our school social worker to reflect on interventions highlighted in Classroom 180 (by Heather Forbes)
			to support trauma informed practices. The school social work team participated in a PLC on Classroom 180 and attended workshop training with Heather

			Forbes.
Courses aligned to Standards	All Staff required to develop a course syllabus that includes reference to standards addressed in their course	Syllabus Templates started for Semester 2 courses by Feb 2021 All courses before the end of June 2021	Start January/February 2021 through June 2021- Delayed due to pandemic Next Steps: Launched with staff in May 2021- updated syllabus format, 1st semester syllabus due in August 2021
Literacy Intervention	Purchase Reading Plus - 25 seats	Staff have access to the virtual training beginning in Dec 2020 Pilot with small number of students from now - June 2021	Monthly check-ins to adjust and plan for Fall 2021 Completed with great results and positive feedback from students and staff. Will continue in 2021-22 SY
PBIS	consistency in language around routine procedures on an on-going basis (adjusted to distance learning)	routine communication with students Documents in google classrooms showing the changes in expectations Embed in the system- this is how they do business	Monthly - rotating subject at Staff Meetings Completed and will continue in 2021-22 SY
Life Skills (SEL Curriculum)	Why Try program in place now, part of the CASEL framework resources are available but still in initial implementation	Tara and Loretta can support the staff to complete this work- Tara can provide direction and Loretta can support the staff capacity to implement the content	Monthly - rotating subject at Staff Meeting Completed and will continue in the 2021-22 SY

	Staff is still working to incorporate the standards into the curriculum on a consistent basis Over time the structure fell to the sideline, working to bring that back		Next Steps: Loretta will continue to deliver the lessons on scheduled intervals. Staff will be present during the lesson to build their own capacity. Staff will then incorporate the lesson content into their classroom environment on an ongoing basis.
Student and Parent/Guardian Engagement	The shift to Distance Learning highlighted the need to focus on this area.	Communication around the clock- text, calls, REMIND, home visits Celebrations -iMovie Awards Career and College Fair Day	Ongoing conversations- often daily Completed and due to the pandemic, individual communication with students and parents/guardians actually increased during the 2020-21 SY. This will continue to be a focus in the 2021-22 SY.

# 2021-22 SY Updates and Plan

Root Cause: same as above, no changes at this time. The pandemic confirmed that this root cause is still an area of concern

Initiatives to Continue	Strategy to implement	Evidence of Progress	Timeframe to check progress
Trauma Informed Practices	Taking the lead from our school social worker to reflect on	Pre and Post evaluation completed	September 2021 and May 2022
	interventions highlighted in	Create a list of Interventions we use	September-May

	Classroom 180 (by Heather Forbes) to support trauma informed practices. The school social work team participated in a PLC on Classroom 180 and attended workshop training with Heather Forbes	at this time and add 2 more we can use school-wide. Share the list with staff so they can be used as needed. (i.e. classroom environments being transformed into student centered and grade level appropriate settings as needed)	
Courses aligned to Standards	All Staff required to develop a course syllabus that includes reference to standards addressed in their course- new format to highlight standards alignment	New Syllabus format being used by staff First Semester Syllabus due August 30, 2021 (Initial Implementation)	Introduced April 2021 September 1st
		Second Semester Syllabus due in December 2021	December 1st
Literacy Intervention	Continue Reading Plus - 25 seats	Initial Implementation data will be reviewed at the end of the school year to measure effectiveness	June 2021
		Refresher training for staff	August 2021
		Continued use and implementation in 2021-22 SY	Quarterly data review of student achievement
		Ongoing support from Reading Plus consultant	Ongoing through the 2021-22 SY
PBIS	Consistency in language around routine procedures on an on-going basis- daily expectations clarified	Review expectations with students at the start of the school year.	August/Sept 2021

	with students	Continue to review data on a quarterly basis with all staff Monthly data review by Principal and School Social Worker	Quarterly staff meetings Monthly Principal and School Social Worker meetings Part of the Monthly rotation items on the staff meeting agendas.
Life Skills (SEL Curriculum)	Why Try program will continue, part of the CASEL framework This will be embed into the instructional schedule for the year	Schedule of lesson delivery created with school social worker to deliver content. Teachers are present during the lessons Teachers incorporate the skills into their classroom environments on an ongoing basis	Part of the Monthly rotation items on the staff meeting agendas.
Student and Parent/Guardian Engagement	This will continue to be an on-going conversation with staff	<ul> <li>Communication around the clock-text, calls, REMIND, home visits</li> <li>Celebrations (parent)</li> <li>Awards</li> <li>Career and College Fair Day (parent)</li> <li>Ditch clean up schedule</li> <li>Partner with Hemker Zoo</li> <li>Tournaments (parent)</li> <li>Greenhouse</li> <li>"Grandma/Grandpa" relationship with nursing home or apartment</li> <li>"Hobby Hour" Monthly</li> </ul>	August-June

		(parent)	
EdGenuity	Introduce to staff in August workshop		
Greenhouse Project (CBE)	Project Development Standards to address		September/October
	Present to Board		November
	Initial Implementation		January/February
	Planting		March/April
	Community Plant Sale		Мау