







INVESTMENT IN SCHOOLS

School Improvement Plan Template

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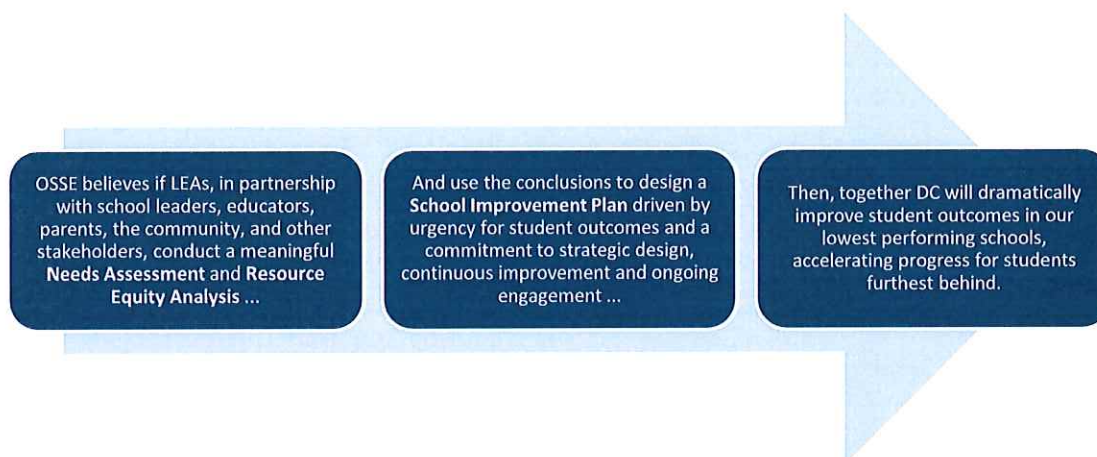
 GOVERNMENT OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DC MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

School Improvement Plan Template

To be completed for each Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Comprehensive Support and Improvement: Low Graduation Rate (CSI-Grad) School designated in the 2022-23 school year. The template may also be used to develop school improvement plans for Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) schools. Local education agencies (LEAs) with TSI and ATSI schools have the discretion to either use the OSSE's provided template or a plan format of their choosing.

Background

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) understands that school turnaround and improvement plans must be designed with consideration of each school's unique context. The process of completing a needs assessment, including an analysis of the equitable distribution of resources, the development of goals aligned to identified needs and the creation of a plan to address those needs provides an opportunity for designated schools to work with stakeholders toward a vision to ensure all students have an opportunity to succeed.



Local education agencies (LEAs) with Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) schools are eligible for *Investment in Schools* (1003) grant funding. The *Investment in Schools* grant provides an opportunity for each of the District of Columbia's lowest performing schools to work with their communities to urgently improve educational outcomes for students. Every CSI school must conduct a needs assessment and develop a school improvement plan. LEAs with at least one school designated for comprehensive support and more than one school overall in the LEA must also complete a Resource Equity Analysis. (Note: Single-site LEAs do not have to perform the Resource Equity Analysis).

LEAs with schools designated in the 2020-23 school year as Comprehensive Support and Improvement: Low Graduation Rate (CSI-Grad) are not eligible for grant funding but are required to complete a needs assessment, school improvement plan and resource equity analysis (if applicable).

LEAs with Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) schools may use this template to assist their schools in developing a school improvement plan,

but use of this template is not required by OSSE. LEAs with schools designated as TSI and/or ATSI are required to share with OSSE their school improvement plan(s) regardless of the template chosen.

School Improvement Plan Template Overview

Framework

To provide guidance and flexibility, OSSE is naming three critical categories - **People, Instruction and Structures** - that school improvement plans (SIPs) will address. SIPs will explain how evidence-based strategies and interventions (*see more detail below*) in each of these areas will be put in place to make the changes needed for each school's individual context. Each SIP must start by describing overall vision and goals for the school; explaining specific strategies related to people, instruction, and structures; incorporating how the school will determine whether the plan is generating its intended outcomes; and describing a process for continuous stakeholder involvement, which will include public engagement and reporting.

Scope

For newly designated schools in 2022, the SIP will span the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. The schools designated in 2018 developed a three-year plan. Given that 2022 designations do not include growth data, a central part of the DC Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan, schools will be identified again in 2024 with full accountability system metrics, after only two years. For schools designated in 2022, the data from the 2021-22 school year should be used for the baseline, and the targets and metrics related to the plan goals should be set at the end of the 2022-23 school year and the 2023-24 school year.

Transparency

SIPs should be available to the LEA, parents and the public, and the information contained in the plan must be in an understandable and uniform format, and to the extent practicable and/or required by DC law, provided in a language that the parents can understand.¹ Documents submitted to OSSE may be made available to the public via request and/or the OSSE website.

Evidence-based Interventions

In each category of the School Improvement Plan Template, schools must identify evidence-based interventions in the strategy for achieving its vision. Evidence-based interventions are practices, activities or interventions that have **evidence** to show that they are effective at producing results and improving outcomes when implemented. The kind of evidence described in ESSA has generally been produced through formal studies and research. Under ESSA, there are four tiers, or levels, of evidence:

¹ See <https://ohr.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ohr/publication/attachments/FINAL%20REGULATIONS%20-%20October%202014.pdf>.

Tier 1 – Strong Evidence

Supported by one or more well-designed and well-implemented randomized control experimental studies.

Tier 2 – Moderate Evidence

Supported by one or more well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental studies.

Tier 3 – Promising Evidence

Supported by one or more well-designed and well-implemented correlational studies (with statistical controls for selection bias).

Tier 4 – Demonstrates a Rationale

Practices that have a well-defined logic model or theory of action, are supported by research and have some effort underway by a state education agency (SEA), LEA, or outside research organization to determine their effectiveness.

CSI plan strategies are required to have demonstrated strong, moderate, or promising evidence (Tiers 1–3) to support them. All other programs under Titles I–IV may use Tiers 1–4.

Schools Implementing a Schoolwide Program

To reduce burden and avoid duplicative efforts, schools implementing a schoolwide program model under Title I, Part A may use this template to meet the requirement to develop and implement a schoolwide program plan. The schoolwide plan must include a description of how the strategies the school will be implementing will provide opportunities and address the learning needs of all students in the school, particularly the needs of the lowest-achieving students. (ESEA section 1114(b)(7)(A)(i), (iii)) The plan must also contain descriptions of how the methods and instructional strategies that the school intends to use will strengthen the academic program in the school, increase the amount and quality of learning time, and help provide an enriched and accelerated curriculum, including programs and activities necessary to provide a well-rounded education. (ESEA section 1114(b)(7)(A)(ii))

Submission Instructions

CSI Schools

LEAs with newly designated or re-designated CSI schools must upload a completed School Improvement Plan Template for each school into the School Improvement folder in [Box.com](https://box.com) by May 31, 2023. After the plan is approved by OSSE, the LEA must upload the approved plan for each school into the Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS) with their application by May 31, 2023.

CSI-Grad Schools

LEAs with CSI-Grad schools must upload a completed School Improvement Plan Template for each school into the School Improvement folder in [Box.com](https://box.com) by May 31, 2023.

TSI and ATSI Schools

LEAs with TSI and/or ATSI schools must upload a copy of their approved school improvement plan (in any format) into the School Improvement folder in [Box.com](https://box.com) by May 31, 2023. The plan must have been approved by the LEA prior to sharing with OSSE.

LEA Name: DC Public Schools

School Name: Ballou HS

Date of Plan Implementation: SY 22-23, 23-24

Date of Plan Update: 08/22/2023

School Plan Template

Overall Vision & Goals

In a narrative, explain the coherent aligned vision for your school, how you determined it and how you will know if you are moving toward that vision.

The narrative must include:

1. How this vision was informed by the process of completing a needs assessment including review of the resource equity analysis, if applicable.
2. How stakeholders were involved in determining this overall approach. Stakeholders should include at minimum, the LEA; Principals; other school leaders, including Title I administrator, teachers, and paraprofessionals; parents and members of the community; and as appropriate, specialized instructional support personnel, technical assistance providers, school staff, other individuals determined by the school and students.
3. If applicable, a description of how the SIP is coordinated with the school's Title I-A schoolwide program and the program's plans for other federal funds or local funds.

You will provide additional detail in the sections that follow on how this overall vision is connected to your approaches to People, Instruction and Structures. We expect that many strategies will be cross-cutting and not isolated to one of these categories to achieve the improvement goals.

School Level Vision and Goals

The shared vision of Ballou High School is to cultivate and empower socially engaged leaders for college, career, and global success. In service of this vision, Ballou's mission is to design and implement effective teaching and learning experiences in a safe and engaging environment with empathy and community support services.

At Ballou High School, our vision for school improvement is to develop the knowledge and skills of the adults in our building and institute the systems and structures within the school to facilitate a high-quality learning environment for our scholars. We will build a culture of strong instruction by developing teachers' ability to plan for and provide rigorous and relevant lessons with our partnership with 3DE and we will provide students High Impact Tutoring interventions. Our high-quality and effective learning environment will be maintained by consistently implementing Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports that keep students in disruption-free classrooms. Finally, the knowledge and skills of the adults in our building will be developed through strong coaching and professional development experiences

through the LEAP framework. We believe investment in these strategies will help us make ambitious progress toward our goals in this school improvement plan.

To support Ballou’s growth to realize this vision, the Ballou leadership team, in collaboration with internal and external stakeholders conducted a thorough Needs Assessment and identified 3 key priorities—building a culture of rigorous instruction, implementing a school-wide behavior process, and improving instructional coaching and professional development. In alignment with those needs, Ballou has established goals around improving PARCC performance in Math and ELA, decreasing Chronic Absenteeism, and increasing AP performance and graduation rates. Subsequent sections of this plan will further detail the plan’s goals and elaborate upon the strategies the school has identified to address the priority needs and their associated root causes.

Ballou is not only dedicated to ensuring students' mastery of grade-level content but also to preparing them for success in their future courses and post-secondary college or career paths. To achieve these ambitious goals, the school recognizes the need to address both course content and the professional development of its teachers. By providing effective coaching and support, teachers will be equipped to create a challenging and rigorous learning environment. When students are empowered to grapple with complex content and have teachers who can offer targeted interventions to keep them progressing along their learning journey, the results will be reflected in improved performance outcomes on assessments such as PARCC, SAT, and AP exams. Additionally, this approach will contribute to higher graduation rates within the traditional four-year timeframe. Students themselves have emphasized the importance of a positive learning environment that fosters support and encourages excellence. This positive atmosphere not only influences academic achievements but also has a direct impact on attendance. When students feel valued and empowered within their learning environment, they are more likely to remain engaged and committed to their school. However, the successful implementation of these strategies hinges on the establishment of robust structures that promote positive behavior and address any disruptions that may arise. Student conduct significantly shapes the overall learning culture within a school. By maintaining a strong focus on behavior and discipline standards, Ballou can sustain a positive learning atmosphere throughout its campus. This, in turn, provides a solid foundation to uphold the core improvement strategies.

Ballou chose the identified goals based on the metrics utilized in the OSSE framework to evaluate schools. The school’s vision for success includes moving out of status and becoming a model of excellence for what is possible in urban education. To do so, the school would need to set up the conditions for significant growth with the identified metrics.

It is believed that the goals, strategies, and evidence-based practices included in this plan will help support Ballou as it seeks to achieve the vision of developing socially engaged graduates.

Needs Assessment Process

Ballou’s school team participated in a thorough needs assessment process that utilized multiple sources of qualitative and quantitative data to identify key trends as they relate to people, instruction, and structures. The DCPS Office of Data Systems and Strategy compiled data across numerous indicators over three years and shared with the school leaders. An external partner (American Institutes for Research, AIR) conducted Principal interviews using a structured protocol and administered an instructional staff survey to learn more about the school’s strengths and areas for growth. A total of 36

staff of 97 staff surveyed completed the survey. A student focus group was held using a structured protocol and data was compiled into key themes. A parent engagement event was held to share information regarding the CSI-LP designation and to provide parents and the external community an opportunity to share their input regarding school improvement strategies. The DCPS Continuous Improvement team organized and ensured that all components of the Needs Assessment process occurred to satisfy the requirements for internal and external engagement.

The school team worked with trained facilitators from AIR to examine all the data collected and prioritize the school's top three areas of need. AIR led the Ballou team in a collaborative data review process to reach consensus on those needs and then facilitated a root cause analysis to identify the underlying causes of each of the school's prioritized needs. Through this structured, facilitated process the Ballou team identified the following top three needs:

- There is a need to build a culture of challenging students with rigorous content.
- Inconsistent implementation of school-wide behavior ladder and strategies by all adults in the school.
- There is a need for clarity of instructional coaching and development processes.

The following week, after completing the needs assessment, the Ballou team worked with the same AIR facilitators to develop this school improvement plan, which articulates Ballou's vision and goals, the school's theories of action about people, instruction, and structures, and specific strategies for achieving Ballou's goals and addressing the school's top needs.

Resource Equity Analysis

DCPS utilizes an equity-based school funding model that ensures schools are provided financial resources based on greater student academic and social-emotional learning needs. This model holds schools harmless for declines in enrollment and ensures that schools will at least receive a baseline level of funding each school year. Based on the results of a Resource Equity Analysis, Ballou's per-pupil expenditures exceed both the mean and median for other DCPS schools. Overall, schools with lower per-pupil expenditures demonstrated higher Summative Index scores, lower rates of Chronic Absenteeism, and higher rates of in-seat attendance. Therefore, it is unlikely that Ballou's performance challenges are related to funding deficiencies. Funding from the Investment in Schools grant will supplement existing high-rates of per-pupil funding at Ballou and the School Improvement Plan strategies will address the root causes of Ballou's top three priorities identified by the school team.

Stakeholder Engagement

Throughout March-May 2023, various internal and external stakeholders engaged in the Needs Assessment process. Representatives from the LEA (Continuous Improvement and Data and Strategy content leads) and school team members (the Administration, Connected Schools Manager, Instructional Coaches, and Assistant Principal) analyzed SY 22-23 data during a mid-year review. Additionally, the DCPS Continuous Improvement Specialist and the DCPS Data and Strategy Specialist engaged with the school team (Administration, Instructional Coaches, Connected Schools Manager, and Dean/Restorative Justice Coordinator) and the AIR facilitator during the Needs Assessment and School Improvement Planning sessions. Teachers, paraprofessionals, and other staff members engaged in the AIR Instructional Staff Survey and the INSIGHT survey. Students were provided opportunities to engage

via the aforementioned student focus groups and the Panorama survey. Parents, partners, and other external community members were provided opportunities to engage via engagement events and the Panorama Survey (families only).

Coordination with Title I-A schoolwide program (if applicable)

Strategies outlined below will be integrated into Ballou’s annual Comprehensive School Plan, the planning mechanism DCPS requires of all Title 1 schools to satisfy the annual schoolwide planning and evaluation requirements under Title 1.

State the Goals

Identify specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (S.M.A.R.T.) goals of the SIP to achieve the vision described above. SIP goals must focus on student outcomes, not on adult actions. These should include annual targets tied to specific accountability framework metrics as well as other leading indicators (inputs and/or outputs).

In the table below, list your school's goals and the metrics:

Goal 1:	Increase PARCC 4+ achievement in ELA from the 21-22 baseline of 6% to 18% by the end of Year 2 (annual increase of at least 6%)				
Measure: PARCC ELA Meets or Exceeds Expectations	Indicator(s)	Data Source	Baseline SY21-22	Target SY22-23	Target SY23-24
	Percentage of Students attaining Level 4+	PARCC ELA	6%	12%	18%
Goal 2:	Increase PARCC 4+ achievement in Math from the SY21-22 baseline of 0.76% to 13.52% by the end of Year 2 (annual decrease of at least 6%)				
Measure: PARCC Math Meets or Exceeds Expectations	Indicator(s)	Data Source	Baseline SY21-22	Target SY22-23	Target SY23-24
	Percentage of Students attaining Level 4+	PARCC Math	0.76%	6.76%	12.76%
Goal 3:	Decrease Chronic Absenteeism from the 21-22 baseline of 97% to 85% by the end of Year 2 (annual decrease of at least 6%)				
Measure: Chronic Absenteeism	Indicator(s)	Data Source	Baseline SY21-22	Target SY22-23	Target SY23-24
	Annual Chronic Absenteeism	DDAC Aspen OSSE Data Validation	97%	91%	85%
Goal 4:	Increase AP performance from the SY21-22 baseline of 3% to 7% by the end of year two (annual increase of at least 2%)				
Measure: AP Performance	Indicator(s)	Data Source	Baseline SY21-22	Target SY22-23	Target SY23-24
	AP performance	College Board	3%	5%	7%
Goal 5:	Increase 4-Year graduation rate from 69% to 73% by the end of year two (annual increase of at least 2%)				
Measure: 4-Year ACGR	Indicator(s)	Data Source	Baseline SY21-22	Target SY22-23	Target SY23-24
	4-Year graduation rate	OSSE Data Validation	69%	71%	73%

Critical Categories

Note: OSSE funding and resources are designed to focus on the most effective interventions, thus the School Improvement Plan Template focuses on strategies and supports related to People, Instruction and Structures.

People

When schools are producing student outcomes that indicate low performance, adults in the building also need supports and interventions to institute change. Through attention to this area, schools will identify the strategies to raise the performance of educators that will be used to address gaps and meet the plan's goals.

In a narrative, explain: What is the school's theory of action around people? What changes do you plan for your approach to talent building – for leadership and educators – to achieve the vision outlined above, and how are they informed by your analysis of qualitative and quantitative evidence in your Needs Assessment and Resource Equity Analysis, if applicable?

The narrative must include how your school is:

- Planning to ensure it will have effective leadership over the next two years, including the Principal and any other key leadership roles and how it is building a pipeline of strong leadership
- Ensuring retention of effective educators
- Developing and helping educators who need support to improve
- Selecting strong, moderate, or promising [evidence-based](#) strategies for educators
- Determining strategies based on the conclusions of the needs assessment and resource equity analysis (If applicable)

The narrative may include how your school is:

- Identifying and creating key positions to support school improvement and academic achievement

Theory of Action

Ballou's theory of action around people is, if we build systems of coaching and professional development for all staff that are based in consistency, best practice, and strong relationships, then we can strengthen staff ability to improve student outcomes.

Key Needs (from Needs Assessment Process) and Alignment to Goals

All three of the key needs the Ballou team identified through the needs assessment process relate to people and align with the theory of action that the school team defined. By building systems for coaching and professional development that are grounded in a clear process and evidence-based practices, school leaders will be able to intentionally improve the clarity of instructional coaching and professional development. The school's improved systems for coaching and professional development will be used as mechanisms for consistently communicating the expectation that Ballou is a school where all students are challenged and regularly engage with rigorous content.

When teachers receive high-quality, consistent coaching and professional development to ensure that students are consistently engaged and challenged, then student achievement (Goals 1 and 2), attendance (Goal 3), and graduation rates (Goal 5) will improve.

Strategies to Develop People

To ensure **effective leadership** over the next two years, including the Principal, Assistant Principal, and other school leaders, the leadership team will continue to implement distributed leadership strategies and collaborative planning structures (including academic leadership team, content PLCs, and grade-level PLCs) that ensure ownership of decision making is shared and systems are understood by all stakeholders. Since the development of the SIP, a new principal has been selected to lead Ballou. The principal will receive direct coaching and support from their Instructional Superintendent, and members of their administrative/instructional teams will receive ongoing coaching via the DCPS' Cluster Support Team. As the new leadership team continues to transition, they will examine the SIP goals and strategies routinely and determine if adjustments are needed to align with current school needs and the leadership vision.

School leaders will build a **pipeline of strong leadership** by intentionally broadening the pool of staff involved in leadership opportunities. At Ballou, there are opportunities to serve as TLIs (to support LEAP) and grade level leads, as well as opportunities to serve on several school-based teams (MTSS, culture and climate). In addition, school leaders will ensure that teachers observe one another, as another way to involve teachers in instructional leadership opportunities. Through distributive leadership and shared responsibility, Ballou school leaders can ensure every staff member in the building is focused on supporting the growth and achievement of Ballou students.

School leaders will ensure the **retention of effective educators** by continuing to provide meaningful opportunities for teacher leadership and personalized support based on teachers' individual needs. When teachers feel that support is being provided to them based on their individualized challenges and areas of support, then they will feel valued as individual professionals and recognize how the school reacts to their needs as much as they do with students. School leaders will also strive to ensure that coaching and professional development efforts are cohesive and aligned with services provided by the DCPS Cluster Support team. Teachers will receive professional development and coaching on any new instructional strategies to be used, including any of the high-leverage practices (practices that research has demonstrated can impact student achievement and be used across different content areas and grade levels) adopted by school leaders.

School leaders will help **educators who need support** to improve by differentiating professional development based on teacher needs and experience and through observation using DCPS' LEAP model. An independent review of the DCPS LEAP model by Learning Forward found that the model aligns to the key tenets of similar evidence-based professional learning practices that incorporate teacher reflective practice and on-going job-embedded professional development, which have been shown to result in positive changes in teaching practice and improvements in student learning outcomes when implemented at the district or state level, thus meeting the Tier 3 ESSA Evidence standard. Additionally, LEAP professional development modules are tied to the DCPS Essential Practices, a set of teacher behaviors actions linked to improved student outcomes. Several studies have suggested that this observation and feedback system grounded in the Essential Practices has been effective in improving

student outcomes and teacher performance. Researchers from the University of Virginia have found that the DCPS system generates “meaningful gains in student outcomes, particularly in the most disadvantaged students”, thus meeting the Tier 3 ESSA evidence standard. School leaders will also use an instructional walkthrough model to provide teachers with real-time, actionable feedback on their instruction and use SchoolMint to provide regular touchpoints with teachers. School leaders will provide supports, for teachers who need them, on the “nuts and bolts” of the daily job.

Teachers will engage in differentiated LEAP sessions and PLC’s based on pedagogical practices. Thus, novice teachers and ineffective teachers will be receiving coaching and support specific to their instructional needs. Novice teachers will be coached and supported by TLI’s and instructional coaches based on content and instructional needs, while ineffective teachers will receive support from AP’s and the principal based on the DCPS Essential Practices, which are part of the IMPACT teacher evaluation system. Coaching structures are tiered based on the needs of individual teachers and tailored to their needs as couched in skill, will, or capacity deficiencies.

Novice teachers at Ballou are provided with a multi-faceted support system supported by school coaches, instructional leaders, and instructional administrators. Beyond differentiating professional development through the LEAP model, the school established a mentorship program for experienced educators to mentor newcomers. This mentorship offers one-on-one coaching, real-time feedback, and collaborative planning sessions. These experiences may be designed to develop overall skills or tailored to focus on specific teaching practices based on teacher needs. Additionally, novice teachers are given opportunities to participate in smaller affinity groups, where they can share challenges and brainstorm solutions in a more intimate setting. Ballou organizes regular check-ins between instructional leaders and teachers to ensure they feel supported and have the resources they need.

Ballou was notified of their re-designation in January 2023, which corresponded to Year 1 of the two-year improvement cycle. Year 1 focused on the Needs Assessment process in identifying root causes that led to the continued CSI status. In Year 1, Ballou continued to execute the strategies identified in the FY 21 revised SIP, which included using the Understand by Design lesson planning framework, a partnership with 3DE, implementing the Connected Schools model, and utilizing the LiveSchool behavior tracking platform. In Year 2, Ballou will focus on refining these strategies and executing them at a high level of fidelity. Prior to the pandemic, Ballou saw progress with the aforementioned strategies. We believe that if we continue to build upon our prior successes, we will accelerate progress.

Connections to Instruction and Structures

By focusing on providing targeted coaching and professional development that address both teacher needs and interests, the strategies described in this section (People) will support the strategies planned and described in the Instruction section. Ballou’s Connected Schools Manager will ensure that student and family needs outside of school are addressed so that attendance improves, and students can increasingly engage in high-quality instructional experiences. Also, their Director of Redesign will support coaching and professional development as the schools continue to build upon their established Redesign initiative. At the same time, building a broad pool of leaders (by involving teachers and other leaders in key decision-making processes and instructional improvement activities, such as classroom walkthroughs) will ensure Ballou builds a growing cadre of teachers who can lead and support the work of the teams described in the Structures section. Building the capacity of leaders and staff is critical to

the success of this plan, especially in relation to academic achievement, AP performance, and graduation goals.

Instruction

We must ensure that all our students are prepared for success in college and in their careers. By investing in resources aligned to school needs, building educator capacity, and using evidence-based instructional strategies, we believe schools can meet this imperative.

In a narrative, explain: What is the school's theory of action around ensuring that adults are effective instructional leaders and students are receiving and demonstrating evidence of high-quality instruction? What strategies and interventions do you plan to implement and how they are related to your school's identified needs?

The narrative must include how your school is:

- Identifying capacity to ensure instructional approaches can be implemented timely and effectively
- Planning for the instructional approach to be scaled across the school for maximum impact and sustained over time
- Selecting strong, moderate, or promising [evidence-based](#) strategies
- Determining strategies based on conclusions of the needs assessment and resource equity analysis, if applicable

Theory of Action

Ballou's theory of action around instruction is if teachers have a structured strategy for rigorous, engaging instruction, then students will be more actively engaged and receive a higher quality of education with improved outcomes.

Key Needs (from Needs Assessment Process) and Alignment to Goals

Through the needs assessment process, the Ballou school team identified one of the school's top needs as needing to build a culture of rigorous and engaging content within course lessons. The school's theory of action around instruction, which focuses on ensuring that teachers have structured strategies to develop and deliver rigorous, engaging instruction, aligns well with this need. If students are consistently engaged and challenged, then student achievement (Goals 1 and 2), attendance (Goal 3), and graduation rates (Goal 5) will improve.

Strategies to Develop Instruction

To ensure rigorous, engaging instruction across all classrooms and content areas, school leaders will provide teachers with more support for lesson planning, with a key focus on backward planning. School leaders will continue to encourage teachers to incorporate authentic work products into their instruction as another strategy for engaging students. These authentic work products provide students the chance to connect in-class content with assignments grounded in real-life applicable tasks. Once completed, teachers will bring work products to collaborative meetings with their peers to determine lesson modifications to improve student engagement through these products. School leaders will also encourage all teachers to create opportunities for students to be leaders in the classroom. The Ballou team is looking for an external partner who can support the school's efforts to equip teachers with

effective, evidence-based strategies for engaging students in instruction. Ballou leaders will also identify high-leverage practices that can be incorporated into their instructional expectations for teachers.

Ballou will continue to implement the 3DE program, which aligns with the school's need to ensure a culture of challenging and rigorous instruction through courses based on post-secondary careers. Students have shared positive feedback on 3DE courses, and providing courses that students want to engage in and be present for supports the school's goal of decreasing chronic absenteeism and improving graduation rates. The 3DE program provides students with authentic, real-world learning opportunities that prepare them for college and careers and has been shown to reduce chronic absenteeism and increase graduation rates.

Ballou will continue to implement targeted and intensive support for students who need them, with a strong commitment to the school's HIIT program in particular, and the school's primary focus will be on ensuring high-quality universal (Tier 1) instruction. Literacy is an area of growth for Ballou, and this year, school leaders will focus more on scaling out writing across the curriculum as their Tier 1 strategy to improve this skill campus-wide. The strategy will be supported through the instructional leadership team with coaching and support coming from APs and instructional coaches. Ballou's high-impact tutoring (HIIT) program, which focused on math this year, will expand to literacy next year. AIR's Evidence Support Center and the What Works Clearinghouse both rate targeted tutoring as an ESSA Tier 3 intervention with promising evidence for improving ELA and math achievement. School leaders also will focus on making sure Ballou's Advanced Placement (AP) instruction is well-aligned to the AP assessments so that students taking AP courses are prepared to earn college credit for the courses, and we can achieve the school's AP performance (Goal 4).

Ballou will use regular LEAP meetings to ensure staff have the capacity to implement instructional approaches focused on rigor and engaging content. The school will use these meetings for targeted and differentiated professional development that acknowledges variation in readiness and experience across staff. Ballou will also utilize LEAP meetings as a mechanism for communicating about expectations for instruction, including specific strategies for engaging students and ensuring rigor. Regular and systematic communication with teachers during LEAP meetings will help school leaders to scale and sustain effective instructional practices over time. School leaders will also utilize weekly instructional leadership meetings and bi-weekly academic leadership team (ALT) meetings to share best practices and navigate continued challenges to implementing consistently rigorous instruction. Ballou staff will also use weekly data meetings within their LEAP PDs to explore effective instructional practices. Setting instructional expectations and providing support for implementing specific strategies aligns well with the school's theory of action around people, which focuses on building better systems for coaching and professional development.

LEAP is a structure that establishes the enabling conditions to create effective and efficacious educators. A key element of the LEAP model is that teachers receive ongoing, job-embedded professional development. This ensures that teachers receive pedagogical and content-based professional development to continually increase their effectiveness as educators. Ensuring that teachers receive consistent information on the Essential Practices will ensure that all teachers operate with a definition of what strong instruction looks like. In LEAP, teachers also receive content pedagogy via modules that are developed by central office content managers. This ensures that instruction at Ballou remains

coherent and aligned to rigorous district standards. By improving teacher practices, Ballou will see positive results in student outcomes and performance indicators.

Opportunities for teachers to observe their peers exemplifying effective teaching practices will expand upon the work done in LEAP. To make the peer observation process targeted, teachers will be selected for observation based on strengths with the DCPS Essential Practices or content pedagogy. When visiting other classrooms, teachers will have a set of “look-fors” to make the connection to what they observe and effective instructional practices. At Ballou HS, we have integrated peer observation into our instructional strategies. Teachers are encouraged to engage in non-evaluative observation sessions, where they can watch their colleagues teach, learn from various teaching methods, and later reflect on their observations. These sessions are followed by constructive feedback discussions, ensuring the practice is both observational and reflective. This is a voluntary process, aimed at promoting a culture of shared learning and continuous improvement. Once they observe it, teachers will have low stake opportunities to practice before shifting to higher stakes.

The variety of identified strategies form a comprehensive instructional and intervention framework that spans both the entirety of the school and individual classrooms. Understanding by Design serves as a framework for backward planning, whereby educators plan for lessons by starting with standards-based student outcomes and planning how students will be guided toward them. A continued partnership with 3DE empowers the school to offer students a myriad of courses that allow them to apply and interconnect knowledge and skills across diverse subject domains and post-secondary and career pathways. High Impact Tutoring (HIT) augments classroom instruction by providing an intervention space for students to master grade-level content and standards.

Connections to People and Structures

Ballou’s commitment to providing teachers with clear and consistent guidance on how to implement rigorous and engaging instruction (as part of the school’s approach to Instruction) connects closely to the strategies for providing targeted coaching and professional development, as described in the People section. At the same time, the instructional focus above (rigorous and relevant lessons, 3DE, writing across the curriculum, and AP courses) will drive the content for many of the teams and collaborative times described in the Structures section (e.g., ALT, LEAP). Improving instructional practices to ensure rigorous and engaging content for all students is critical to the success of this plan, especially in relation to the academic achievement, AP/IP performance, and graduation goals.

Structures

Improving our lowest performing schools requires dramatic change. By investing in bold commitments to empower decision-making, structural configuration and management, we believe schools can accelerate improvement.

In a narrative, explain: What is the school's theory of action around structures and how will it reinforce and facilitate the work you are doing around People and Instruction? What supports and interventions do you plan to implement and how are they related to your school's identified needs?

The narrative must include how your school is:

- Selecting strong, moderate, or promising [evidence-based](#) strategies
- Determining strategies based on themes from the needs assessment and resource equity analysis, if applicable, to meet projected short- and long-term goals

Theory of Action

Ballou's theory of action around structures is, if we develop and communicate clear systems for managing student behavior and supporting all student needs (both academic and non-academic), train our people on how to implement the system, and monitor student outcomes paired with adult actions, then we can systematically support success for students in our building.

Key Needs (from Needs Assessment Process) and Alignment to Goals

During the needs assessment process, Ballou staff identified more consistent implementation of a schoolwide behavior ladder as one of the school's top three needs. The school's theory of action around structures aligns well with this need, given its focus on developing, communicating, implementing, and monitoring key school systems, including a system for managing student behavior. If positive behavior is developed and supported, and students spend more time in school, then student achievement (Goals 1 and 2), attendance (Goal 3), and graduation rates (Goal 5) will improve.

Strategies to Develop Structures

To ensure that all staff understand Ballou's schoolwide behavior ladder, and how it relates to effective instruction, school leaders will communicate Ballou's approach to behavior during the summer leadership retreat and then continuously and consistently throughout the school year. When staff understand the system, including what to do and who to contact, then they can focus on instruction. Ballou also plans to continue their partnership with Access Youth, a nonprofit organization that provides at-risk youth with access to the skills, resources and support they need to stay in school and out of the criminal justice system.

Ballou believes in a proactive, community-based approach to behavior management. They have adopted a Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) system, focusing on rewarding positive behaviors and offering supportive interventions for challenges. The Multi-Tiered Student Support (MTSS) model ensures that students receive the appropriate level of support based on their individual needs. Multiple student performance indicators are tracked in a MTSS platform, and faculty and staff can create, monitor, and update student intervention plans within the platform. Additionally, restorative justice practices have been incorporated to address conflicts, ensuring that students understand the impact of

their actions and work towards positive resolutions. Ballou plans to continue their partnership with Access Youth, a nonprofit organization that provides at-risk youth with access to the skills, resources, and support they need to stay in school.

To support positive student behavior, Ballou will continue their work with Healing Centered practices. Students are encouraged to maintain positive behaviors through the school's use of LiveSchool, a digital platform where school staff can track the frequency of positive behaviors from students. Students earn "credits" through the platform that they can then "spend" on incentives.

Ballou is committed to a curriculum and teaching methodologies that are culturally responsive. Educators receive training on incorporating diverse perspectives into lessons and recognizing potential biases. Classroom materials, including textbooks and supplementary resources, are regularly reviewed to ensure they reflect the diverse backgrounds of the students.

The school has incorporated the 3DE case methodology through its redesign. 3DE by Junior Achievement combines core competencies with school districts and the broader business community to initiate a transformation from the inside out. The model leverages networks, resources, and expertise to create a cost-effective and scalable solution that maximizes the impact for all involved. These are aligned to culturally relevant practices as they codify the following practices as core competencies that are aligned to cultural responsiveness:

- Creativity and Innovation
- Cultural Agility
- Engaging Communication
- Effective Collaboration
- Self-Direction

Ballou will continue several strategies that have provided positive returns on invested time and personnel. First, Ballou will continue using a co-teaching model and will focus on ensuring staff understand what effective co-teaching looks like. Also, School leaders will use ALT and coaching meetings to support teachers in implementing systems and will use professional development to achieve this end. Knowing that new teachers (new to the profession and/or new to Ballou) will join Ballou's faculty, Ballou will also continue to implement the "New to Ballou" program, which allows school leaders to clearly communicate with new staff about all of Ballou's systems. Finally, seeing a need to continue the work to create culturally sensitive and empathetic instructors, the culture and climate team will be given space during professional development and coaching sessions to provide support with developing whole-child practices.

Ballou will continue to utilize several of its existing collaborative teams, which also serve to distribute leadership:

- The academic leadership team (ALT) will continue to meet every other week to review student work and data, to monitor and review the comprehensive school plan, to review LEAP data, and to plan for monthly staff meetings.
- Content PLCs (LEAP) will continue to meet every week to review student work and data and to monitor Tier 1 supports.
- Grade level PLCs will also continue to meet to monitor Tier 2 and 3 supports.

Ballou will continue to use its multitiered systems of support (MTSS) team, comprised of administrators, school psychologists and grade level representatives, to help connect students with appropriate resources and supports. Team leaders will focus on making sure teachers know what kinds of interventions and supports are available to students and can implement those interventions, when appropriate. School leaders will also incorporate systems for monitoring interventions, to learn more about which interventions are most effective. HIIT is an evidence-based intervention that will support classroom instruction by providing supplemental, academic support to help students master course content.

Ballou will also continue with the Connected Schools model (the DCPS version of Communities in Schools), a whole-school evidence-based approach to school improvement. Ballou will continue to receive support from a dedicated Connected Schools Manager, who helps to ensure students and families have access to the resources and supports they need. The Connected Schools Manager will continually review attendance, academic performance, and student/family perception data to evaluate existing partnerships and cultivate new ones aligned to data trends and needs that emerge.

EdConnective is an additional coaching resource that will be provided to Ballou. EdConnective is a virtual coaching platform in which teachers are paired with a non-evaluative online instructional coach. As the coaching support is non-evaluative and provided by an EdConnective instructional coach partner, novice and/or ineffective teachers may feel more comfortable expressing their professional growth needs. The online instructional coach can review videos teachers submit and provide feedback to improve practice. Online instructional coaches can also review lesson plans and provide feedback, and work with teachers on their individualized professional growth interests. This model will help to further differentiate coaching and provide the school with additional non-evaluative coaching capacity. As coaching support is differentiated and driven by teacher skill and interest, the support is expected to further increase teacher satisfaction and retention.

Connections to People and Instruction

By focusing on establishing systems that staff understand and are held accountable to, the strategies described in this section (Structures) will naturally support the strategies planned and described in both the People and Instruction sections, in terms of building capacity and improving instruction. The Connected Schools Manager (CSM) position will leverage families and community partners with the school's decision-making process. The AP of Redesign will oversee the partnership with 3DE and support the coaching and development of teachers of these courses. Weekly data meeting structures will also provide space for teachers and instructional support staff to reflect on student outcomes to drive lesson plan development and reteach plans to ensure students are mastering content standards. With the implementation of MTSS, Ballou will have a platform to monitor student outcomes across multiple areas (academics, behavior, attendance, etc.), identify students requiring advanced tiers of support, and track improvement progress. This will improve the school's ability to support in-class instruction with supplemental support and provide a data-rich information system for teachers to inform their own lessons and practices.

Continuous Improvement

In a narrative, explain the routines for how the school will determine whether the SIP is having its intended outcomes, including self-monitoring and continuous stakeholder engagement.

The narrative must include how your school is:

- Establishing or continuing internal routines
- Establishing or continuing routines with stakeholders
- Making the SIP available to the LEA, parents and the public in a form that is understandable and uniform, to the extent practicable and/or required by DC law, provided in a language that the parents can understand
- Conducting an annual process of reviewing, sharing progress publicly, and as necessary, revising its SIP
- Structuring for sustainability, including how the school will coordinate and integrate the activities outlined in this plan with other federal, state, and local services, resources, and programs (e.g., other federal grant programs, health and nutrition programs, culture/climate programs, career, and technical education programs)

Internal Routines

Formative assessment and benchmark data will be examined weekly during the Data and Planning Meetings (Weekly Data Meetings-WDM). Additionally, this data will be reviewed by administration, coaches, and non-academic staff leaders during the monthly Academic Leadership Team. The ALT format will also allow the Ballou team to correlate attendance trends against academic performance. Teachers will receive routine feedback on Tier 1 instructional practices from instructional Coaches during the observation-feedback cycles and use this information to improve instructional practice. Our top three priorities and our progress in implementing strategies to address them will be reviewed in monthly staff meetings. This will ensure that all Ballou staff remain focused on our key priorities, understand their role in the work, and know how the school is progressing.

External Routines

Ballou will continue to leverage events conducted in partnership with the Connected Schools model to continue to engage around key school priorities and progress towards goals with parents and community members, such as through LSAT meetings. Additionally, the Attendance Team will routinely meet with partners to set goals and refine strategy. Ballou will engage in three formal reviews (BOY, MOY, and EOY) of their annual DPCS Comprehensive School Plan (which encapsulates the multi-year SIP Goals and strategies) with the instructional superintendent, the school-based leadership team, and members of the Cluster Support Team, which includes DCPS content managers for Attendance, ELA, Math, Data & Strategy, Continuous Improvement, MTSS, Special Education, and Restorative Justice. Members of this team will review data against goals and targets with the Ballou team and engage in thought partnership around any adjustments to strategies that may be necessary based on data trends. The Continuous Improvement team will also have regular, monthly check-ins with the school to monitor SIP/CSP progress and alert central support with the new or persistent needs shared during these check-

ins. DCPS central office content leads will also provide one-on-one coaching for school-based instructional coaches and other staff members as warranted by data and needs of individual staff members. Additionally, Ballou will engage in any additional required monitoring activities as required by OSSE or DCPS senior leadership such as the Chancellor, Deputy Chancellors, and Office Chiefs.

Communication and Transparency

Ballou will leverage existing LSAT (local school advisory team) meetings to share SIP goals, strategies, and progress at least twice a year. Such touchpoints may include the back-to-school family night and/or community and family events organized by the Connected Schools Manager. The DCPS Continuous Improvement team will provide Ballou with materials and resources that can support meetings with stakeholders regarding SIP goals and progress.

This two-year School Improvement Plan will be available to the public via the OSSE website. The approved two-year SIP will be posted on the DCPS ESSA Website, which is publicly available to stakeholders.

The DCPS Comprehensive School Plan is an annual school improvement plan that encapsulates the OSSE SIP goals, strategies, and evidence-based interventions. The entire version of the DCPS Comprehensive School Plan is made available to all LEA-based stakeholders. Parents may request a copy of the DCPS Comprehensive School plan, and it is released at the discretion of the Principal, as some information may need to be redacted to protect student identity. Major content from the DCPS Comprehensive School Plan is elevated and transcribed in parent and community-friendly language that is made available in the CSP Snapshot. These are made available to all members of the public on the DCPS website, and to any parents or external stakeholders when requested.

Coordination

Goals, evidence-based interventions, and other improvement strategies outlined in this plan are also captured within the school-wide Title 1 Plan, which is the DCPS Comprehensive School Plan, which also contains other strategies for LEA program requirements. Investment in Schools funding is utilized to supplement local and federal funding in the school budget, which ensures that strategies in the plan are sustainable over time.

As a multi-campus LEA, DCPS provides Title allotments to schools as part of their school budgets, apart from the Investment in Schools Grant. As the team responsible for monitoring CSI schools, the DCPS School Performance and Continuous Improvement team works in partnership with the DCPS Office of Federal Programs and Grants and the DCPS Office of Resource Strategy to ensure that multiple school funding sources are allotted to schools in an equitable manner and in alignment with CSI School Improvement Plans and the DCPS Title Plans. This funding model allows school leaders to be able to maximize resources across multiple funding streams to ensure resources are used to their fullest extent to fund human capital or programs aligned to school needs and the DCPS Comprehensive School Plan.

Approvals

School Approval

Approver Name: **William Haith**

Approver Title: **Principal**

Signature: 
William Haith (Sep 19, 2023 12:49 EDT)

LEA Approval

Approver Name: **Drewana Bey**

Approver Title: **Deputy Chancellor**

Signature: 
Drewana Bey (Sep 20, 2023 13:38 EDT)

OSSE Approval

Approver Name: *Danielle Branson*

Approver Title: *Deputy Superintendent of Academics & Schools*

Signature: 