INVESTMENT IN SCHOOLS

Required School Improvement Plan Template

District of Columbia
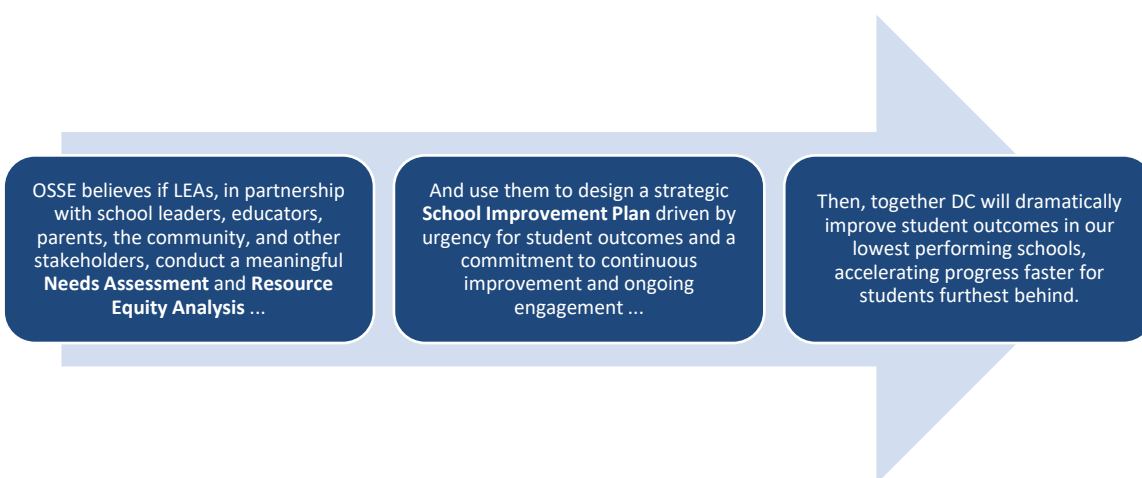Office of the State Superintendent of Education

Required School Improvement Plan Template

To be completed for each Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CS) School identified in the 2018 DC School Report Card.

Background

In the District of Columbia (DC), as with most urban areas around the country, there are schools that have struggled for years to achieve strong results for students, despite many attempts and much effort on the part of educators and leaders.

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) understands that schools do many things to improve and that the process of school turnaround and improvement 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 CS schools to organize with stakeholders toward a vision to ensure all students have an opportunity to succeed.

OSSE believes if LEAs, in partnership with school leaders, educators, parents, the community, and other stakeholders, conduct a meaningful **Needs Assessment** and **Resource Equity Analysis** …

And use them to design a strategic **School Improvement Plan** driven by urgency for student outcomes and a commitment to continuous improvement and ongoing engagement …

Then, together DC will dramatically improve student outcomes in our lowest performing schools, accelerating progress faster for students furthest behind.

All local education agencies (LEAs) with CS schools identified based on performing at the bottom 5 percent on the School Transparency and Reporting (STAR) Framework (known as CS1) are eligible for *Investment in Schools* (1003) grant funding. The *Investment in Schools* grant provides an opportunity for each of DC's lowest performing schools to work with their communities to urgently improve educational outcomes for students. OSSE anticipates that a maximum of 10 schools will be identified as CS1 schools and will be eligible to receive the *Investment in Schools* grant. For each CS school identified, LEAs must complete a Needs Assessment and a School Improvement Plan. LEAs with at least one CS school and more than one school overall in the LEA must also complete a Resource Equity Analysis. All three must be completed using required templates provided by OSSE. All CS1 schools that meet the standards established in the templates will receive funding.[1]

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[1] ESEA 111(d) requires for each CS school, LEAs complete a Needs Assessment, Resource Equity Analysis (if applicable), and School Improvement Plan. CS1 schools and their LEAs are required to utilize OSSE's templates. LEAs with CS2 schools may submit an alternative template to OSSE review for and approval by Feb. 28, 2019, prior to submission by May 31, 2019.

School Improvement Plan Template Overview

To provide guidance and flexibility, OSSE is naming three critical categories - **People**, **Instruction,** and **Structures** that School Improvement Plans will address and *Investment in Schools* grant funding will be available to support. School Improvement Plans 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 School Improvement Plan must start by describing overall vision and goals for the school; explain specific strategies related to people, instruction, and structures; incorporate how the school will determine whether the plan is having its intended outcomes; and describe a process for continuous stakeholder involvement, which will include public documentation, engagement, and reporting.

School Improvement Plans 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.[2] 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 or programs that have **evidence** to show that they are effective at producing results and improving outcomes when implemented. The kind of evidence described in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) has generally been produced through formal studies and research. Under ESSA, there are four tiers, or levels, of evidence:

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.

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[2] See https://ohr.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ohr/publication/attachments/FINAL%20REGULATIONS%20-%20October%202014.pdf.

CS schools applying for *Investment in Schools* (1003) are required to have strong, moderate, or promising evidence (Tiers 1–3) to support them. All other programs under Titles I–IV may use Tiers 1–4.

For more information on how to identify and implement evidence-based practices under ESSA, see [Massachusetts Turnaround Practices Field Guide](#) and the [What Works Clearinghouse](#).

Schools Implementing a Schoolwide Program

To reduce burden and avoid duplicative efforts, schools implementing a schoolwide program under Title I, Part A may use this template to meet the requirement of preparing a comprehensive schoolwide 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

LEAs applying for *Investment in Schools* grant funds must upload completed templates for each school into the [Enterprise Grants Management System](#) (EGMS) by 3 p.m. on May 31, 2019. LEAs must develop a School Improvement Plan informed by stakeholder engagement for every CS school. LEAs will then provide a work plan and budget aligned to the three critical lever areas in its fiscal year 2020 (FY20) *Investment in Schools* grant application.

Per federal statute, all CS schools must complete a School Improvement Plan. CS1 schools applying for *Investment in Schools* grant funding are required to use this template.

-   For public charter schools, LEAs with CS1 schools not applying for funding or CS2 schools identified for graduation rate should coordinate with the Public Charter School Board (PCSB) on the format for competing the Needs Assessment and School Plan. School Improvement Plans must be approved by the school/LEA and submitted to PCSB for approval by May 31, 2019.

-   For DCPS, CS2 schools identified based on graduation rate may use this template or may submit an alternative format to OSSE for approval by Feb. 28, 2019. The School Plan must be approved by the school and LEA prior to final submission of materials to OSSE by May 31, 2019.

LEA Name: DCPS   **School Name:** Cardozo EC

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:

- How this vision was informed by the process of completing a Needs Assessment including review of a Resource Equity Analysis, if applicable.
- 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.
- Three to five overarching school improvement goals to advance the school's vision. Identify specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (S.M.A.R.T.) school improvement goals. Overarching school improvement goals must focus on student outcomes, not on adult actions. These should include short- and long-term targets tied to specific STAR Framework metrics as well as other potential leading indicators (inputs and/or outputs).
- If applicable, a description of what other programs are consolidated within the school's schoolwide program (e.g., other federal funds or local funds). Please list the specific program being consolidated within the schoolwide program.

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 overall vision.

Internal Engagement Process:
At Cardozo Education Campus, a thorough needs assessment process was conducted that utilized multiple sources of qualitative and quantitative data to identify key trends as they relate to people, instruction, and structures. The DCPS Data Systems and Strategy team compiled data across numerous indicators over three years and shared with the school leaders. An external partner (Turnaround For Children, or TFC) conducted staff interviews and observations using a standardized and research-based rubric to learn more about each school's culture of achievement.

The DCPS Continuous Improvement (CI) Specialist led an extensive day-long site visit that included classroom observations, teacher interviews, leadership reflections and interviews, and data review. The visit was attended by central office support staff, including representatives of different curriculum

content offices and the Instructional Superintendent. The DCPS Design and Innovation team interviewed students to discover information around their hopes and needs from the school.

The school finance team conducted the required Resource Equity Analysis to examine Fiscal Year 2018 school-level expenditures and found that per-pupil expenditures at Comprehensive Support schools were not consistently higher or lower than the average of non-CS schools. We believe this may be due to 3 major factors:

- **The STAR framework and Comprehensive Staffing Model use different inputs:** DCPS allocates school budgets using the Comprehensive Staffing Model (CSM). CSM allocation formulas are informed by enrollment (e.g., 1 Assistant Principal for every 400 students), student demographics (e.g., 1 ELL teacher for every 17 ELL students), specialty programs (e.g., 1 IB coordinator per IB program), as well as ensuring a floor of programming and resources at all schools regardless of size or need (e.g., every school receives an administrative aide). The STAR framework is informed largely by performance outcomes and school environment measures. Because the CSM and STAR ratings are informed by different inputs, it is possible that a school performing well on the STAR framework received significant funding to due to its demographics and programming, and vice versa.
- **Adjustment for student demographics:** The per-pupil expenditures reported in our Resource Equity Analysis is straight per-pupil expenditures (divided by enrollment). We expected that need-adjusted per-pupil expenditures may more accurately represent equitable per-pupil expenditures.
- **Budget allocation versus expenditures:** School expenditures may differ from allocated budgets due to actual teacher salaries, vacancies schools have throughout the year, and differential teacher compensation through IMPACT bonuses. DCPS is required to budget based on a district-wide average teacher salary, but schools may employ a teacher force that is higher or lower cost than the average salary, as well as maintain vacancies during the school year, leading to expenditures that are higher or lower than budget allocations.

When compared to Fiscal Year 2018 (School Year 2017-2018) expenditures for other secondary schools, Cardozo has per pupil expenditures slightly higher than the average for DCPS secondary schools. The school houses an International Academy that focuses on the needs of English Language Learners, so additional resources are devoted to this program focus. Additionally, the school supports grades 6-12, so staffing needs are greater to meet the scheduling requirements of both a middle school model and high school model. DCPS is committed to continually increasing the investment for Cardozo to support the targeted intervention planning and implementation as part of the school improvement strategy.

Ahead of the next budget development season, DCPS is conducting a series of equity analyses internally and with outside partners to inform both FY21 and FY22 changes to our funding model. Potential topics for prioritization include specialty program allocations, budget assistance allocations, as well as applying the Resource Equity Analysis to previous fiscal years. For Fiscal Year 2020, Comprehensive Support Schools received additional funding during budget development. For School Year 2019-2020, DCPS will be making changes to IMPACTPlus (add-on bonus for high need schools) to better align to the STAR framework status.

External Engagement Process:
Community members were invited to two different engagement forums and invited to complete surveys to share their desires for the school and to identify areas in which the school should improve. In order to get robust feedback from the Cardozo community, DCPS and PAVE (Parents Amplifying Voices in Education) partnered to conduct community feedback sessions in which participants shared their thoughts and hopes for Cardozo in a group discussion.

During the first community feedback session, 21 participants (one family member, five teachers, five staff, and 10 participants who did not disclose their relationships to the school) shared their ideas and priorities for how they'd like to see the school improve. The Principal presented relevant data, discussed the implications of being identified as a Comprehensive Support Type 1 school, and parents and other stakeholders were engaged in focus groups to share their experiences and hopes for the school. The group discussion was guided by a set of questions that was developed in partnership with DCPS, PAVE, and the school principal. These questions were centered on the types of supports Cardozo would need in order to make improvements and which types of school transformation models would fit best for the school. The second community feedback session focused on Cardozo's Connected Schools and targeted intervention strategies. Led by the Principal, the community provided feedback on the types of interventions they'd like access to as part of their Connected Schools work. During the second community feedback session, 16 participants (seven family members, five community members, and four staff) shared their ideas.

A total of 66 surveys were collected from the Cardozo Education Campus community between February 12, 2019 and February 22, 2019. Surveys were administered at the community feedback session, as well as through other various channels, including email and school outreach. Six surveys were collected at the in-person community feedback session. The school distributed and collected another fifty-five surveys, and five were collected online. The majority of the respondents were teachers. In addition, respondents were associated with students across a variety of grade levels.

Plan Development:
The DCPS Continuous Improvement specialist compiled information from all of these sources and developed a report that was presented to the DCPS Senior Management team and the school leader. Information contained within this needs assessment report was used to determine that Cardozo Education Campus would receive targeted intervention in the following areas: Shared Leadership and Culture of Achievement.

Once the needs assessment was completed, the Principal worked with the school-based team to develop a three-year School Improvement Plan that established a vision and goals and mapped out strategies, action steps, and indicators of success. In developing the plan, the Principal received support from the Instructional Superintendent, the DCPS curriculum coaches, and members of the CI Team. The Principal then submitted the plan to the DCPS CI Team. Information from the Principal's three-year plan was used to develop this document. As more student achievement data becomes available with the end of the 2018-2019 school year, Cardozo will continue to refine strategies and actions to align with data. The plan will also be updated as needs change and progress emerges throughout implementation. The Principal of Cardozo will be able to provide further details around actions that emerge throughout the course of the three years upon request.

Scope and Sequence:
During Year 1, the school will restructure teams and committees to engage with multiple stakeholders in order to share ownership of school actions. Shifts will be made towards conscious discipline practices that leverage social and emotional strategies. Lesson planning development will be tailored towards student outcomes and data driven instruction.

In Year 2, established teams and committees will be fully integrated into the school's decision-making process. Various venues and tools will be utilized to maintain open communication with families and community members. Teachers will build upon planning practices to adapt lessons to include rigorous tasks that are student-led and they will implement student-specific intervention strategies.

In Year 3, measures of impact will continue to be tracked. Based on the data, systems and supports will be revised to meet newly identified needs and structures will be created to sustain improvements with fidelity after the third year.

School Level Vision and Goals:
The vision of Cardozo High School is to create a school atmosphere that engenders educational excellence through exceptional teaching and learning, a safe and effective learning environment, and active participation of parents and community.

In alignment with that vision, over the course of the next three years, achievement targets could include:

Middle School
- Increase PARCC 4+/MSAA 3+ achievement in ELA from the SY17-18 baseline of 15% to 33% by the end of year three (annual increase of at least 6%)
- Increase PARCC 4+/MSAA 3+ achievement in Math from the SY17-18 baseline of 8% to 26% by the end of year three (annual increase of at least 6%)
- Increase In-Seat Attendance rate from the SY17-18 baseline of 82% to 91% by the end of year three (annual increase of at least 3%)
- Increase ACCESS growth rate from the SY17-18 baseline of 15% to 29% by the end of year three (annual increase of at least 4.5%)

High School
- Increase PARCC 4+/MSAA 3+ achievement in ELA from the SY17-18 baseline of 10% to 28% by the end of year three (annual increase of at least 6%)
- Increase PARCC 4+/MSAA 3+ achievement in Math from the SY17-18 baseline of 1% to 19% by the end of year three (annual increase of at least 6%)
- Increase 4-Year graduation rate from the SY17-18 baseline of 58% to 64% by the end of year three (annual increase of at least 2%)
- Increase In-Seat Attendance rate from the SY17-18 baseline of 73% to 76% by the end of year three (annual increase of at least 1%)
- Increase ACCESS growth rate from the SY17-18 baseline of 47% to 53% by the end of year three (annual increase of at least 2%)

Critical Categories

Note: OSSE funding and resources are designed to focus on highest leverage areas, thus this School Improvement Plan template focuses on how the school will undertake interventions and supports in the categories of People, Instruction, and Structures. Schools are also welcome to share other strategies planned.

People

When schools are experiencing low student outcomes, adults in the building also need supports and interventions to institute change. Through attention to this area, schools will identify the talent strategies that will be utilized to address gaps and meet identified goals.

In a narrative, explain: What is the school's theory of action around people? What changes do you plan to take to your approach to the talent in your building – leadership and educators – to achieve the coherent and ambitious 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 may include how your school is:

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

The narrative must include how your school is:

- Planning to ensure it will have effective leadership over the next three 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 are in need of support to improve
- Selecting strong, moderate, or promising evidence-based strategy(ies)
- Determining strategy(ies) based on themes from the Needs Assessment to meet projected short- and-long term goals

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Key Needs:
Within the needs assessment, it was identified that there were mixed perspectives from stakeholders as it pertains to the quality of school engagement and the community. ELL and SPED students had lower achievement and graduation rates than their peers. While past efforts have been made to recruit and develop highly effective teachers, recent retention data showed that roughly a third of the faculty had left Cardozo since the previous school year (this includes all and highly-effective teachers). The needs assessment also identified that teachers did not consistently implement rigorous instruction that was grounded in student needs. PARCC performance and 4-Year graduation rates have improved but are still well below the district average. Overall enrollment has steadily decreased due to loss of students in the high school.

Strategies to Develop People:
Two new assistant principals will be funded using 1003 funds. The addition of an Assistant Principal of Literacy and an Assistant Principal of Math is aligned to Practice #1: Leadership, Shared Responsibility, and Professional Collaboration (2016 Massachusetts Turnaround Field Guide, p. 3). Such staff members "are actively monitoring and assessing the implementation and impact of key improvement strategies, use of resources, classroom instructional practices, and nonacademic supports on student achievement." Furthermore, additional instructional leaders "Build teachers' instructional and organizational capacity to meet the needs of all students", a strategy outlined in Turnaround Practice 2: Intentional Practices for Improving Instruction (p. 37).

Cardozo will also partner with CT3 to provide PD and teacher training that builds school capacity through improved pedagogy and transforms classrooms by supporting the effective creation of classroom cultures that drive academic excellence for all students. The CT3 partnership will support the creation of "shared behavioral expectations that support student learning" (2016 Massachusetts Turnaround Field Guide, Practice #4 School Climate and Culture). CT3 professional developing and coaching will ensure that "administrators and teachers have clearly established and actively reinforce a set of behavioral expectations and practices that supports students' learning and efforts to increase student achievement" (p. 3).

The Principal will continue to receive coaching from the Instructional Superintendent and specialized support and attention from DCPS content offices. Within the school, the Principal will foster distributive leadership through the Academic Leadership Team, which consists of department/grade level chairs and other teacher leaders. Instructional coaches at the school will receive coaching and support from the DCPS curriculum specialist assigned to support the school.

Teachers will continue to receive personalized coaching and support from LEAP leaders in their respective content areas. Additionally, the DCPS IMPACT evaluation system is based upon five essential research-based best practices. Teachers receive feedback and support from their Administrators through this system in accordance with their respective evaluation schedules. Additionally, teachers receive frequent informal feedback via informal classroom walkthrough observations conducted by the Administrators and other members of the school leadership team.

Cardozo's Communities in School partner will fill the role of a Connected Schools Manager. DC Public Schools is implementing a Community Schools model that has been branded "Connected Schools" to align with related efforts of other DC Government agencies. The "Connected Schools" model will utilize the key pillars often associated with community schools initiatives: integrated student supports, expanded learning opportunities, family and community engagement, and collaborative leadership and practices (Oakes, Maier, & Daniel, 2017). In New Haven, CT, a quasi experimental study found that students who had direct case management through Communities in Schools (a nationally recognized community schools partner) after three years of implementation, high schools significantly increased their graduation rates, and elementary schools significantly increased their attendance rates relative to comparison schools (Somers & Haider, 2017)*

*Somers, M., & Haider, Z. (2017). Using integrated student supports to keep kids in school: A quasi- experimental evaluation of Communities In Schools. New York, NY: MDRC.

Connections to Instruction and Structures:
At Cardozo, the Connected Schools Manager will cultivate stronger partnerships between external partners and DC Government agencies and parents and teachers will receive supports they need to address community and home stress factors that affect the culture of achievement and academics at Cardozo. The manager will also facilitate structural "bridges" to link community partnerships with the school by engaging with willing and capable partners to support mindfulness programs, student incentives, and other aspects related to improving the school culture.

A partnership with CT3 will provide additional personnel to work with Cardozo in building the instructional capacity of teachers and improve classroom culture. CT3 utilizes real-time coaching as part of their model where feedback is directly provided to teachers as they facilitate lessons. They will work with school-level coaches so that practices can be continued after the partnership. School leaders will also be supported on developing effective structures to sustain transformative improvements.

With two new assistant principals of instruction, teachers will receive additional support through coaching and observation cycles to develop their capacity to deliver effective instruction. Additionally, these leaders will allow the principal to more evenly distribute responsibilities and oversight of the middle school systems and structures.

Cardozo will provide targeted supports to build the instructional capacity of all faculty and staff, including those that work with ELL and SPED students. Instructional practices will be normed through the regular addition of International Academy and Inclusion teachers in professional development and planning sessions with their mainstream peers; effective ELL strategies will be shared with non-International Academy teachers so that students receive similar supports as they transition from program to program.

Connections to District Supports:
In addition to the school specific strategies above, DCPS is implementing the following strategies to develop the capacity of teachers and staff:

- Under the Connected Schools Initiative, each school will receive a **Connected Schools Manager**. This individual will work with school leadership and stakeholders to determine needs and coordinate supports as they relate to trauma-informed services to support students and the broader school community.
- Each school will receive **two Urban Teachers residents**. The teacher residents will work alongside experienced staff members to develop their skills in a residency type model. The Urban Teachers residency supports "sustained and stable staffing", a key condition of a successful school turnaround identified in the 2016 Massachusetts Turnaround Field Guide (p. 7). The residency will support the school's ongoing efforts to recruit and retain high-quality educators, thus "contributing to teachers' willingness to work intensively and deeply on core problems of practice and to fully implement a consistent and aligned system of instruction and assessments.
- DCPS will continue to implement the **LEAP model of job-embedded professional development** at all CS 1 schools. Under this model, teachers are supported by dedicated LEAP content leaders and receive differentiated professional development and coaching related to their demonstrated areas of need.

All of the strategies outlined above are aligned to the following DCPS Capital Commitment goals:
- Double the percent of students who are college and career ready and triple the students of at-risk and students of color who are college and career ready
- 85% of students graduate within 4 years, and 90% graduate within 4 or 5 years
- 100% of schools are highly rated or are improving

Instruction

We must ensure that all of our students are prepared for success in college and 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 supports and interventions do you plan to undertake and how they are related to your school's identified needs?

The narrative may include how your school is:

- Increasing the rigor of curricular materials
- Instituting specific academic programs, supports, and interventions
- Implementing instructional methods or other activities to improve the performance of all students or specific groups of students

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 strategy(ies)
- Determining strategy(ies) based on themes from the Needs Assessment to meet projected short and long term goals

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Key Needs:
The needs assessment identified that during classroom observations, observers noted trends such as students not able to fully engage with grade-level content and teachers inconsistently using best practices. Students described frustrations with the lack of rigor in their classes and teachers shared how the LEAP model, as implemented at the school, did not provide support for specialized instruction. Highlighted in conversations with faculty and staff, Cardozo saw improvements in instructional practices as a result of implementing the Understanding by Design (UBD) model. PARCC performance has slightly increased, though it still remains well below the district average. Cardozo's 4-Year graduation rate has slightly decreased in the past three years. Highlighting inequalities in student achievement, the needs assessment detailed how ELL and SPED students lagged behind their peers in achievement.

Strategies to Develop Instruction:
Cardozo will focus on three academic strategies: data driven instruction, UBD model of planning, and lesson tasks that encourage productive struggle. During the first year, the school will work with central content owners to develop professional development seminars and coaching cycles that focus on Stage 2 of UBD planning. Embedded in the seminars, teachers will learn to incorporate tasks that have students perform the cognitive lift of the lesson with the teacher acting as a facilitator. Driving all of this will be data conferences between administrators, coaches, and teachers to guide adjustments to instructional practices and data engagement with students and families will be implemented. Attention will be devoted to increasing staff capacity at the school to accelerate student achievement with targeted populations, including ELL and SPED students. Subsequent years will include coaching on successful implementation of the strategies and additional seminars to bridge skill-gaps as they appear among teachers. Thereafter, data analysis of current and previous year's data will be utilized to revise and remodel supports for teachers.

Cluster-based support personnel from Central Office (Continuous Improvement, Math and ELA curriculum leads, and Special Education content specialists) will provide wrap-around support as Cardozo implements improvement strategies. Cardozo has developed a three-year action plan that has taken key strategies and broken them down into subsequent action steps to be implemented over the

next three years. This plan builds upon foundations which have already been established and scales new strategies over the next three years. As the instructional plan is meant to be a living document, adjustments will be made as student data changes. Interested stakeholders may contact the school for a more detailed annual map of the school's key instructional actions.

Connections to People and Structures:
Successful implementation of targeted interventions will require coaches/mentors to have collective capacity to support teachers. To accommodate teachers of varying learners (e.g., ELL and SPED), opportunities will be made available for them to plan and train with their traditional classroom peers so instructional practices can be normed across campus.

Connections to District Supports:
As a district, DCPS is implementing the following strategies to develop the capacity of teachers and staff to improve instruction:

- Under the Connected Schools Initiative, the Connected Schools manager will **coordinate external supports, which will support increased time for school leaders to focus on instruction**. With improved external coordination, it is believed that students will more readily receive the socio-emotional supports they need and therefore readiness for learning will improve.
- Each school will receive support from Urban Teachers in the form of teacher residents. **The teacher residents will work alongside experienced staff members to develop their skills in a residency type model.** Support from Urban Teachers will allow each school to provide more intensive supports and residents will develop skills teachers need to effectively meet the needs of students in socio-economically stressed communities.
- DCPS will continue to implement the LEAP model of job-embedded professional development at all CS 1 schools. Under this model, teachers are supported by dedicated LEAP content leaders and receive **differentiated professional development and coaching related to their demonstrated areas of need**. LEAP leaders will support teachers in the use of district-supported instructional resources that are aligned to Common Core Standards.

All of the strategies outlined above are aligned to the following DCPS Capital Commitment goals:
- Double the percent of students who are college and career ready and triple the students of at-risk and students of color who are college and career ready
- 85% of students graduate within 4 years, and 90% graduate within 4 or 5 years
- 100% of schools are highly rated or are improving

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 undertake and how are they related to your school's identified needs?

The narrative may include how your school is:

- Using multi-year design partners

- Configuring a school (e.g., dividing into grade-based academies, other internal restructuring and autonomies)
- Reorganizing school time and/or calendar
- Leading other structural changes designed to improve outcomes for students

The narrative must include how your school is:

- Selecting strong, moderate, or promising [evidence-based](#) strategy(ies)
- Determining strategy(ies) based on themes from the Needs Assessment to meet projected short- and long-term goals

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Key Needs:
For the 2019-2020 school year, Cardozo will have a new principal. To minimize the negative effects of a leadership change and maintain current successes, structures will need to be instituted for the new leader to integrate with Cardozo and the community. Graduation rates have increased, though are still below district averages. Enrollment in the middle school has increased steadily in the past three years, though recent enrollment loss in the high school has resulted in a net drop in overall enrollment. From engagement sessions and surveys, some stakeholders described low levels of engagement between school and home. In interviews, students described tensions between the International Academy and mainstream student populations.

Strategies to Improve Structures:
Cardozo will proactively support at-risk students with targeted and comprehensive interventions. To acclimate students to a new environment, community building and transition plans will be created for all 8th graders and middle school International Academy students will have opportunities to engage with their high-school peers to encourage camaraderie. When working with SPED and ELL students transitioning to new programs, stakeholder feedback, data reviews, and readiness evaluations will be utilized to evaluate the transition and map out paths for student success. Cardozo will replace punitive and counterproductive practices in school discipline with those that address the social and emotional wellbeing of students.

Cardozo will restructure the Academic Leadership Team (ALT). ALT meetings will be held monthly and open to all faculty and staff with members leading new structural changes. Engaging with external stakeholders, communication will be made through various methods and translated to reflect families home language. Leveraging communication to increase participation in school organizations, Cardozo will involve the Local School Advisory Team (LSAT) and Parent Teacher Association in school decision processes. A Family Engagement Leadership Team (FELT) will be created to provide professional development to teachers and staff along with scheduling events for community members to maintain open communication between school and home.

Connections to People and Instruction:
To ensure equitable representation, Cardozo will strive to have representation from all academies on committees and teams such as the ALT. With diverse memberships, these groups can better identify gaps in desired outcomes internally (i.e., academics) and externally (i.e., community engagement) and develop targeted actions to address concerns. Efforts will also be made to ensure that all middle/high school, mainstream, and international academy students have equal opportunities to access all school

activities and resources. In building the capacity of all stakeholders, The Connected Schools Manager will work with the school to schedule family workshops in collaboration with community partners. Targeted supports for students will provide instructional benefits as resources are used to reduce barriers for students furthest from achievement.

Connections to District Supports:
As a district, DCPS is implementing the following strategies to develop the capacity of structures at the school:

- Under the Connected Schools Initiative, the Connected Schools manager will coordinate external supports, which will support increased time for school leaders to focus on instruction. With **improved external coordination**, it is believed that students will more readily receive the socio-emotional supports they need. The Connected Schools structure at each school will be supported by members of the DCPS Office of Family and Public Engagement.
- Each school will receive support from Urban Teachers in the form of teacher residents. The teacher residents will work alongside experienced staff members to develop their skills in a residency type model. **Increased staffing will allow more experienced teachers time to engage in instructional leadership roles**.
- DCPS will continue to implement the LEAP model of job-embedded professional development at all CS1 schools. Under this model, teachers are supported by dedicated LEAP content leaders and receive differentiated professional development and coaching related to their demonstrated areas of need. **LEAP is an integrated part of the school schedule that provides teachers protected time at least once a week to collaborate and share instructional best practices.**
- Each school will continue to have an **ALT** that is composed of teacher leaders and school administrators that will engage in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the annual Comprehensive School Plan. **This team will also routinely engage in data cycles to maintain a pulse on instruction and engaged in shared decision making to better distribute leadership in the school**.
- Each school will have an **LSAT** that will bring together external stakeholders that will act as an **advisory group** for school leaders as they engage in broader discussions around budget and school strategy.

All of the strategies outlined above are aligned to the DCPS Capital Commitment goals:
- Double the percent of students who are college and career ready and triple the students of at-risk and students of color who are college and career ready
- 100% of schools are highly rated or are improving
- 100% of students feel loved, challenged, and prepared
- 90% of students re-enroll

Goals and Continuous Improvement

In a narrative, explain the routines for how the school will determine whether the School Improvement Plan 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 School Improvement Plan 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 School Improvement Plan
- 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 Engagement:
At Cardozo, the DCPS LEAP model is continuously implemented, which allows for ongoing, job-embedded professional development through seminars and intentional teacher practice with feedback. Additionally, Cardozo engages in a continuous improvement cycle through the development and ongoing evaluation of the Comprehensive School Plan (CSP). CSPs are formally reviewed at least twice per year to evaluate progress towards key actions and course is adjusted if needed based upon data collected. The Cardozo Academic Leadership Team will meet regularly to review instructional trends from across the school and develops responses to identified trends.

The DCPS Continuous Improvement team has developed a common planning template for all CS1 schools to use that maps out key strategies, action steps, and progress monitoring benchmarks across the district's "Pathway to Excellence" model. The tool allows schools to plan in a more intentional way and the LSAT and ALT are involved in the development and monitoring of the plan. Additionally, DCPS creates public-facing summarized versions of the CSP and posts them online where they are available to any member of the general public.

The DCPS Continuous Improvement team will conduct all monitoring activities for CS1 schools. The DCPS Continuous Improvement team will continue to facilitate bi-annual CSP/SIP review meetings that involve internal and external stakeholders. During these meetings, data is reviewed, and strategies and actions are adjusted as warranted by the data.

Upon completion of the bi-annual review, the DCPS Continuous Improvement team will develop a brief presentation that highlights evidence of how strategies are supporting progress towards the three-year plan goals, and what next steps are necessary to enhance progress. School leaders may use this tool to further plan with their ALT, and/or apprise the staff and external stakeholders of progress through forums such as LSAT or PTO meetings.

External Engagement:
The Local School Advisory Team (LSAT) is composed of teachers, parents, and other community members and will meet monthly. During LSAT meetings, school leaders share progress updates with external stakeholders. The ALT is an internal stakeholder body that engages in reviewing progress and making key decisions in conjunction with the Principal. In addition to regular meetings with the ALT and LSAT, leadership will have forums with the staff and community to discuss and address concerns, such as parent/teacher/partner concerns. These meetings will allow for increased parental input and community member voice in school-wide decision making.

As the plan is implemented, the Principal will regularly engage with the LSAT and ALT and keep them apprised of plan progress and consult these groups regarding updates which may be made. Updates regarding plan progress and adjustments will be made at minimum at the middle and end of each school year. The Principal may choose to use deliverables, such as those produced by the DCPS CI Team mentioned earlier, to apprise external stakeholder groups of progress. Additionally, the LSAT is engaged in the budget development process each year, and this will allow the LSAT opportunity to provide input regarding the use of school financial resources to support the three-year plan's goals and strategies.

Sustainability:
The Connected Schools model will enhance school capacity to work with external community partners in order to further the advancement of the school. Additionally, schools are funded based on the annual Needs Assessment process. Available and needed resources are looked at against initial local school budget allocations and made sure that additional items on 1003 application are supplementing initial baseline allocations. With the investments in structures and professional development, we aim to develop sustainable capacity that can advance improvement upon the expiration of funding. We will continue to think about sustainability as schools implement their three-year plan and continually adjust with annual budget cycle as we approach year 3.

Looking Ahead

An LEA applying for the *Investment in Schools* grant for its CS1 school(s) will provide a work plan and budget aligned to the strategies outlined for People, Instruction, and Structures in its FY20 *Investment in Schools* grant application. The application will require additional detail on:

- The proposed cost for each selected strategy
- The funds to be used from the *Investment in Schools* grant and other sources to support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan
- Timeline for implementation
- Plans for sustainability