

Guide to Establishing Your School & LEA Teams for Accelerating Progress

School Team for Accelerating Progress (STAP)

The purpose of a **School Team for Accelerating Progress (STAP)** is to conduct a Needs Assessment (NA) and then develop, implement, monitor, and evaluate the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

STAPs can serve as key change agents in school improvement, which is grounded in the theory of action that those in a school who are closest to students know the needs of students best and therefore are best positioned to make and implement recommendations for improvement. Members of the team will bring their respective expertise as well as their knowledge of evidence-based best practices that may work best in their contexts. Distributing leadership to include multiple staff members leading strands of the work across a school can facilitate implementation of initiatives and reforms by increasing buy-in among key actors and stakeholders and, in turn, become an opportunity to shift from transactional to transformational impact.

STAP Responsibilities and Tasks

- Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment and develop a school improvement plan with the involvement of parents, staff, and other members of the community.
- Review and analyze the domains from OSSE's *Accelerate DC* Framework for Rapid School Improvement; the DC Report Card accountability framework/other school data; school performance history; community and neighborhood context; school team; school instruction; and school resources & operations to inform the needs assessment and school improvement plan.
- Engage stakeholders to design and implement stakeholder engagement strategies to solicit input from other members of the community at key points in the process.
- Analyze trends and data patterns from various sources to evaluate and prioritize the root causes of key challenges, determine student achievement goals, and identify strategies with milestones for realizing those goals.
- Monitor implementation of the plan throughout the designation period and make adjustments as needed based upon progress and roadblocks along the way to support continued pursuit of the student achievement goals.

Requirements for STAP Members

1. **Consistent Participation:** Team members should plan to attend no less than 75% of planned school improvement-related meetings; school leaders (or their designee) will need to attend all school improvement-related meetings.
2. **Decision-Making Authority:** The STAP must include the individual(s) who oversee instructional design, strategic planning and resource allocation for the school in order to drive executive decision-making.
3. **Size and Composition of Team:** Given the parameters surrounding the make-up of a STAP, teams should plan to have a team of no less than three (3) members and no more than seven (7) members. Teams must include principals and other leaders with the decision-making authority to

drive the development and implementation of the plan. Schools are also strongly encouraged to include perspectives representing teachers, parents, and if a high school, students.

Additional Guidance

Composition

- Members should be representative of the school community they serve in terms of race, class, ethnicity, linguistic and cultural background, disability, sexual orientation, documentation status, and other community-specific factors.
- Members should exhibit the following qualities: Growth mindset, inclusive, solutions-oriented, analytical, collaborative, active listener, empathetic, action-driven.
- Members should exhibit knowledge of students and families served by schools, knowledge of community assets and needs, expertise in an area applicable to school improvement including but not limited to school-specific programmatic experience, student health and wellness, fiscal operations, legal process, and implementation science.

Strategies for Recruitment, Selection & Participation

- School leaders may want to consider ways to hear the voices or perspectives that have historically been underrepresented in the decision-making process and design a selection process in which peers select members in a fair and equitable manner.
- School leaders may want to ensure that recruitment does not exclude people whose first language is not English, who may lack regular access to computers and/or the internet, or who may feel unwelcomed in more traditional public forums.
- School leaders may also want to consider ways to remove barriers to participation, for example:
 - Offering childcare during the meeting;
 - Leveraging technology and providing a virtual meeting option;
 - Translation services be made available as needed; and
 - Scheduling meetings at times and locations accessible for all team members.

Local Education Agency (LEA) Team for Accelerating Progress (LTAP)

The purpose of the **LEA Team for Accelerating Progress (LTAP)** is to systematically examine performance gaps within the LEA and identify, understand, and prioritize the needs that must be addressed to improve outcomes for all students through completing the Resource Allocation Review (RAR) and providing support and accountability to schools for the development and implementation of strong School Improvement Plans (SIPs).

Similar to the School Team for Accelerating Progress (STAP), LTAPs can serve as key change agents in school improvement. Members of the team will bring their respective expertise to help district and school staff understand how the various components of their local educational system interact. The LTAP will complete the LEA's Resource Allocation Review (RAR) as appropriate, and support identified schools to analyze trends and data patterns from various sources to determine student achievement goals, support planning for strategies and activities related to school improvement goals, and monitor and adjust, as

needed, strategies and activities related to school improvement goals based on quantitative and qualitative data.

LTAP Responsibilities and Tasks

- Complete the Resource Allocation Review (RAR), if applicable⁴, and share the completed RAR with designated schools to inform their School Improvement Plan (SIP) development.
- Provide support to designated schools as they review and analyze data as it relates to the ***Accelerate DC*** framework for school improvement, as part of their Needs Assessment (NA).
- Review and give feedback to individual designated schools on their Needs Assessment (NA) and School Improvement Plan (SIP).
- *For Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) schools*, provide sole approval of the school’s SIP and monitor their progress. (TSI schools are not required to have OSSE approval of their SIP).
- Monitor and evaluate progress on SIP implementation, including monitoring and evaluating each school’s progress towards achieving SIP goals and implementation of evidence-based strategies.
- Consider other actions to support designated schools, for example:
 - Plan and strategize on professional development offerings based on each school’s improvement plan goals and needs.
 - Plan and strategize on what technical assistance to provide to schools in designation.
 - Review the annual school budget.
 - Recommend the hiring of school personnel.

Requirements for LTAP Members

1. **Team Representation:** When considering which LEA personnel are best suited to be a part of the LTAP, it is imperative that team members come from divisions that represent the five domains of OSSE’s Framework for Rapid School Improvement and have the expertise to provide technical assistance to a school-based school improvement team. Schools are also strongly encouraged to include perspectives representing teachers, parents, and if a high school, students.
2. **Team Size:** Teams should be large enough to include all areas of needed expertise but not too large to be a working team. As an advisory and support body, this team can be larger than a STAP, but it is recommended that it not exceed 15 members.
3. **Leadership Participation:** Teams must include principals and other leaders with the advisory knowledge to support the development and implementation of the plan.
4. **Budget Authority:** Team members will also need to be positioned to make connections across budget decisions to align overall focus and harness all resources available.
5. **Level of Support:** Based on a school’s level of designation and capacity, LTAP members must be able to plan and map out how they will support a school to conduct a needs assessment and towards meeting their SIP goals.

⁴ All LEAs with a significant number of schools designated as Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CIS-Grad), Intensive Support and Improvement (ISI), Monitored Improvement Status (MIS), or Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) are required to complete the Resource Allocation Review (RAR). A significant number of schools is defined in [DC’s 2022 ESSA State Plan](#) as “for all LEAs with 10 or more of their schools identified for Comprehensive or Targeted Support, or 60 percent of their schools identified for Comprehensive or Targeted Support (whichever is lower)”.

6. Consistent Participation: Team members should plan to attend no less than 75% of planned school improvement-related meetings; LEA leaders within an office directly related to school improvement will need to attend all school improvement-related meetings.

Additional Guidance

School Designation Status

- An LTAP may be required to place a greater emphasis on a school based on the following order of designations level: ISI, CSI, MIS, CSI-Grad, & TSI.

Strategies for Recruitment, Selection, & Participation

- Members are representative of the school community they serve in terms of race, class, ethnicity, linguistic and cultural background, disability, sexual orientation, documentation status, and other community-specific factors.
- LEA leaders may want to consider ways to hear the voices or perspectives that have historically been underrepresented in the decision-making process.