



School Improvement Resource Guide & Supplemental Toolkit

Resources to Support LEAs and Schools with School Improvement Planning

The **Supplemental Toolkit** is a collection of OSSE-created and external resources and supporting documents meant to assist designated schools and their LEAs in completing the Needs Assessment (NA), Resource Allocation Review (RAR), School Improvement Plan (SIP), and submission of an application and budget for the Investment in Schools (IIS) grant. All resources are also available via OSSE’s website: osse.dc.gov/acceleratedc.

For additional support and guidance, schools and LEAs may reach out to OSSE at any point during the planning process and as they complete the required deliverables.

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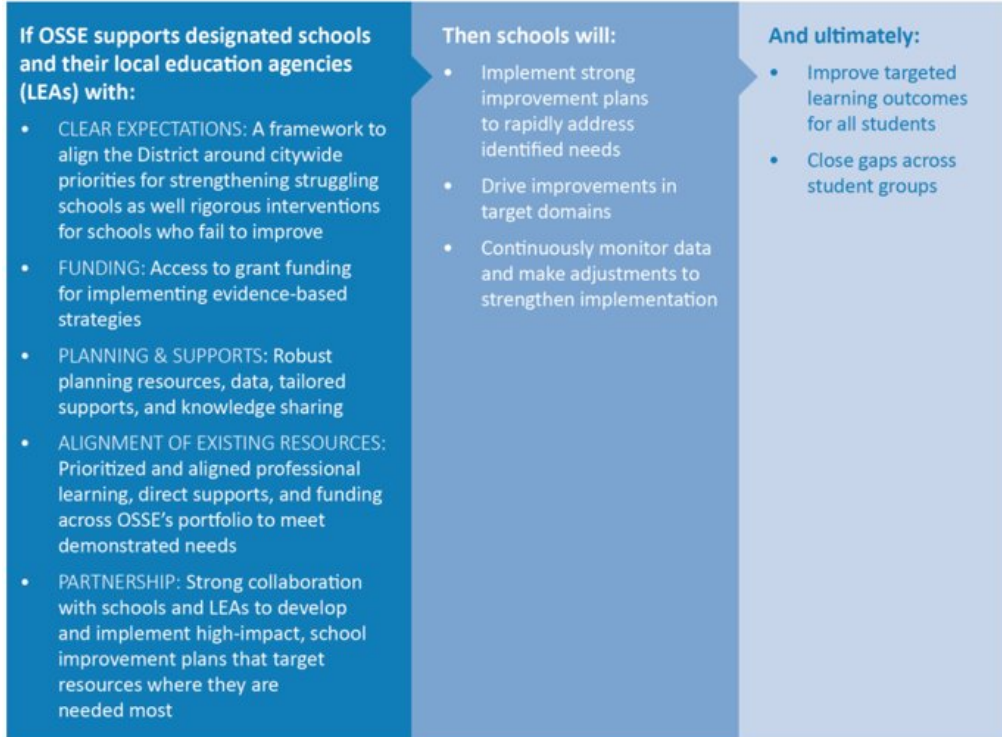
The Accelerate DC Framework

Background

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 – the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) – requires that each state develop a plan to identify its lowest performing schools for support and improvement.¹ To identify schools, ESSA requires states to measure student academic achievement, student growth, progress in achieving English language proficiency, graduation rates, and one or more indicators of school quality and student success that is valid, reliable, and comparable.² Under the [District’s ESSA State Plan \(State Plan\)](#) that was approved by the U.S. Department of Education (USED), the DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) established a federally required state accountability system that assesses the performance of public schools across a number of metrics and indicators aligned to these requirements and tailored to the specific context of the District. In 2022, the accountability system was amended by OSSE and re-approved by USED. The approved accountability system is used to determine the lowest scoring 5% of schools required to receive support and intervention from the state.

The Accelerate DC Framework

OSSE is committed to strengthening the supports and accountability mechanisms in place for the District’s lowest performing schools. *Accelerate DC* represents a new vision and theory of action for school improvement in DC:



¹ Every Student Succeeds Act, 20 U.S.C. § 6311(c)(4)(D) (2024).

² Every Student Succeeds Act, 20 U.S.C. § 6311(c)(4)(B) (2024).

The *Accelerate DC* framework is grounded in five key domains that represent national best practices related to school improvement, adapted for the unique context of the District: (1) transformational leadership, (2) talent development, (3) instructional excellence, (4) a strong school climate and (5) organizational health.

The *Accelerate DC* framework is centered on student outcomes and the guiding principles of equity and continuous improvement:



You can find more information and download the full *Accelerate DC* report on OSSE’s website at: osse.dc.gov/acceleratedc.

Guide to 2024 School Improvement Designation Categories

Background

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) is required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to:

1. Annually calculate accountability scores for public and public charter schools in the District using its accountability system, as approved by the US Department of Education (USED) and State Board of Education (SBOE),
2. Designate the lowest-performing 5 percent of schools for additional supports, and
3. Inform Local Education Agencies (LEAs) of these school designations.

In December 2024, OSSE made designations for the first time using its [2022 ESSA State Plan Amendment](#)³ based on accountability scores from the 2023-24 school year. There are four (4) designation types based on school-wide accountability scores, as well as one (1) designation type for schools that are consistently underperforming for a particular student group. This guide provides an overview of the designation categories as well as requirements for schools designated under each category.

Summary of December 2024 Designation Categories

Designation	Description
Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)	Title I schools that score in the bottom 5% of total number of points on the accountability framework within the same grade span/accountability system level. As in previous years, the lowest-performing 5% of elementary/middle schools and high schools will be calculated separately. Eight (8) elementary/middle schools and two (2) high schools will comprise the lowest-performing 5%.
Comprehensive Support and Improvement – Graduation (CSI-Grad)	High schools where both their 4-year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) and 5-year ACGR fall below 67%.
Intensive Support and Improvement (ISI)	Any school that was designated as CSI in the previous designation cycle, and remains in the lowest performing 5% of schools, as determined by accountability score. This designation is officially a subset of CSI.
Monitored Improvement Status (MIS)	Schools will receive this designation if they were designated as CSI in 2018 and do not have an accountability score in the lowest-performing 5% in 2024, but did not demonstrate improvement in academic achievement by raising ELA and math proficiency on the statewide assessment by at least one percentage point since 2018. Please note that this designation does not apply to schools identified as CSI only in 2022, as the state plan addendum under which those schools were designated did not state the same exit criteria.
Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI)	Schools with a student group accountability score that is at or below the threshold identified for the lowest performing 5% of schools within the same grade span/accountability system for two consecutive years (SY2022-23 and SY2023-24).

³ OSSE previously made school designations in 2018 and 2022, under the District’s original ESSA State Plan and State Plan Addendum, respectively.

Requirements of Designated Schools

Designated schools, with support from their School Team for Accelerating Progress (STAP) and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are required by law to conduct a Needs Assessment (NA) and develop a School Improvement Plan (SIP) inclusive of evidence-based strategies. LEAs, if applicable (see below) must also complete a Resource Allocation Review (RAR) and share it with schools to inform their SIP development. Schools designated as CSI, ISI, and MIS are also requested to submit an Investment in Schools (IIS) grant application and budget. All designated schools are monitored by OSSE. OSSE provides mandatory templates for the NA, RAR, and SIP, ensuring consistency and adherence to federal guidelines.

	CSI	CSI-Grad	ISI	MIS	TSI
Needs Assessment (NA)	X	X	X	X	O
School Improvement Plan (SIP)	X	X	X	X	O
Resource Allocation Review (RAR)*	X	X	X	X	X
Investment in Schools (IIS) Grant Application	X		X	X	
IIS Grant Budget	X		X	X	
Monitoring	Differentiated By Designation Type				

* Completed at the LEA Level and only required by multi-site LEAs who have 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).

O: A needs assessment is encouraged but not required; A school improvement plan is required but does not need to adhere to the OSSE template and is not approved by OSSE.

X: Required to use the OSSE templates and must be approved by OSSE.

Below is a description of each required deliverable:

- **Needs Assessment (NA):** CSI, CSI-Grad, ISI, and MIS-designated schools conduct a comprehensive Needs Assessment, gathering input from stakeholders, reviewing data, and identifying root causes of underperformance.
- **Resource Allocation Review (RAR):** For multi-site LEAs with a significant number of designated schools, OSSE requires a Resource Allocation Review to document expenditures and identify disparities in resource allocation across schools.
- **School Improvement Plan (SIP):** CSI, CSI-Grad, ISI, and MIS-designated schools are required to develop a School Improvement Plan based on their Needs Assessment and Resource Allocation Review. These plans must outline specific, evidence-based strategies for improvement, and are approved by OSSE. For charter schools, the SIP must also be approved by PCSB and the board of the charter LEA.
- **Investment in Schools (IIS) Grant:** CSI, ISI, and MIS-designated submitted an IIS grant application, aligning their budgets with the SIPs and focusing federal funds on the most critical areas of need.
- **Monitoring:** OSSE conducts periodic monitoring of SIP implementation and oversees end-of-year reviews, ensuring that schools adhere to their plans and make progress towards their improvement goals. OSSE offers ongoing technical assistance to LEAs and schools, helping them navigate the requirements, complete their assessments and plans, and effectively utilize the IIS grant funds.

School Designation	SIP Development	SIP Approval	SIP Monitoring
CSI, ISI, and MIS	Schools & LEA	OSSE, PCSB	OSSE
CSI-Grad	Schools & LEA	LEA	LEA
TSI	School	LEA	LEA

Exiting Designations

For schools designated in 2024 and beyond, schools will exit CSI status if they meet all of the following conditions. CSI-designated schools do not exit status just because their accountability score goes up or other school scores go down.

1. The school receives an accountability score higher than the initial cut-point that was used to make designations for CSI in the cycle of their designation;
2. The school receives an accountability score which is higher than the new lowest performing 5% cut-score; and
3. The school increases its rate of students meeting or exceeding expectations on the statewide English language arts (ELA) and math assessments above the respective rates from the year in which the school received its original CSI designation.

In order to exit CSI-Grad-designation status, the school must: (1) increase its 4- and 5-year graduation rates so that at least one is higher than 67% and (2) both rates must not be below the rate when the school was designated for support.

Using the school’s approved SIP, OSSE will support designated schools to address their areas of greatest need as they improve performance to exit designated status.

Questions

For additional resources and questions related to designation categories and OSSE’s school improvement work, please visit osse.dc.gov/acceleratedc.

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.

Suggested Data for Review and Goal Setting

OSSE has developed the following list of potential data sources, organized by each of the five (5) *Accelerate DC* school improvement domains, to support schools with conducting a thorough Needs Assessment (NA) that will in turn inform their development of a School Improvement Plan (SIP). The data below are suggestions; schools may consider additional data sources not listed here.

When conducting the Needs Assessment, the evidence reviewed can be quantitative or qualitative. A school may reference **quantitative** data on metrics the school tracks, like interim assessments, survey data, disciplinary incidents, or attendance. Or the evidence may be **qualitative**, such as feedback received on an activity or observations made about the activity.

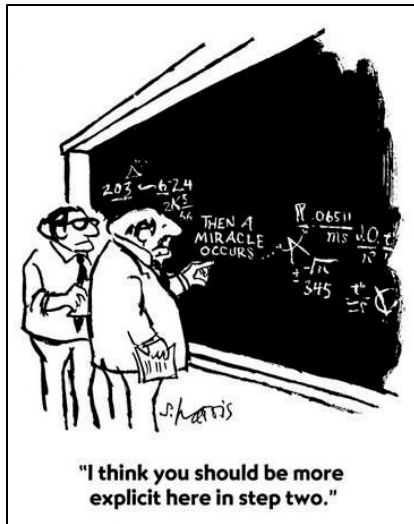
Additionally, data sources may be useful when determining how the school will monitor and measure their progress towards goals as part of the school improvement plan. SMART goals set through the School Improvement Plan (SIP) must be quantitative, so that they can be routinely and objectively monitored by the School Team for Accelerating Progress (STAP), the LEA Team for Accelerating Progress (LTAP) and by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE).

Schools likely already have data on most of the metrics suggested below, but OSSE also recommends that schools view the available data on the [DC School Report Card](#) and [the Educator Talent and Equity Dashboard](#).

Accelerate DC Domain	Suggested Data for Review and Goal Setting
Transformational Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior school improvement identifications and plans, including revisions and progress of those plans • School leader evaluations • Tenure of current leader and prior leaders, coaching and/or other pipeline strategies • Feedback on leaders from teacher, student and caregiver surveys • Routines for feedback from students, parents and educators • Evidence of establishing high expectations for all students
Talent Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom observations • Teacher evaluations • Teacher Attendance • Rates of experience amongst educators • Rate of certification and in-field educators • Rates of vacancies • Retention of effective staff • Student: teacher ratio • Professional development opportunities and routines • Feedback collected on those professional development opportunities • Classroom management routines and evidence • School decision-making routines that involve teachers • Feedback on teachers from student and caregiver surveys

<p>Instructional Excellence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Performance and growth on the statewide assessment in ELA, math, and science ● Performance and growth on the ACCESS assessment ● Interim, formative or benchmark assessments ● Other assessment such as SAT, ACT, AP, IB ● Pre-K Measures: Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) ● Graduation rates ● Promotion rates and credit accumulation ● Drop-out rates ● Quality of curriculum materials ● Evidence-based routines for selecting curriculum materials ● Ninth grade on-track rates ● Dropout rates ● Time allocation to school subjects and key programs in school schedule ● Availability, use and outcomes of evidence-based interventions ● Instructional planning practices, including use of data to inform planning ● Evidence of differentiation in planning and delivery for students ● Social emotional learning, trauma-informed practices
<p>Strong School Climate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chronic absenteeism ● Attendance growth ● School satisfaction as measured in school climate surveys from staff, students, and caregivers ● School satisfaction ● Teacher retention and tenure data ● Incidents of school discipline – exclusionary and restorative justice practices ● Family and parent engagement in the school
<p>Organizational Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Patterns and trends of student enrollment and re-enrollment ● Compliance with DC and federal requirements, including audits, data collection and submission, prior monitoring reports and operational reviews ● Safety and cleanliness routines ● Availability of health care providers (e.g., counseling, nursing staff) ● Health of budget ● Per pupil expenditures ● Additional sources of funding – including federal and local grants, philanthropy ● Availability of appropriate technology ● Partnerships with community organizations ● Health and social services available to students and families ● Availability of after school/ before school learning and co-curricular opportunities ● LEA-level Title IV-A needs assessments ● Title I-A schoolwide program needs assessments and program plan ● School Behavioral Health Workplan and needs assessment ● Language Instruction Education Program plan for English learners

Guide to Developing Milestones



What is a milestone? Milestones help connect the work that we are doing to the strategies and larger goals we seek to accomplish and give us a roadmap that we can use to track our progress. Without milestones, we risk falling prey to the challenge described in this Sidney Harris *The New Yorker* cartoon. Milestones should represent the most important things that need to happen to accomplish a given goal and its supporting strategies.

To develop milestones, focus on discrete accomplishments which demonstrate that you are making progress against your strategy, such as the launch of a program, drafting a new policy, completing initial analysis of a problem, collection of feedback from users or holding an important training. Milestones should focus on specific deliverables with a single, point-in-time end date (e.g., “develop recommendations based on teacher feedback”) as opposed to routine work or points of process (e.g., “ongoing review of

applications”; “Hold quarterly meetings with stakeholders”). Keep the language describing each milestone short and sweet.

How many milestones? You should identify the 2-3 most important deliverables for each strategy to represent your three-year milestones. This means that if there are 3 strategies for a given goal, you would identify 6-9 total milestones for the goal.

Setting start and end dates: The start date of your milestone represents the time when you begin actively working to implement the milestone. The end date of your milestone represents the deadline by which you expect it to be fully complete. Across your milestones for a given strategy, you should generally see a clear progression, or “waterfall,” across both the start and end dates. You should not have the same start or end date for all of your milestones.

When and how to make milestone changes: Plans change. Teams can--and should--request changes to milestones and milestone timelines throughout the year. In regular monthly updates, strategy owners should alert STAPs to changes as need arises.

Sample Milestones

Goal: Extend Learning Opportunities for Students with the Highest Needs. Accelerate learning for our highest need students through extended learning opportunities such as high-impact tutoring and summer accelerator programs.

Strategy	Milestone	Start Date	End Date
Design and launch a High Impact Tutoring program, with a focus on those that have the greatest student need.	Finalize design for supporting targeted students	10/1	11/30
	Pilot support approach with a small group of students	12/1	2/28
	Scale support approach to reach 35 students, building on lessons learned in pilot	4/1	6/30

OSSE Supports by Accelerate DC School Improvement Domain

The following table summarizes existing available OSSE supports aligned to the evidence-based strategies under each *Accelerate DC* domain. These supports are available to designated schools to help drive their School Improvement Plans. *OSSE will continue to make additions to this document as we evaluate designated school and LEA needs and build out additional supports and resources within each domain.*

Accelerate DC Domain	Key Practices	Aligned Strategies for Improvement	Existing OSSE Supports to Leverage
Transformational Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize improvement and communicate its urgency Develop and monitor short- and long-term goals and strategies based on customized needs Customize and target support to meet needs Develop strong and aligned instructional leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership coaching for principals and school leadership teams Creation of diverse career pathways for teacher leadership School leader pipeline development and succession planning Distributive leadership model implementation 	<p><u>Inclusive Leadership - Vision of Excellence:</u> Comprehensive self-paced resource available on OSSE’s Learning Management System (LMS) for implementing high-impact practices and evidence-based tools for inclusion. Participants engage with practical examples, explore the research underpinning inclusive practices and gain access to actionable resources to enhance professional learning.</p> <p>Literacy Coaching for Instructional Coaches and Educators: Starting in Spring 2025, OSSE will offer direct in-person coaching focused on foundational literacy skills. The coaching will be tailored for educators and coaching teaching or supporting kindergarten. For additional information, please contact OSSE.TTA@dc.gov.</p>
Talent Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit, develop, retain, and sustain excellent talent Target professional learning opportunities to identified needs Set clear performance expectations and support continuous improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructional coaching for educators Increased compensation for school leaders and educators in exchange for clear accountability metrics and/or increased time commitments Educator trainings on the science of reading (e.g., LETRS), as well as other research-backed trainings (e.g., math bootcamps) Classroom management training 	<p><u>LMS (Professional Learning) Offerings:</u> Professional learning opportunities for educators and school staff in a wide variety of subject areas are available via OSSE’s Learning Management System (LMS). A selection of current PD offerings is listed below; visit our Teaching and Learning Professional Learning Opportunities page for more information.</p> <p><i>Literacy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dyslexia Awareness, Grades PreK-12 Science of Reading, Grades PreK-12 Adolescent Literacy, Grades 4-12 Biliteracy for Dual Enrollment, Grades PreK-12 Universal Screeners Data Analysis, Grades PreK-12 <p><i>Math</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DC Math Teacher Bootcamp (Elementary), Grades PreK-5 DC Math Teacher Bootcamp (Secondary), Grades 6-12 <p><i>Special Education</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundations of Special Education, Grades PreK-12 <p><i>Lesson Design</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal Design for Learning, Grades PreK-12 <p><u>School Climate and Culture</u></p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support • School Climate • Restorative Justice • Trauma-Informed Supports • Social Emotional Learning (SEL) • Mindfulness and Wellbeing <p>OSSE Apprenticeship in Teaching Program: The OSSE Apprenticeship in Teaching program is a new, cost-free opportunity to become an Elementary, Early Childhood, or Special Education teacher in DC, providing prospective DC educators with a tuition-free bachelor’s degree, flexible coursework offerings, and paid on-the-job learning. There is a pathway for candidates with a high school diploma (or GED) from a DC high school, as well as paraprofessionals currently employed by a DCPS or DC public charter school. The next application window will open in Winter 2025.</p>
<p>Instructional Excellence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide rigorous, evidence-based, high-quality Tier 1 instruction • Diagnose and respond to student learning needs • Target supports for students with the greatest needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-quality instructional materials and implementation supports • Integration of academic and social and emotional learning content and competencies • High-impact tutoring targeting highest-need students • Use of validated interim assessments to target supports based on data • Implementation of multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) • Expanded planning and collaboration time for educators • Use of research-backed technology to help provide individualized supports based on student needs 	<p>High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) Guidance and Resources: Resources to support LEAs in selecting HQIM in English Language Arts, math, and science.</p> <p>K-Adult Social-Emotional Learning Standards & Related Resources (adopted May 2024): These newly adopted standards apply to all public and charter school students District-wide beginning in the 2024-25 school year. OSSE has developed an accompanying SEL Educator Toolkit, Parent, Family and Caregiver Guide, and other resources to support LEAs and school leaders with implementation.</p> <p>OSSE High-Impact Tutoring (HIT) Initiative – Resources for LEA and School Leaders: Grant opportunities, guides, toolkits, cost estimator tool, and free math tutoring lesson plans for LEAs and schools interested in implementing HIT at their school site(s).</p> <p>Inclusive Practices Professional Learning: Synchronous and asynchronous professional learning hosted in OSSE’s via OSSE’s Learning Management System available to all DC educators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSSE Inclusive Leadership – Vision of Excellence Community of Practice • Universal Design for Learning Professional Learning • Multi-Tiered System of Supports Professional Learning (visit OSSE LMS for access to virtual course) <p>Structured Literacy Walkthrough Tool: This tool is designed to support high-quality instructional practices and is not intended to serve as a formal, summative assessment tool. This tool is designed to deliver feedback for teachers in structured literacy instruction to improve instructional practices.</p> <p>Structured Literacy Recommended Training List: This list is designed to support LEAs with identifying high-quality structured literacy training focused on kindergarten through fifth grade.</p>

			<p>High-Quality Instructional Materials Rubric: This tool is designed to support an LEA in evaluating whether a program meets the requirements of a high-quality science-based literacy program.</p> <p>Dyslexia Legislation Implementation Resources: The tools on the dyslexia landing page offer LEAs tools and resources for implementing DC Law 23-191, Addressing Dyslexia and Other Reading Difficulties Amendment Act of 2020.</p>
<p>Strong School Climate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a strong community intensely focused on student academic acceleration and wellbeing • Solicit and act upon ongoing stakeholder input from the school community • Engage students and families in pursuing the student’s education goals • Provide wraparound supports based on student, family, and community needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting home visits to re-engage chronically absent students • Implementation of a positive behavior management system • Coaching for school leaders on developing and maintaining effective partnerships with community-based organizations • School behavioral health training and curricula • Access to evidence-based behavioral health interventions (e.g., cognitive behavioral therapy) 	<p>OSSE School Year Attendance Reports: OSSE collects and reports student attendance data for public schools in the District, publishing two Mid-Year Attendance Briefs in addition to an annual report. The data can be used by LEAs and school leaders throughout the school year to respond to attendance trends and changes in a timely manner.</p> <p>SEL Parent, Family, and Caregiver Guide: Offers a wide range of tools to promote social and emotional learning in the home.</p> <p>SEL Wheel Poster: A visual anchor for instructional and campus climate support. Educator Toolkit: A primary tool for teachers and administrators to integrate systemic and instructional SEL.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Toolkit: Overview of SEL in DC ○ Toolkit: Establishing Schoolwide SEL Systems and Practices ○ Toolkit: Strengthening Adult Staff SEL ○ Toolkit: Implementing Practices to Promote SEL with Students ○ Toolkit: Assessing and Reflecting on SEL Data for Continuous Improvement <p>Restorative Justice: Monthly trainings and quarterly Community of Practice are offered to all schools with an opportunity to apply for technical assistance to support school teams with implementation.</p> <p>Statewide School Climate Survey: Beginning in school year 2024-25, OSSE will provide all LEAs with school climate surveys to administer for students (grades 3–12 and adult), caregivers, educators, school-based staff, and school leaders. Hands-on technical support and robust professional development is available to LEAs.</p> <p>Supporting Mental Health in Schools: Tools and resources to support schools, school staff and families in addressing mental and behavioral health and well-being. This page contains links to guidance for LEAs in developing and adopting policies and procedures for addressing student mental and behavioral health, professional development and training programs for school staff, and curricula and implementation resources relating to a high-quality, multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) framework for school mental health programs and services.</p>

			<p>LGBTQ+ Trainings for Educators and Education Leaders: Recorded 5-part training series to support school leaders and educators foster inclusion and belonging in their teaching, classroom, and school community for LGBTQ+ students.</p>
<p>Organizational Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a cycle of data-driven, continuous improvement Optimize the allocation and use of financial, human, and material resources aligned to goals Develop efficient scheduling systems that maximize instructional time and support student learning Ensure plans are in place to address ongoing and emergent barriers to student learning (attendance, safety, crises) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended instructional time through an extended school day and/or school year Conducting a school-day audit to evaluate the use of time and maximize instructional class time Assessment of resource allocation in school budget and relative impact of each item on student outcomes Consultation on relevant school policies to support effective implementation (e.g., school immunization policy, mental health guidelines) 	<p>The Educator Talent and Equity Dashboard: An interactive tool available to LEA leaders and data managers that is designed to integrate educator workforce and student equity data. Users can explore their own data across schools at their LEA. They can also compare their data to citywide rates, which helps them contextualize their data within trends found across the city. LEAs can use these insights to support strategic staffing policies and practices. The dashboard module includes the following sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 1: Demographics Section 2: Retention/Mobility Section 3: Teacher Equity Comparisons <p>School Immunization Policy and Resources: Resources for LEA and school leaders, school nurses, immunization points of contact, school registrars, front office staff, and families regarding the District’s school immunization policy for students.</p>

Funding Strategy Guide for Designated Schools

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with schools that have been designated as CSI, ISI, or MIS will be awarded **Investment in Schools (IIS) Grant** funds from OSSE for each year of the three-year designation period. The purpose of the IIS grant is to support LEAs and schools with implementing their School Improvement Plans (SIPs). To gain access to this funding, LEAs with schools designated as CSI, ISI, and MIS must submit an Investment in Schools (IIS) grant application and budget – along with their final and approved Needs Assessment, Resource Allocation Review, and School Improvement Plans, as applicable – which will then be reviewed by OSSE for approval.

In addition to this targeted school improvement grant program, LEAs also have access to additional annual federal grant funding such as **Title I-A** and **SOAR Academic Quality**, which they may also use as additional fund sources to support the successful implementation and execution of their SIPs.

This guide provides a non-exhaustive list of resources, aligned to the five (5) domains in the *Accelerate DC* framework and corresponding strategies, that may be purchased with these federal grant funds.

Accelerate DC Domain:

Transformational Leadership

Key practices in this domain include:

- Prioritize improvement and communicate its urgency
- Develop and monitor short- and long-term goals and strategies based on customized needs
- Customize and target support to meet needs
- Develop strong and aligned instructional leadership

The below table lists strategies aligned to this domain and how Investment in Schools, Title I-A, and SOAR Academic Quality grant funds can be leveraged to resource these strategies.

Aligned Strategies for Transformational Leadership	Examples of Resources
Leadership coaching for principals and school leadership teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract with executive coach • Conference registration and travel
Creation of diverse career pathways for teacher leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentive stipends for participating teachers • Contract to design program
School leader pipeline development and succession planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Contract to support planning • Professional development
Distributive leadership model implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Stipends

Accelerate DC Domain:

Talent Development

Key Practices in this domain include:

- Instructional coaching for educators
- Increased compensation for school leaders and educators in exchange for clear accountability metrics and/or increased time commitments
- Educator trainings on the science of reading (e.g., LETRS), as well as other research-backed trainings (e.g., math bootcamps)
- Classroom management training

The below table lists strategies aligned to this domain and how Investment in Schools, Title I-A, and SOAR Academic Quality grant funds can be leveraged to resource these strategies.

Aligned Strategies for Talent Development	Examples of Resources
Instructional coaching for educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Professional development for instructional coaches
Increased compensation for school leaders and educators in exchange for clear accountability metrics and/or increased time commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bonuses for educators based on performance
Educator trainings on the Science of Reading (e.g. LETRS) as well as other research-backed trainings (e.g. math bootcamps)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development for teachers • On-going, real-time coaching for teachers • Curriculum and aligned materials
Classroom management training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development for teachers • On-going, real-time coaching for teachers • Supplies for classroom protocols/procedures • Family engagement activities

Accelerate DC Domain:

Instructional Excellence

Key Practices in this domain include:

- Provide rigorous, evidence-based, high-quality Tier 1 instruction
- Diagnose and respond to student learning needs
- Target supports for students with the greatest needs

The below table lists strategies aligned to this domain and how Investment in Schools, Title I-A, and SOAR Academic Quality grant funds can be leveraged to resource these strategies.

Aligned Strategies for Instructional Excellence	Examples of Resources
High-quality instructional materials and implementation supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum and aligned materials • Professional development • Staff overseeing implementation • Family engagement activities aligned to the curriculum
High-impact tutoring targeting highest-need students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutors / Contract with tutoring provider • Staffing (e.g. tutoring manager) • Tutoring curriculum

Aligned Strategies for Instructional Excellence	Examples of Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation for students • Operational costs of extended school time
Use of validated interim assessments to target supports based on data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments • Data system • Professional development • Staffing • Family engagement activities
Implementation of multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Data system • Implementing evidence-based interventions for identified students / student groups
Expanded planning and collaboration time for educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stipends for teachers (e.g. extended hours) • Materials for collaborative time (e.g. paper, large sticky notes)
Use of research-backed technology to help provide individualized supports based on student needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blended learning resources (e.g. curriculum licenses, learning management platform) • Devices • Hotspot / Internet services • Professional development • Family engagement activities

Accelerate DC Domain:

Strong School Culture and Climate

Key Practices in this domain include:

- Build a strong community intensely focused on student academic acceleration and wellbeing
- Solicit and act upon ongoing stakeholder input from the school community
- Engage students and families in pursuing the student’s education goals
- Provide wraparound supports based on student, family, and community needs

The below table lists some strategies aligned to this domain and how Investment in Schools, Title I-A, and SOAR Academic Quality grant funds can be leveraged to resource these strategies.

Aligned Strategies for Strong School Culture and Climate	Examples of Resources
Conducting home visits to re-engage chronically absent students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stipends • Staffing • Training • Transportation support for staff
Implementation of a positive behavior management system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data system • Staffing

Aligned Strategies for Strong School Culture and Climate	Examples of Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PBIS resources (e.g. incentives)
Coaching for school leaders on developing and maintaining effective partnerships with community-based organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Professional development • Contract with community-based organization
School behavioral health training and curricula	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development • Curriculum and aligned materials
Access to evidence-based behavioral health interventions (e.g., cognitive behavioral therapy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Behavioral health curriculum • Professional development

Accelerate DC Domain:

Organizational Health

Key Practices in this domain include:

- Build a strong community intensely focused on student academic acceleration and wellbeing
- Solicit and act upon ongoing stakeholder input from the school community
- Engage students and families in pursuing the student’s education goals
- Provide wraparound supports based on student, family, and community needs

The below table lists some strategies aligned to this domain and how Investment in Schools, Title I-A, and SOAR Academic Quality grant funds can be leveraged to resource these strategies.

Aligned Strategies for Organizational Health	Examples of Resources
Extended instructional time through an extended school day and/or school year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stipends • Operational costs of an extended calendar • Professional development • Curriculum and aligned materials • Transportation for students
Conducting a school-day audit to evaluate the use of time and maximize instructional class time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Stipends • Contract for an audit • Implementation of recommendations resulting from audit outcomes
Assessment of resource allocation in school budget and relative impact of each item on student outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Stipends • Contract to conduct assessment of resource allocation • Implementation of recommendations resulting from the assessment

Aligned Strategies for Organizational Health	Examples of Resources
Consultation on relevant school policies to support effective implementation (e.g., school immunization policy, mental health guidelines)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staffing• Stipends• Contract for external review of school policies• Implementation of recommendations resulting from the review

External Resources for Designated Schools and LEAs

Resource	Description
WestEd Four Domains of School Improvement Framework	<p>OSSE’s <i>Accelerate DC</i> framework was adapted from this WestEd framework, which is designed to help states, districts, and schools lead and manage rapid improvement efforts. The framework shares the practices of successful school turnaround in four domains that both research and experience suggest are central to rapid and significant improvement: turnaround leadership, talent development, instructional transformation, and culture shift. The framework offers examples of the domains in action at school, district, and state levels.</p>
What Works Clearinghouse	<p>The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) is the statistics, research, and evaluation arm of the U.S. Department of Education. Through the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), they conduct independent reviews of research on what works in education. The WWC can be used by schools and LEAs to search for and identify evidence-based strategies for improving student outcomes to be incorporated into their School Improvement Plans.</p>
S.M.A.R.T. Goal Setting in K-12 Education	<p>This resource from Frontline Education provides a helpful walkthrough exercise for setting goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART). Schools and LEAs should ensure that goals developed in their School Improvement Plan are written in a SMART format.</p>