

## Needs Assessment Procedure

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*Districts are required to conduct annual needs assessments for each Title I school (both schoolwide and targeted assistance programs) that include data on student achievement relative to state standards, and input from parents and educators. The needs assessment procedure briefly describes how the district and schools conduct their needs assessments in order to establish priorities for action and make appropriate decisions about the allocation of resources (e.g., people, materials, time, and fiscal, including all funds under ESEA). This includes a description of the quantitative and qualitative data collected and analyzed, who is involved in the analysis, how priority needs are determined, and how school improvement plans and other documentation relate to this process.*

*The following samples are not official Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education documents. They are provided only as an example.*

### Needs Assessment Procedure – Sample 1

#### **Step One: Data Teams**

Each Title I school has a data team which meets monthly to evaluate assessment data by grade level and subject area. These data are to include such assessments as MCAS, BAS, SRI, SMI, ACCESS for ELLs, and other common assessments in that school, such as district math or district writing prompts. Behavioral data are also included in the evaluations conducted by data teams.

The members of the data team, in collaboration with the building principal, will make recommendations regarding changes in curriculum, assessment, student programming, and professional development needs based on this analysis. Their work also helps to identify best practices to be utilized in the school.

#### **Step Two: District Improvement Planning Committee**

The District Planning Committee meets in early spring each year. The committee meets in the evening and is comprised of all administrators, community partners, teachers, paraprofessionals, parents, members of the business community, and town officials.

In small groups, the committee works to analyze assessment and survey data, as well as data regarding graduation rates, college attendance, preschool school enrollment, and tiered instruction statistics. Groups assess the district's strengths and areas of need in the following categories: Curriculum, School Leadership, Professional Development, Technology, Tiered Support, Family and Community Engagement, Budget and Resources, and Culture and Climate.

From the District Improvement Planning Committee notes, the team identifies two to four priority areas and develops an action plan.

### ***Step Three: School Improvement Planning Committee***

The schools follow the same process in developing school improvement plans in the fall. First, the superintendent shares the finalized district improvement plan with all staff. Then, in collaboration with teachers, parents, administrators, business partners, and school committee, the school improvement councils create their school improvement plans based on the broad goals of the district improvement plan and the specific needs of their school community.

### ***Step Four: The Budget Process***

The District Improvement Plan and School Improvement Plans are used to inform the budget process (January to March), the district professional development plan, the Title I plan and grant application, the school professional development plans, and the Title IIA grant application, as well as the special education grant and funding decisions. The budget process is as follows:

- 1) Superintendent seeks budget suggestions through an e-mail sent to all school personnel
- 2) Administrators provide input regarding the needs of their schools as determined by data teams, and school improvement goals.
- 3) A budget subcommittee works to create a budget that meets district needs and town parameters. The subcommittee is comprised of the superintendent, administrators, finance committee members, and a school committee representative.

Funding sources used include:

- Local budget
- Federal and State Grants
- Other foundation support, when available

### ***Step Five: Finalize Plan***

With the budget in place and the needs determined, the administrative team finalizes decisions for professional development and grant applications.

## **Needs Assessment Procedure – Sample 2**

The district will utilize the following needs assessment procedure every summer to assess the comprehensive needs and determine how resources, including those from the Title Program, should be allocated to address those needs.

- **Part I: Leadership Team Annual Planning Meetings:** In late May, and the last two weeks of July, the District and School Leadership Teams will meet over a number of hours in order to review data from the previous academic year, determine the critical areas of need for the schools, and develop plans and strategic initiatives to address those needs.
  - The data reviewed by the Leadership Team will include:
    - Interim assessment data from previous school year
    - MCAS/PARCC data from the previous school year

- Student retention, attrition and withdrawal data
  - Qualitative data, including classroom observations by the Leadership Team the previous school year and feedback garnered from families
  - Based on this data review and on the Leadership Team's own reflections on what it takes for the schools to meet goals, the Leadership Team will determine an initial set of core needs of the schools and draft an initial set of strategic initiatives required to meet these needs.
  - The needs and corresponding strategic initiatives may range from curriculum interventions initiatives designed to improve family engagement to initiatives designed to ensure better use of data throughout the year.
- **Part II: August Staff Orientation:**
  - Each school will hold a Staff Orientation in August
  - One of the purposes of the Staff Orientation is to ensure that all staff has a chance to review data from the previous year and participate in determining the priorities for their school, based on the needs identified in this data, and have an opportunity to help translate strategic initiatives into action plans.
  - Staff will therefore spend time in orientation reviewing the same data reviewed by the Leadership Team.
  - The staff will then collectively work to execute action plans based on strategic initiatives in preparation for the new school year.
  - In addition, some needs may be addressed through the development of one-off projects or quick hits that can be implemented right away and do not take as much follow-through from the Leadership Team to monitor their completion.
- **Part III: Resource Allocation**
  - Once the schools have completed their needs assessment and developed strategic initiatives for the year, the next step is to ensure that the schools have the appropriate resources in place to carry out these initiatives, both in terms of instructional materials but also in terms of the staff and people that need to be in place to implement these initiatives.
  - The Title I Director will work with the principals to ensure Title I resources are being allocated most effectively to meet needs.
- **Part IV: Data Teams:**
  - Each school has data teams that will meet throughout the year to review data and re-assess priority needs
  - The data reviewed includes:
    - Interim assessment data from previous school year
    - Student retention, attrition and withdrawal data
    - Qualitative data, including classroom observations by the Leadership Team the previous school year and feedback garnered from families
  - The data reviews focus on individual student and classroom performance, performance by grade and cohort, and performance across student subgroups (e.g. ELL, SPED), to understand both individual and group areas of need. Once areas of need have been identified, staff discuss what type of action is required to address those needs.