

Cycle of Instructional Improvement: Self-Assessment Tool

| Set Goals and Align Resources | | Early | Limited | Proficient | Advanced |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|
| 1 | Achievement and improvement goals are aligned around high expectations for student learning, and are set and communicated by the school system | No school or system goals communicated | AYP and state goals communicated | School system sets and communicates its own goals in addition to, and in concert with, AYP | Detailed system/school achievement and improvement goals in place; everyone aware of the goals and their roles in helping achieve them; principal and teacher evaluation systems are aligned with these goals |
| 2 | Clear grade-by-grade learning expectations are aligned with state standards, state tests, and college-ready expectations, and are set and communicated system-wide | No detailed learning expectations articulated | State standards are in the hands of all teachers at each grade level | Detailed learning expectations (beyond state standards, at a "teachable" level of granularity) have been articulated by the school system for each grade level and course | Grade-level expectations exist and are reviewed/improved annually based on data; are clearly aligned with state standards, state tests, and college-ready requirements; and everyone is aware of them and their role in helping achieve them |
| 3 | Curriculum is aligned to learning expectations | Textbooks dictate the curriculum | System-wide curriculum has been selected and aligned to learning expectations | School system has ensured complete curricular coverage of all learning expectations | School system has ensured complete curricular coverage of all learning expectations and has made available multiple versions of curricula to meet differentiated instructional needs. Curricula improved annually based on data and implementation feedback |
| 4 | Sequencing and pacing chart show when essential learning expectations should be covered | No pacing chart exists | Teachers develop their own sequencing and pacing charts | System maps sequence/pace, but no active accountability measures or only partially implemented | All schools and teachers follow and are held accountable for implementing system-wide sequence and pacing; pacing charts improved annually based on data and implementation feedback |
| 5 | Instructional calendar shows how and when time is allocated to teaching, assessments, data analysis, reteaching, teacher collaboration, and professional development | No system-wide instructional calendar has been created | A calendar has been developed but does not include all elements | A calendar including all elements has been developed, but no active accountability measures or only partially implemented | All schools and teachers follow the calendar and are held accountable for implementing it. Calendar improved annually (or more frequently where needed) |
| 6 | Teachers are trained on data use; buy-in and commitment developed | No system-wide training or focus on instructional improvement activities | Teachers are provided with an overview of the cycle of improvement early in the school year; little or no follow-up occurs | Teachers are trained on the cycle of improvement and how it will be implemented in their school system; follow-up training occurs regularly to answer questions and address problems | Teachers participate in how cycle of improvement will be implemented in their school system; relevant professional development occurs regularly, is responsive to data, and is integrated into teacher collaboration and coaching activities |
| 7 | Interim assessments are developed and aligned with essential learning expectations and with curriculum sequence/pacing | No interim assessments given | Interim assessments are given, but the content is developed individually by teachers so tests differ from class to class | System-designed interim assessments exist, and have SOME of the characteristics below | System-designed interim assessments exist, and have substantively ALL of the characteristics below |
| <p>Key Characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> High-quality tests with items correlated to learning expectations so results accurately measure level of proficiency achieved on each standard <input type="checkbox"/> Reflective of item formats used on state's standardized tests to ensure students can demonstrate their levels of proficiency in the way their state measures it <input type="checkbox"/> Cumulative, focusing on current period's learning expectations and sampling from prior periods' <input type="checkbox"/> Same tests used across the system, so results are comparable and insights sharable <input type="checkbox"/> In use for all grade levels/courses (at a minimum: for K-8 in math, reading, and writing; for 9-12 in math, ELA, history, science) <input type="checkbox"/> Administered at least quarterly <input type="checkbox"/> Tests are thorough but not overwhelming in length (generally 3-4 items per standard) | | | | | |
| Gather and Share Student Data | | | | | |
| 8 | Interim assessments are scored in reliable, convenient, consistent ways, and results are turned around rapidly | Scoring is ad hoc and done by the teacher | Scoring is inconsistent; answer keys and/or rubrics exist for some but not all tests; results turned around weeks after tests administered | Scoring is consistent and reliable; answer keys and rubrics always exist and are used; results turned around with one week of test | Scoring done conveniently, reliably, consistently (by machine where possible, by hand using rubrics where not). Scoring can be done at school site or system level; results turned around within 48 hours of test |
| 9 | Student data are presented in clear, relevant, and actionable ways | Teachers develop own format for data presentation | Data is presented in series of lists or tables, no highlighting of patterns or problems | Data presentation includes clear call-outs of patterns and problems | The display <i>is</i> the analysis; the data, as presented, lends itself to action |
| Analyze Data | | | | | |
| 10 | Interim assessment results are analyzed and interpreted | Analysis of test results done on ad hoc basis; data is not shared openly or discussed collaboratively | Teachers required to analyze test results, but no practices in place for accountability or quality control; if data is shared or discussed, it happens informally | Practices exist to ensure that teachers analyze data and draw accurate conclusions from it; time is allocated to analysis; teachers actively engage in formal data meetings (teams or 1:1); instructional leaders actively involved | Analysis is systematic and thorough: teachers and instructional leaders analyze data by standard, student, and sub-group; look for meaningful patterns; and draw accurate conclusions. Time is allocated to analysis; teachers actively engage in formal data meetings; instructional leaders actively involved |
| 11 | Classroom-level action plans are created by teachers, based on interim assessments and other data, to address student learning needs | Teachers develop action plans in their own ways and only if they desire; plans not shared or discussed | Teachers required to develop action plans, but no practices in place for accountability or quality control; if plans are shared or discussed, it happens informally | Teachers required to specify how they will bring low-performing students to mastery: what will be retaught to individual students, groups of students, and the whole class; what interventions and strategies will be used; and when this will happen. Teachers share and refine action plans with instructional leaders and/or colleagues | Teachers develop true differentiated action plans addressing needs of both struggling and accelerated students; action plans include what will be retaught to individual students, groups of students, and the whole class, what interventions and strategies will be used, and when this will happen. Teams share/compare data to identify best practices and raise biggest challenges to get input on; willing to talk about weaknesses; and develop collective and individual action plans |
| 12 | School and system-level action plans are created by instructional leaders, based on assessment and other data, to improve instruction | Instructional leaders (school- and system-level) develop action plans in their own ways and only if they desire | Instructional leaders required to develop action plans, but no practices in place for accountability or quality control | Instructional leaders required to specify which teachers/principals need support and in what areas, and what interventions, coaching, or professional development strategies they will use; action plans shared and refined | System-wide action planning occurs regularly: principals/coaches develop intervention, coaching and professional development strategies to address individual teacher needs; central office staff develop intervention, coaching, and professional development strategies to address individual principal and common teacher needs |
| Use/Act on Information | | | | | |
| 13 | Classroom-level action plans are implemented by teachers to address student learning needs | Teachers may or may not take action based on assessment results | Teachers required to implement action plans, but no practices in place for accountability or quality control | Time allocated for and teachers expected to reteach students who have not yet achieved mastery; instructional leaders actively follow-up and support teachers on implementation of action plans | Teachers implement and measure the effectiveness of differentiated action plans: some students have full interventions, some get reteaching, some receive reinforcement activities, others get enrichment; resources are marshaled across the system to support teachers and ensure student mastery |
| 14 | School- and system-level action plans are implemented to continuously improve instruction | Instructional leaders (school- and system-level) may or may not implement action plans | Instructional leaders implement action plans to support teachers/principals, but no practices in place for accountability or quality control | Instructional leaders implement action plans and actively follow-up to ensure that identified issues have been adequately addressed | Instructional leaders systematically measure the effectiveness of teaching and learning and use this data to improve curriculum, assessments, professional development, and resource allocations; all are improved in response to patterns seen across classrooms, grade levels, subjects, and schools |
| 15 | Students are enlisted in their own educational improvement | Students don't know what is expected of them | Students know what is expected and how they performed against goals | Students actively engage with teacher in achieving goals | Students take ownership of their own learning and actively seek out help from teachers and others to achieve their learning goals |
| 16 | Parents/guardians and other concerned, supportive adults are enlisted in students' educational improvement | Supportive adults don't know what is expected of their students | Supportive adults get regular communication about what is expected of their students and how students performed against those expectations | Supportive adults get information about students' specific areas of need and how they can help students achieve their learning goals | Supportive adults actively engage with teachers and students in helping students address specific areas of need and achieve their learning goals |



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Directions: For each row, mark the cell that best describes your school system.
(Note that the rows do not describe a proposed progression or order. The cells are
descriptive, not prescriptive; you do not necessarily have to move through one "stage"
before you can get to the next.)

Please send comments and suggestions to Joanne Weiss, jweiss@newschools.org

Key Sources (Full bibliography available upon request)

"New Leaders for New Schools Interim Assessment Project: Final Report" by Kim Marshall, February 2006

Center on Educational Governance, University of Southern California

Books and research by Mike Schmoker, Douglas Reeves at the Center for Performance Assessment, Springboard

Schools, Anthony Bryk at Stanford University

Interviews with school and system leaders