

# District Review Guide

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**2005 - 2006**

**September 2005**



## 1. Setting Directions: Goals and Objectives

Improving districts and schools have a strong instructional focus. This focus is made visible in relevant goals and objectives for improving achievement for all students.

### Questions

- What specific goals have you chosen for improving student achievement?
- What objectives have you chosen to support your goals?
- What process is used to review and revise goals and objectives to ensure a focus on areas of need?
- How do the goals and objectives address achievement for all students:
  - The most challenged?
  - The most able?

### Guide

Not Yet	Approaching Expectations	Meeting Expectations	Sustaining Improvement
Goals and objectives have little focus on student achievement.	Some goals and objectives are based on evidence and focused on student achievement.	All goals and objectives are relevant, based on evidence, and focused on student achievement.	All goals and objectives are relevant, based on a range of evidence, and focused on student achievement. Goals and objectives are systematically reviewed and revised. Consideration is given to all students.

### Comments:

## 2. Setting Directions: Rationale

Improving districts and schools have a thorough and connected set of reasons, based on evidence, for the selection of their student achievement goals and objectives.

### Questions

- What reasons do you have for selecting your goals and objectives?
- When selecting your goals and objectives what specific groups of students were you most concerned about? How did you determine this priority?
- Your data seem to indicate some challenges and/or opportunities to enhance student achievement in \_\_\_\_\_. How did you consider this information when developing your goals and objectives?

### Guide

Not Yet	Approaching Expectations	Meeting Expectations	Sustaining Improvement
Reasons for the selection of goals and objectives appear to be based on little consideration of evidence from data.	There is some evidence that the reasons for the selection of goals and objectives are based on relevant data.	Reasons for the selection of goals and objectives are based on evidence from a variety of sources and focused on student achievement.	Reasons for the selection of goals and objectives are consistently based on evidence from a variety of sources and focused on the achievement of all students.

### Comments:

### 3. Setting Directions: Data (Evidence)

Improving districts and schools are actively considering at least three sources of evidence including classroom, school, district and provincial data. The analysis of this evidence informs the selection of district goals and objectives and is used to monitor progress.

#### Questions

- When setting your goals and objectives, what data (evidence) did you consider:
  - Provincial?
  - District?
  - School?
  - Classroom?
- What did the data (evidence) tell you about the achievement of all students?
- How are you disaggregating data to get a deeper understanding of particular groups of students?
- How are you aggregating data from the classroom to use at the school and district levels?
- What did you observe when you considered participation rates?
- How are you tracking data (evidence) over time?
- What data (evidence) did you find most useful?
- How are staff and SPCs engaged in working with data?

#### Guide

Not Yet	Approaching Expectations	Meeting Expectations	Sustaining Improvement
It is unclear what data are used to determine areas of need and plan for improvement.	Evidence from data is used or beginning to be used to determine areas of need, plan for improvement, and monitor progress.	The district and schools consistently analyze classroom, school, district, and provincial data sources to determine areas of need, plan for improvement, and monitor progress.	The district and schools consistently analyze classroom, school, district, and provincial data sources to determine areas of need, plan for improvement, and monitor progress of all students. Data are disaggregated, participation rates are considered, and trends are tracked over time.

Comments:

#### 4. Organizing for Improvement: Strategies

Improving districts and schools have focused, well organized improvement plans in place. The strategies selected to achieve the goals and objectives are a blend of research, best practice, and innovative thinking.

##### Questions

- How did you determine the strategies to support your goals and objectives?
- What strategies are you using in your improvement efforts in the areas of:
  - Staff development?
  - Assessment practices?
  - Instructional practices?
  - Other?
- What specific strategies are in place for schools that do not demonstrate improvement?
- What specific strategies are in place for groups of students who do not demonstrate improvement?
- How do you monitor strategies and adapt or refine them as required?
- What strategies are you finding particularly promising?

##### Guide

Not Yet	Approaching Expectations	Meeting Expectations	Sustaining Improvement
Strategies are not connected to school and/or district goals and objectives.	The district and schools have improvement strategies in place with some connection to goals and objectives.	The district and schools have practical, research-based strategies in place to achieve goals and objectives. Strategies link to staff development and other improvement efforts. There is evidence of monitoring and adjusting strategies as required.	The district and schools have practical, research-based strategies in place to achieve goals and objectives. Strategies are in place to address areas of highest need and link to staff development and other improvement efforts. The district and schools consistently monitor and adjust strategies as required.

Comments:

## 5. Organizing for Improvement: Structures

Improving districts and schools have aligned structures – resources, time, organization – to get results. This includes, but is not limited to, effectively differentiating resources in the areas of highest need for improvement.

### Questions

- How did you determine the structures you are using in your improvement efforts?
- What structural changes are in place or are you considering as a result of identifying areas for improvement?
- What specific structures are in place for schools that do not demonstrate improvement?
- How do you monitor your structures and adapt or refine them as required?
- What promising practices from other schools or districts have you considered?
- How do your structures align with your strategies?

### Guide

Not Yet	Approaching Expectations	Meeting Expectations	Sustaining Improvement
The district and schools have not aligned structures to support school and/or district goals and objectives.	The district and schools have some structures in place to support school and/or district goals and objectives.	The district and schools have structures in place to support school and/or district goals and objectives. Structures support areas of highest need and align with strategies.	The district and schools have structures in place to support school and/or district goals and objectives. Structures support the areas of highest need and align with strategies. Structures are consistently monitored and adjusted as required.

### Comments:

## 6. Organizing for Improvement: Coherence/Alignment

In improving districts, there is a connection between school and district goals and objectives. School uniqueness and district directions are both valued. Schools connect with other schools to build capacity.

### Questions

- Describe the connection between school and district plans.
- Describe how the school board:
  - Consults with the SPCs.
  - Approves school plans.
- To what degree do schools develop goals or objectives that respond to their unique circumstances?
- How is the connection between school and district plans reinforced and supported?
- How are connections among schools reinforced and supported?
- Describe the connection between the Enhancement Agreement and school plans.
- Describe the connection between the Enhancement Agreement and the district Accountability Contract.

### Guide

Not Yet	Approaching Expectations	Meeting Expectations	Sustaining Improvement
There is little connection between school and district plans, and there is little evidence of efforts to develop connections.	The district and schools are developing connections between school and district plans.	Connections between the district and schools are interactive and reflect both school uniqueness and district directions.	Connections between the district and schools are interactive and reflect both school uniqueness and district directions. Schools connect with other schools to build capacity.

### Comments:

## 7. Building Learning Communities: Dialogue and Communication

Improving districts and schools maintain relationships that promote continuous dialogue about student achievement and make public their improvement goals and the progress being made in specific areas of focus.

### Questions

- How do you ensure communication about student achievement is consistent, timely, and delivered in multiple ways with:
  - Staff?
  - Students?
  - Parents?
  - The community?
- What strategies do you use to seek input from these groups?
- What strategies have you found most effective for strengthening dialogue about student achievement?
- How do you build relationships with all communities in your district and schools that enable you to connect in an ongoing dialogue about student achievement?

### Guide

Not Yet	Approaching Expectations	Meeting Expectations	Sustaining Improvement
There is no consistent approach to communicating about student achievement.	The district and schools communicate about student achievement and make public their improvement goals and the progress being made.	The district and schools communicate in multiple ways about improving student achievement. There are opportunities for dialogue, and community input is valued.	The district and schools communicate in multiple ways about improving student achievement. There are ongoing opportunities for dialogue, and community input is actively sought and valued. These practices are embedded in school and district culture and are sustained over time.

### Comments:

## 8. Building Learning Communities: Parent Involvement

Improving districts and schools work with all parents to improve student achievement.

### Questions

- At the school and district:
  - How are parents encouraged to support their child's achievement?
  - How are parents and parent groups, including the PAC(s) and DPAC, involved in efforts to improve student achievement?
- How are SPCs reaching out to engage all parents, including parents of specific groups such as Aboriginal, Special Needs and ESL students, to support achievement for all students?
- What strategies are you finding most useful in engaging parents?

### Guide

Not Yet	Approaching Expectations	Meeting Expectations	Sustaining Improvement
There is little evidence of parent involvement. Few ideas are sought or heard in setting goals and working collaboratively to improve the achievement of all students.	Some groups of parents have a role in setting goals and working collaboratively with schools and the district to improve the achievement of all students.	Parents, individually and collectively, are actively involved in setting goals and are working collaboratively with schools and the district to improve the achievement of all students.	Parents, individually and collectively, are actively involved in setting goals and are working collaboratively with schools and the district to improve the achievement of all students. Efforts to engage less active parents as well as specific groups of parents are evident. Parental involvement is embedded in school and district culture and sustained over time.

### Comments:

## 9. Building Learning Communities: Leadership

Leaders in improving districts and schools have a clear vision for, and commitment to improving achievement for all students. Leadership at all levels, in all roles, is encouraged and systematically developed in a collaborative learning community with a focus on improving student achievement.

### Questions

- How are the district and schools providing for the leadership development of principals, vice-principals, teachers, support staff, district staff, parents and students?
- How is leadership development focused on improving student achievement?
- How are the district and schools working as a team to improve student results?
- What processes are in place for a team approach to examine student achievement results?

### Guide

Not Yet	Approaching Expectations	Meeting Expectations	Sustaining Improvement
There is little evidence of collaborative leadership.	There is some evidence of collaborative leadership.	Leadership is collaborative at all levels of the system with a shared commitment to improving student achievement.	Leadership is collaborative at all levels of the system with a shared commitment to improving student achievement. Efforts to build and sustain leadership capacity at all levels are evident.

### Comments:

## 10. Achieving Results

Improving districts and schools improve results. They monitor and make adjustments in key areas of student achievement – in classrooms, schools and the district.

### Questions

- What are your expected results/performance targets?
- How are you monitoring the progress of all?
- What results are you finding so far?
- Based on your results, what adjustments are you making?
- Have there been surprises or unexpected outcomes?
- Have you identified any new challenges?
- What evidence can you present to demonstrate that every school in your district is an improving school?
- What evidence can you present to demonstrate that every classroom in your school(s) is an improving classroom?

### Guide

Not Yet	Approaching Expectations	Meeting Expectations	Sustaining Improvement
There is little evidence of monitoring results and adjusting to improve student achievement.	The district and schools are beginning to monitor results and make adjustments to improve student achievement.	The district and schools monitor results and make adjustments to improve student achievement. There is evidence of improving results.	The district and schools consistently monitor results and make adjustments to improve student achievement. There is evidence of improving results over time.

### Comments:

**Strengths**

*Team observations of particular strengths.*

**Promising Practices**

*District or school practices that could be helpful to other districts with a similar focus.*

**Recommendations**

*Team recommendations for strengthening school and district focus on student achievement and for improving results.*

**Priorities (Optional)**

*Team identification of areas needing immediate attention.*