

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Office of Education Services
Policies and Procedures

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Effective Date: January 11, 2008
Original Effective Date: January 11, 2008
References: NCGS 143B-146.12

Purpose:

To establish uniform practices for the development and implementation of School Improvement Plans at the Residential Schools which support the 24 hour, five day week education of residential and day students.

Policy:

The School Improvement Plan will be a dynamic document that guides each school for a three-year period. All stakeholders (instructional staff, residential staff, support services staff, parents, and community members) should have a voice on the School Improvement Team. The School Improvement Plan should address all aspects of the school community which enable every child master basic skills and knowledge which are the foundation for lifelong learning. The document should be used daily and updated regularly to ensure that all stakeholders are working collaboratively to achieve their vision of what their students can accomplish.

The School Improvement Team Membership

The School Improvement Team (SIT) shall consist of the following representatives who must be elected by secret ballot by their peers.

- 4 teachers representing K-5, 6-8, and 9-12
- 1 teacher assistant
- 1 student services professional (counselor, audiologist, psychologist, nurse, etc.)
- 2 residential life staff (preferably from second and third shifts)
- 5 parents (no more than one of whom can be a parent and an employee of the school)
- 1 staff member from auxiliary services (such as business, child nutrition services)
- 2 members of the community

These members will form the voting group of the School Improvement Team. Members will be elected for one, two, and three-year terms so that the voting membership will refresh itself automatically each year by infusing new members onto the team. Each school shall decide, before elections are held, which positions will be one year terms, two year terms, and three year terms. This will create an on-going process that allows for the inclusion of new members while at the same time ensuring continuity of members with longer terms.

If one of the members leaves the school or decides to step down before his/her term ends, then an election shall be held in that area to choose a new representative.

This team will guide the entire school community in the development, implementation, and revision of the School Improvement Plan.

The following shall be ex-officio, non-voting members of the School Improvement Team; none of these members may be elected as chair or co-chair of the Team. However, it is critical that they attend School Improvement Team meetings because they bring the whole school perspective and may have expertise in areas that some of the school staff do not. They can also share information regarding the actions of the SIT and/or content of the plan in Executive Team meetings.

- School Director
- Principal/Assistant Principal
- Residential Life Director
- School Safety Officer
- School Business Officer

The SIT will need a secretary who is not a member of the team. The School Director shall appoint a clerical staff member from the school to serve in this capacity. The secretary will take notes and post them for access by the school community.

Election of a Chair and Co-chair; Terms

The School Improvement Team shall elect a chair and co-chair from within its numbers. Whoever is chair during the third year of the plan will act as an advisor to the new team chair once the new plan cycle begins.

School Improvement Committees

Each member of the school staff shall participate on at least once School Improvement Committee. It is the duty of the committees to develop the strategies, outcome measures, resources, data, persons responsible, and deadlines for the goal areas of the School Improvement Plan. Committees should report to the School Improvement Team regularly to share progress in their goal areas, made revisions as students' needs change, and to take direction from the SIT on information from other areas that may affect them. Each school will decide how often its committees will meet as well as how often each committee will report to the SIT.

Parent Participation

Each school, to the extent possible, should have a minimum of five parents on the School Improvement Team. No more than two of the parents can be employees of the school. The General Assembly recognizes and affirms the importance of parent participation in the School Improvement process. SIT meetings should be held at times when parents can attend. Parents who are not employees of the school can be reimbursed for travel and subsistence so that they can attend School Improvement Team meetings.

Development of the School Improvement Plan

The School Improvement Team will involve all stakeholders in the development of the School Improvement Plan. The plan shall be comprehensive and shall address the following goal areas which align with the goals of the Office of Education Services.

- Student Safety
- Curriculum and Instruction to Support Student Success, particularly in reading
- Parent Involvement
- Transition
- Compliance

Embedded in these should be extensive planning to develop professional staff in all areas of the school community as well as a focus on the use of technology to support student learning.

Each goal should be achieved through a number of objectives which would be accomplished through specific strategies. Each strategy should be defined by specific outcomes, resources, data, persons responsible, and deadlines. It is critical for the School Improvement Team and its committees to gather, interpret, and use data collected over time as the basis for its decisions related to students' academic, social, emotional, and vocational needs.

Approval of the School Improvement Plan

Once the entire school staff has had an opportunity to review the completed Plan, it must be approved by a vote by the stakeholders of 50% plus one. If the Plan is approved, then the School Director would submit it to the OES Superintendent. The OES Superintendent will review the Plan and forward it to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services for approval as the local board. If the Superintendent does not approve the Plan, it will be returned to the School Director for the School Improvement Team to make revisions, and the process starts again.

If the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services does not approve the Plan, then it is returned to the school for revisions and resubmission to the OES Superintendent and then the Secretary within 60 days.

Availability of the School Improvement Plan

Each school shall make arrangements for its SIP to be available to staff, students, parents, and community members in formats accessible to all of these stakeholders.