CHARACTERISTICS OF
SUCCESSFUL
DISTRICTS

DISTRICT SUPPORTED
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
HANDBOOK

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
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Characteristics of Successful Districts

Self-Assessment Handbook

District Support of Low-Performing Schools

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

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This document can be downloaded from the DPI website:
www.dpi.wi.gov/ssos/pdf/dsahandbk.pdf

Bulletin No. 7125

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Revised April 2011

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Foreword

The Department of Public Instruction is committed to ensuring that all Wisconsin students achieve at high levels. We have incredibly talented educators who are committed to creating schools that meet the diverse needs of our students. Many factors affect the success of our classrooms, schools and districts, and it is important that all practitioners and stakeholders take a step back and critically reflect on current systems and structures that support the mission of our schools and districts to ensure that they are functioning as effectively as possible.

The *Characteristics of Successful Districts* provides districts with a tool to examine their current practices in five key areas. It allows districts to identify and build on their strengths, and address areas that need to be improved. Just as our teachers provide support and guidance to the students in the classroom, districts must offer focused support to each of their schools. These rubrics provide a framework for continuous data gathering and reflection that leads to collaboration and improved strategies to meet the needs of all students. We must continue working to ensure that every child graduates with the knowledge and skills needed for success in the workforce or if they pursue further education.

Acknowledgements

Menominee Indian School District

Dan Hinkfuss, Director of Special Education
Chuck Raasch, Principal, Menominee Indian High School
Wendell Waukau, Superintendent
Marcia Wittrock, EEN Program Support Teacher

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Introduction

Educators in Wisconsin are dedicated to ensuring a quality education for all children and closing the achievement gap. This resource, the *Characteristics of Successful Districts Self-Assessment Handbook*, is aimed at assisting districts in achieving the goal that *Every Child is a Graduate* through district support to its low-performing schools. The framework for assessing this support, the Characteristics of Successful Districts, and a process for measuring the extent to which a district provides this support are contained in this handbook. Below is a description of the individual chapters.

Chapter One of this handbook provides introductory information about the District Self-Assessment. This section includes an explanation of what a District Self-Assessment is and why a district would choose to conduct this process.

Chapter Two contains an explanation of the Characteristics of Successful Districts, which provides the basis for the District Self-Assessment.

Chapter Three includes instructions and explanations of the District Self-Assessment process, including sample timelines and agendas, data collection and analysis tools, and techniques for beginning and conducting the District Self-Assessment. In addition, there is an online reporting form, which is described in the latter part of this chapter. The online reporting form is where all data gathered and analyzed will be compiled.

Chapters Four through Eight contain the specific action steps for each of the Characteristics, including possible data to collect, reflection questions, and steps to analyze the data for each standard of each of the Characteristics.

Chapter Nine contains a form on which districts can complete a summary of the findings from the Self-Assessment by identifying prioritized needs and developing an action plan with these results.

The Supporting Research is in Appendix K. Here you will find the extensive research that went into the creation of the Characteristics of Successful Districts. These resources are sorted by Characteristic.

Appendices have been developed to support the Self-Assessment process. Suggested facilitation techniques and a variety of worksheets make this a user-friendly process.

Ultimately, the *Characteristics of Successful Districts Self-Assessment Handbook* is designed to help district staff assess the effectiveness of district programs and policies, with the goal of improving performance in the district's low-performing schools. By completing a District Self-Assessment, a district has the necessary information to build a complete picture of district support to its low-performing schools, prioritize needs, and allocate resources to ensure improved student achievement.

Understanding the District Self-Assessment

What is the District Self-Assessment?

While education research in the past two decades has predominantly focused on school improvement, there has been a recent movement to focus on the district role in school improvement planning. The *Characteristics of Successful Districts Self-Assessment Handbook* has been created to help Wisconsin districts examine their role in effectively supporting improved school and student achievement. This handbook assists districts with the application of five key Characteristics that help districts examine how effectively they support their low-performing schools (see figure A). The five Characteristics of Successful Districts are:

Figure A

- Vision, Values, and Culture
- Leadership and Governance
- Decision Making and Accountability
- Curriculum and Instruction, and
- Professional Development and Teacher Quality
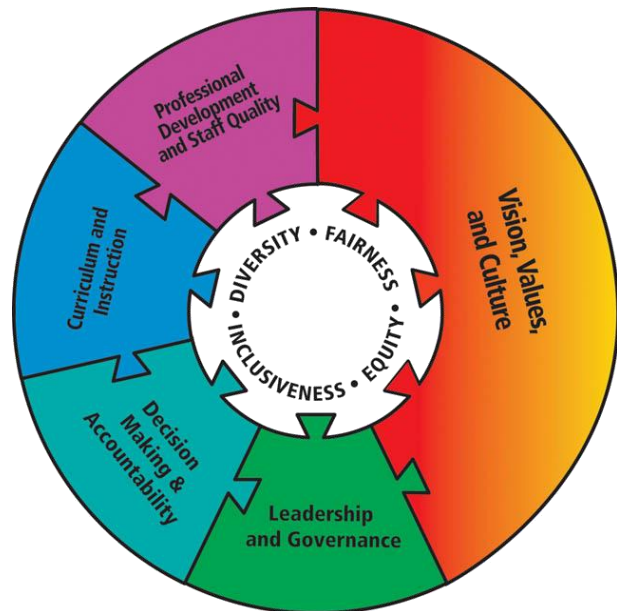
Each Characteristic is further defined by four to five accompanying Standards. Each Standard has four Indicators that describe the degree to which a district provides effective support to their low-performing schools. There are four indicator levels:

- Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization,
- Leads to Effective Implementation,
- Raises Awareness, and
- Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective.

To develop a common understanding of these indicators of district support refer to the table on the following page.

Common Understandings of the INDICATORS OF DISTRICT SUPPORT	
Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization	The district… • has integrated programs and responsibilities related to this standard in such a way that leadership for these initiatives has become a part of the systematic operations within the district. • has a systematic process for evaluating impact and improving programs to meet the changing needs of its schools.
Leads to Effective Implementation	The district… • has systems and structures in place to ensure consistent application of programs and policies in the district. • can clearly articulate its goals, philosophy, and action steps for implementing policies and programs related to this Standard.
Raises Awareness	The district… • is currently contemplating improvements in this Standard and/or implementing some policies and programs. • has some awareness or evidence of action amongst district leadership and staff around this issue, but there may be a lack of cohesive implementation.
Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective	The district… • is in a pre-contemplation phase for this Standard. There has been little discussion or action regarding the content in this Standard. • has staff or leadership that may be aware of the need for changes in this area, but improvement plans at present do not reflect the needed change in this Standard.

The Standards in each Characteristic were developed after a comprehensive literature review on district support for improved school and student performance. The following four steps provide the basis for the analysis of each Standard:

Step One: Prepare and Collect Data from a variety of sources.

Step Two: Analyze Data utilizing key questions.

Step Three: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard using the Characteristics; identify strengths and areas for improvement in the district's support to its low-performing schools.

Step Four: Create a Report to summarize the areas of strength and areas for improvement. The online reporting form for the Self-Assessment is a tool for compiling all data.

Why Should a District Conduct a Self-Assessment?

Most districts are continually engaged in a variety of activities related to district and school improvement. The District Self-Assessment helps district staff evaluate the degree to which these activities are targeted to the school or schools with the greatest need and whether or not these activities result in improved student achievement. Whether a district is completing its Elementary and Secondary Education Act Consolidated (ESEA) Application, setting goals and budgets for the upcoming year, or making decisions about future staffing needs, the District Self-Assessment results can inform important district level decisions.

In an era of heightened accountability and shrinking resources, districts must determine where their resources are best placed. In larger districts, conducting the District Self-Assessment can provide a process for bringing the numerous programs, policies, and initiatives into focus to determine critical areas of need. For smaller districts, District Self-Assessment results can be utilized to make the most effective use of often limited resources.

For all districts, large and small, the District Self-Assessment Report that is generated as a result of this process helps the district make decisions about programming and services to ensure the greatest impact on the district's low-performing schools. The Self-Assessment allows districts to:

- Build a comprehensive picture of district support to low-performing schools

- Determine how the district differentiates support to schools

- Measure the effectiveness of differentiation of support

- Evaluate program effectiveness through the use of data

- Identify effective programs and strategies, both existing and new, and reallocate resources and support to the low-performing schools

- Build capacity for district and school improvement by facilitating a district-level examination of policies, programs, and practices that focus on enhancing school performance. Refer to Appendix A for a visual representation of this data analysis

Connecting District and School Improvement Efforts

In 2000, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction released the *Characteristics of Successful Schools* framework. Based on research, this framework was designed to summarize the critical characteristics present in schools that have been successful in closing the achievement gap. Central to the implementation of these characteristics are equity, diversity, fairness, and inclusiveness. Each characteristic listed below must include these important principles and the corresponding responsive practices.

The *Characteristics of Successful Schools* are:

- **Vision:** Having a common understanding of goals, principles, and expectations for everyone in the learning community

- **Leadership:** Having a group of individuals dedicated to helping the learning community reach its vision

- **High Academic Standards:** Describing what students need to know and be able to do

- **Standards of the Heart:** Helping all students and staff within the learning community become caring, contributing, productive, and responsible citizens

- **Family, School, and Community Partnerships:** Building positive collaborative relationships with parents and families

- **Professional Development:** Providing consistent, meaningful opportunities for adults in the school setting to engage in continuous learning

- **Evidence of Success:** Collecting and analyzing data about students, programs, and staff
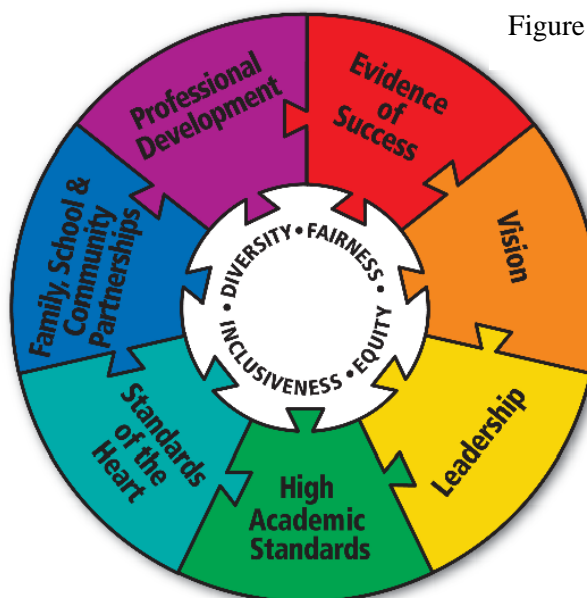
Figure B

The *Characteristics of Successful Schools* can be found at http://dpi.wi.gov/cssch/cssindex.html. This resource formed the basis for school improvement needs assessments tools available on the Wisconsin Information Network for Successful Schools (WINSS) website www.dpi.wi.gov/sig/index.html. Many Wisconsin schools have found the tools on this site to be useful. The five *Characteristics of Successful Districts* build on the ideas in the *Characteristics of Successful Schools*. The *Characteristics of Successful Districts* provide a framework for district-level staff to examine the impact that district decisions and support are having on student success in the low-performing schools. Successful schools are supported by efficient, responsive district structures. The *Characteristics of Successful Districts* outline the support and guidance that such districts provide. The accompanying graphic shows the connection between the *Characteristics of Successful Schools* and the *Characteristics of Successful Districts*. These combined characteristics create the basis for improvement efforts in any educational system (see Figure C).

Figure A
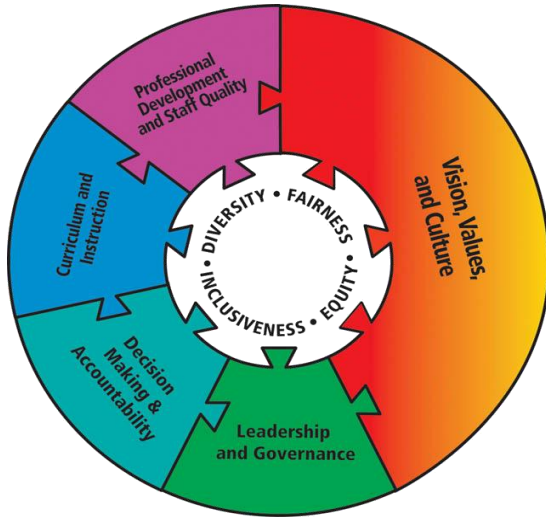
Characteristics of Successful Districts

Figure B
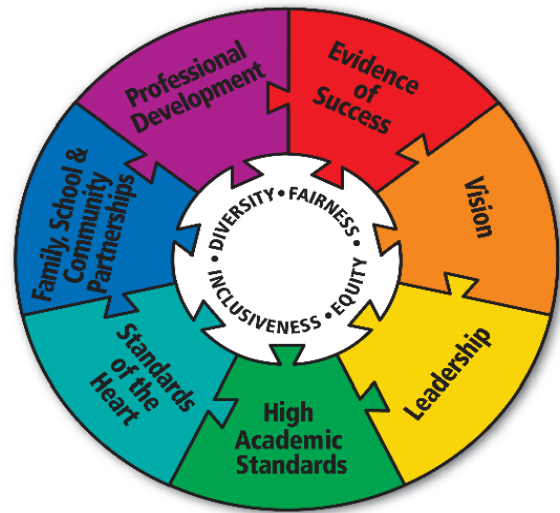
Characteristics of Successful Schools

Figure C
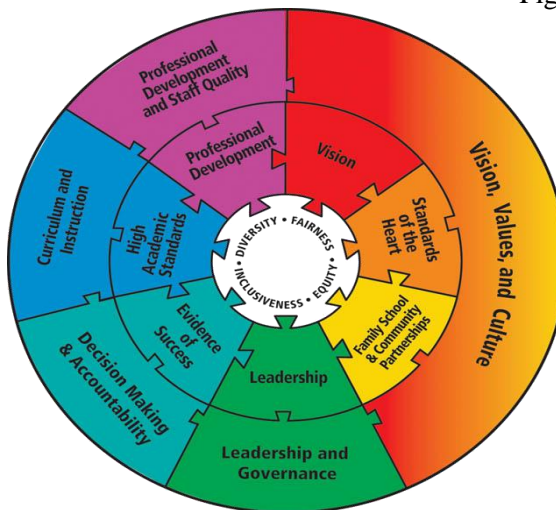
Characteristics of Successful Education Systems

Small and Large Districts…Make it Work for You!

One of the key strengths of the District Self-Assessment process is the ability of districts to design an experience that works within the size, structure, and local context of their district. Districts, along with the assistance of an experienced facilitator, develop a plan for implementing this reflective process. There is no recipe for how it should be done, because the process is contextual and must be designed to provide the district with the most honest and accurate information, especially as it supports its low-performing schools.

Some standards may be more appropriately applicable to larger districts. If a smaller district can use the intent of the standard and adapt it to practices in its own district, then change the language so that it better fits your district. If the standard is really not applicable to your district, do not spend time on that standard.

Remember, you are engaging in this process to promote dialogue that will give you information to make changes necessary to support your low-performing schools. Make the *Characteristics of Successful Districts* work for you!

The Five Characteristics of Successful Districts

CHARACTERISTIC I: VISION, VALUES, AND CULTURE

Standard 1.1   District Vision and Mission
Standard 1.2   District Communication with Stakeholders
Standard 1.3   District Community Partnerships
Standard 1.4   District Promotion of Positive School Culture
Standard 1.5   District Support for Safe Learning Environments

CHARACTERISTIC II: LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Standard 2.1   District Support for Leadership - District Administrative Leadership Team and Board of Education
Standard 2.2   District Support for Leadership - Central Office and School Building Administrators
Standard 2.3   District Support for Teacher Leadership for Student Achievement
Standard 2.4   District Training for School Improvement Teams and District Monitoring of School Improvement Plans

CHARACTERISTIC III: DECISION MAKING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Standard 3.1   District Development of a Data System for School Improvement
Standard 3.2   District Use of Data for Resource Allocation to Improve Student Learning
Standard 3.3   District Use of Fiscal Resources
Standard 3.4   District Support for School's Data-based Decision Making

CHARACTERISTIC IV: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Standard 4.1   District Curriculum and Instruction Framework
Standard 4.2   District Curriculum Alignment
Standard 4.3   District Support for Research-based Instruction
Standard 4.4   District Use of Data to Close Achievement Gaps
Standard 4.5   District Support for Interventions and Extended Learning Opportunities

CHARACTERISTIC V: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND STAFF QUALITY

Standard 5.1   District Support of Initial Educators
Standard 5.2   District Professional Development Model
Standard 5.3   District Recruitment and Retention of Highly Qualified, Experienced Teachers
Standard 5.4   District Support of Orientation and Mentoring for Principals
Standard 5.5   District Support for Principals as Instructional Leaders

Characteristic I: Vision, Values, and Culture

The district's focus on vision and mission, communication with stakeholders, partnerships with community agencies/organizations, and promotion of positive school culture, results in learning environments that are focused on student learning and success in low-performing schools.

DEFINITION	INDICATORS OF DISTRICT SUPPORT			
	Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization	Leads to Effective Implementation	Raises Awareness	Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective
1.1 DISTRICT VISION AND MISSION: The district's *vision* provides a collaboratively developed descriptive picture of a district's preferred future. The district's *mission* is a collaboratively developed description of how the district will achieve its vision. Together the vision and mission guide district and school practices, policies, and goal development, resulting in increased student achievement.	The district's low-performing schools have the capacity to lead school improvement using the district's vision and mission. There is an ongoing process to support the link between the district's vision and mission and school improvement efforts.	The alignment of the district's vision and mission with district and school practices and policies results in increased student achievement in the district's low-performing schools. Stakeholders are knowledgeable and supportive of the district's vision and mission.	There is evidence that some alignment exists between district and school practices and policies, and the vision and mission in the district's low-performing schools, but it is inconsistent. There is some evidence of collaboration and communication with stakeholders in building the vision, but it is not systematic.	There is little or no connection between the district's vision and mission and district practices, policies, and goals. Few stakeholders are aware of the district's vision and mission.
1.2 DISTRICT COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS: *District Communication with Stakeholders* is a key strategy to foster two-way communication between stakeholders and the district, by systematically sharing information and working collaboratively to achieve the district vision and mission. Stakeholders include students, parents, community members, university partners, staff, the Board of Education, and others. Parents/families are considered to be full partners in their child's education.	The district supports ongoing, systemic, formal two-way structures for communicating and collaborating with key stakeholders in its low-performing schools. These structures are assessed for their effectiveness, and continuous improvements are made. Parents are actively involved and knowledgeable about district/school practices that support the needs of all students.	The district has formal, two-way structures for listening and communicating with stakeholders in its low-performing schools that result in meaningful feedback and building positive relationships. Parents/families may be involved in some school practices, but their involvement may be inconsistent or not tied to strategies that will have an impact on student learning in low-performing schools.	The district has an initial plan or informal structures in place to address communication with stakeholders about its low-performing schools, but these structures provide few ongoing opportunities to gather feedback, input, or updates from stakeholders. Involvement of parents/families is sporadic or not tied to student learning and achievement.	The district has no formal structures for listening to and communicating with stakeholders about its low-performing schools. There are few opportunities to involve parents/families in meaningful ways to support student learning and achievement.

	Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization	**Leads to Effective Implementation**	**Raises Awareness**	**Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**
1.3 DISTRICT COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: *District Community Partnerships* enhance the achievement of students by providing external resources that benefit the district and its low-performing schools.	Partnerships between district and community agencies/ organizations are structured, self-sustaining, and continuously developing with a focus on increasing student performance in the district's low-performing schools. Partnerships are assessed for their impact on student/school success and are responsive to changing needs.	Partnerships between district and outside community agencies/organizations assist with aspects of student learning and success, resulting in increased student performance in the district's low-performing schools.	The district has fragmented or informal partnerships with outside resources and community agencies/ organizations with little focus on addressing needs of the low-performing students and schools.	The district has limited or nonexistent partnerships with outside resources and community agencies/ organizations to better meet the needs of the low-performing schools.
1.4 DISTRICT PROMOTION OF POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE: *District Promotion of Positive School Culture* reflects the norms, behaviors, and practices of a district that ensure staff, students, and parents/families are connected and valued.	The district's processes to promote positive school culture result in clear, operational procedures that are integrated into daily practice in its low-performing schools. The values that support the learning and success of students are evident throughout the school.	The district has processes that effectively promote positive school cultures in its low-performing schools through communication, interaction, respect, and high-quality learning environments. School norms, behaviors, and practices result in improved relationships that benefit students in its low-performing schools.	The district has an inconsistent or unevenly applied process to effectively promote positive school cultures in its low-performing schools.	The district has limited or nonexistent processes to effectively promote positive school cultures in its low-performing schools.
1.5 DISTRICT SUPPORT FOR SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS: *District Support for Safe Learning Environments* are the district's plans, programs, and strategies that include behavioral expectations and consequences for actions, as well as knowledge and skills needed by students and staff to promote safe physical, emotional, and social environments.	The district's procedures that ensure safe and orderly environments are embedded within daily practices at the district's low-performing schools. Data analysis and ongoing assessment are used to continuously improve safe learning environments.	The district's processes for ensuring safe and orderly environments in its low-performing schools lead to maximized student learning and staff effectiveness.	The district's implementation of procedures to ensure safe and orderly environments in its low-performing schools is inconsistent, incomplete, or ineffective.	The district lacks procedures to prevent violence, foster a drug-free environment, and/or create a safe learning environment in its low-performing schools.

Characteristic II: Leadership and Governance

The district's leadership and governance practices result in effective district administrative leadership teams and school board policies, a collaborative central office staff, effective building administrators, and targeted training and monitoring to support school improvement in the low-performing schools.

DEFINITION	INDICATORS OF DISTRICT SUPPORT			
	Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization	Leads to Effective Implementation	Raises Awareness	Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective
2.1: DISTRICT SUPPORT FOR LEADERSHIP— DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM AND BOARD OF EDUCATION: *District Support for Leadership— District Administrative Leadership Team and Board of Education* refers to the district administration and the Board's critical role in aligning policies, resources, and funding to the district's goals and priorities, and overseeing the impact of those funds.	The district administrative leadership team, in collaboration with the Board of Education, monitors how the district's low-performing schools effectively utilize and coordinate targeted funding, resources, and policies, resulting in increased student achievement.	The district administrative leadership team, in collaboration with the Board of Education, provides additional, targeted district funding and resources to address the district's goals and priorities in its low-performing schools, ensure alignment of policies and funding, and monitor the impact of the use of the funding.	The district administrative leadership team, in collaboration with the Board of Education, targets the effective use of Title I money and resources for the designated low-performing schools, but does not ensure alignment between these funds and local funding resources.	The district administrative leadership team, in collaboration with the Board of Education, accepts the report for the use of funds at the low-performing schools, without examining if these funds are targeted to the greatest need, only meeting minimal compliance with Title I requirements.
2.2: DISTRICT SUPPORT FOR LEADERSHIP - CENTRAL OFFICE AND SCHOOL BUILDING ADMINISTRATORS: *District Support for Leadership - Central Office and School Building Administrators* refers to the critical relationship between central office staff and school building administrators in planning, monitoring, and decision making regarding district programs and the use of resources that address improved student achievement. In smaller districts, this might involve key individuals who make decisions about programs and resources.	The district's planning, monitoring, and decision making processes include an ongoing review of how effectively central office staff and school building administrators collaborate, assess district programs, use resources, and how these practices impact student achievement in the district's low-performing schools.	The district provides structured, regular opportunities for central office staff and school administrators to plan and monitor collaboratively, and make decisions about district programs and use of resources addressing student achievement in its low-performing schools.	The district provides some opportunities for central office staff and school administrators from its low-performing schools to jointly plan and make decisions about district programs and use of resources addressing student achievement, but collaboration among these groups is infrequent and inconsistent.	The district's central office staff/departments operate independently with few opportunities for collaboration between school building administrators and other district central office staff to support the district's low-performing schools.

	Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization	Leads to Effective Implementation	Raises Awareness	Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective
2.3: DISTRICT SUPPORT FOR TEACHER LEADERSHIP FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: *District Support for Teacher Leadership for Student Achievement* recognizes the critical role that districts play in building teacher ownership of student achievement by providing opportunities for teachers to collaboratively plan and work together on school improvement and professional development.	The district has defined various roles for teacher leaders including collaboration opportunities and school improvement and professional development planning. The district can describe the impact of their leadership on student learning and achievement.	The district partners with schools in promoting student achievement by deliberately building teacher leadership in its low-performing schools through support of teacher opportunities for collaborative planning, school improvement planning, and professional development planning opportunities.	The district has begun acknowledging the role that teacher leadership plays in increasing student achievement, but efforts to support and build teacher leadership are inconsistent in its low-performing schools.	The district has little or no evidence of building teacher leadership in its low-performing schools. School staff lacks ownership of the learning process of students.
2.4: DISTRICT TRAINING FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAMS AND DISTRICT MONITORING OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS: *District Training for School Improvement Teams and District Monitoring of School Improvement Plans* are critical strategies that districts use to build the skills of school staff to collect and analyze data, make recommendations for actions, and monitor the effectiveness of school improvement plans in addressing the needs of students and staff.	School improvement teams collect and analyze data, monitor the effectiveness of school improvement plans, and make necessary changes to the plans to continuously increase student achievement. The district monitors results and provides additional support and resources in its low-performing schools.	The district provides targeted support for training of school improvement teams, collecting and analyzing data from a variety of sources, and monitoring the effectiveness of school improvement plans, resulting in increased student achievement in its low-performing schools.	The district plan for training and monitoring school improvement processes is not implemented systematically and does not provide targeted support to the district's low-performing schools.	The district provides little or no training for and monitoring of school improvement processes for the low-performing schools.

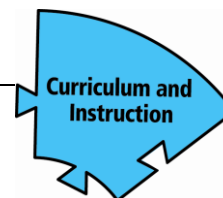# Characteristic III: Decision Making and Accountability

The district supports the school's collection and analysis of different sources of disaggregated student data. These efforts result in effective decisions regarding the allocation of resources and school improvement initiatives based on student performance in its low-performing schools.

DEFINITION	INDICATORS OF DISTRICT SUPPORT			
	Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization	**Leads to Effective Implementation**	**Raises Awareness**	**Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**
3.1: DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT OF A DATA SYSTEM FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: *District Development of a Data System for School Improvement* is a comprehensive and systematic process developed by the district for collecting and using a variety of data that can be disaggregated by student subgroups. The data system is accessible to school staff and includes strategies for stakeholders to continuously provide feedback.	The district has a plan and system in place to add building-based qualitative and quantitative disaggregated student data that provides for continuous improvement in data collection and use in the low-performing schools.	The district has a comprehensive system of targeted data that can be disaggregated by student subgroups, is enhanced and improved continuously, and includes strategies for stakeholders to provide feedback. The system is user-friendly, accessible to all staff, and available from a variety of locations.	The district has a data system beyond WINSS that is accessible to staff. However, data is not always current or immediately available to the district's low-performing schools.	The district does not have a comprehensive system beyond WINSS for gathering and reporting disaggregated achievement, perception, and program data about its low-performing schools.
3.2: DISTRICT USE OF DATA FOR RESOURCE ALLOCATION TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING: *District Use of Data for Resource Allocation to Improve Student Learning* refers to a district system for targeting resources, including, money, staff, professional development, materials, and additional support to schools based on the analysis of a variety of data that is disaggregated by student subgroups to determine district and school needs. In smaller districts, decisions might be made to target specific groups or individuals who need extra support.	The district has an objective system involving multiple stakeholders who use a variety of data that is disaggregated by student subgroups to allocate resources that sustains district operations and meets critical learning needs of students of the low-performing schools. The system is continuously evaluated and refined to improve resource allocation that meets the needs of the schools and the district.	The district uses a variety of data that is disaggregated by student subgroups to make decisions concerning resource allocation and improved support to the district's low-performing schools. Use of resources is continually evaluated by the district for its impact. Input from school staff, parents, students, and the community is periodically gathered to make changes to balance allocation needs.	The district uses data that is disaggregated by student subgroups to make some adjustments based on performance and operational needs; however, only a small portion of the resources is allocated based on targeting resources to the low-performing schools.	The district does not use data that is disaggregated by student subgroups for resource allocation purposes in its low-performing schools.

	Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization	Leads to Effective Implementation	Raises Awareness	Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective
3.3: DISTRICT USE OF FISCAL RESOURCES: *District Use of Fiscal Resources* refers to how districts use fiscal resources from local, state, and federal programs to achieve their goals and priorities, and how those resources are coordinated in the district.	The district has an ongoing process to evaluate and improve the use of fiscal resources and collaboration among programs and departments that are responsible for various funding sources. This evaluation and collaboration allows the district to more effectively achieve its goals and priorities in its low-performing schools.	The use of all district school improvement funds from Title I, II, III, V, or other programs are coordinated among key stakeholders and targeted toward reaching goals in the low-performing schools. Carryover of school improvement funds only occurs when funds are allocated for future support of specific school improvement activities.	The district has attempted to create a centralized plan for coordinating school improvement funding, but there are gaps in coordination and targeting of funding to the low-performing schools. School improvement funds that are returned or carried over are generally ten percent or less of the original allocation.	The district has no centralized plan for allocating and coordinating school improvement resources to its low-performing schools. The district frequently turns back funds available for school improvement from Title I, II, III, V, or other programs.
3.4: DISTRICT SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL'S DATA-BASED DECISION MAKING: *District Support for School's Data-based Decision Making* refers to the practices and systems that the district has implemented to develop a school's capacity to use a variety of data that can be disaggregated by student subgroups to make effective decisions that benefit students.	School staff in the district's low-performing schools use a variety of disaggregated student data to make decisions as an operational norm of the culture. Schools become more self-sufficient in their capacity to make data-based decisions. The district supports the schools' use of data through a continuous feedback loop.	The district has a formal plan to build capacity for school-based, data-driven decision making in its low-performing schools. The district is extensively involved in helping its low-performing schools use a variety of disaggregated student data, resulting in improved student achievement.	The district has a process that supports the use of disaggregated student data for school-level decision making, but the process is applied infrequently or inconsistently at the low-performing schools.	The district does not have a formal process that supports the use of disaggregated student data for school-level decision making in its low-performing schools.

Characteristic IV: Curriculum and Instruction

The district ensures that curriculum, assessment, instructional practices, and programs lead to equitable educational opportunities and outcomes for all students in its low-performing schools.

DEFINITION	INDICATORS OF DISTRICT SUPPORT			
	Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization	Leads to Effective Implementation	Raises Awareness	Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective
4.1: DISTRICT CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION FRAMEWORK: The *District Curriculum and Instruction Framework* provides a district-wide picture with levels of specificity to what is taught in all grades and in all subject areas, including the core content, grade level benchmarks, instructional strategies, and assessments. The framework provides curricular and instructional transitions between grades and disciplines within and among district schools.	The district's low-performing schools monitor, evaluate, and improve implementation of the curriculum and instruction framework to maintain the integrity of the core content, grade level benchmarks, instructional strategies, and assessments for growth of student achievement. With the help of school staff and administrators, the district provides additional support to teachers and principals to implement the framework, and provides additional support for curricular and instructional transitions between grades and disciplines within and among district schools, when necessary.	The district process for supporting teachers and principals in the implementation of the curriculum and instruction framework results in rigorous and relevant curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the district's low-performing schools. The framework provides for curricular and instructional transitions between grades and disciplines within and among district schools.	The district has developed a curriculum and instruction framework including the core content, grade level benchmarks, instructional strategies, and assessments, but provides inconsistent or infrequent support to teachers and principals for implementing the framework in its low-performing schools.	The district does not have a curriculum and instruction framework with levels of specificity to what is taught in all grades and in all subject areas, including the core content, grade level benchmarks, instructional strategies, and assessments.

	Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization	Leads to Effective Implementation	Raises Awareness	Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective
4.2: DISTRICT CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT: *District Curriculum Alignment* describes the systematic and systemic processes, support, and training for the use of curriculum aligned with state and district standards, resulting in common, high expectations and a shared vocabulary for curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the district's low-performing schools.	The district's low-performing schools ensure the use of aligned curriculum in their classrooms and utilize the district's established expectations and vocabulary for curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote the school's planning and implementation of improved instructional and assessment practices. The district monitors the successful application of aligned curriculum, classroom instruction, and assessment, and provides additional support when necessary.	The district's processes, support, and training for the use of curriculum aligned to both the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards (WMAS) and the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE) assessment frameworks lead to common expectations and vocabulary for instruction, curriculum, and assessment that foster improvement of instructional and assessment practices in the low-performing schools. The district provides targeted staff development and follow-up support for schools to ensure classroom instruction aligns with the curriculum.	The district supports processes that result in curriculum aligned to both the WMAS and the WKCE assessment frameworks, but provides little additional support or training in the low-performing schools to ensure that common expectations and vocabulary for classroom instruction, curriculum, and assessment assist with the school's improvement of instructional and assessment practices.	The district has provided few or no resources and/or processes to assist schools with curriculum alignment, resulting in no common vocabulary for classroom instruction, curriculum, and assessment.
4.3: DISTRICT SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH-BASED INSTRUCTION: *District Support for Research-based Instruction* refers to the effective support that the district provides to teachers and schools regarding the use of research-based instructional strategies, materials, and assessments to effectively meet the needs of a wide range of student learners – including English Language Learners (ELL), students with disabilities, gifted, ethnically diverse, and economically disadvantaged – in their classrooms.	The district requires, finances, supports, monitors, and evaluates the effectiveness of its low-performing schools' implementation of research-based instructional strategies and assessments, resulting in multiple opportunities at the classroom level for all students to meet state standards. The district provides additional targeted resources and training to support research-based instruction in its low-performing schools. Referrals to Title I and Special Education have decreased.	The district requires, finances, and supports research-based instructional strategies, materials, and assessments in its low-performing schools, resulting in multiple, effective opportunities at the classroom level for all students, including ELL, students with disabilities, gifted, ethnically diverse, and economically disadvantaged to meet state standards. All classroom teachers in the low-performing schools are providing effective differentiated instructional strategies.	The district requires that research-based instructional strategies, materials, and assessments be applied at the classroom level, but provides little additional, targeted support to reinforce the use of research-based instruction, materials, and assessments in its low-performing schools. Professional development is provided to classroom teachers to build their skills at providing differentiated instruction, but application of these strategies varies from teacher to teacher.	The district does not require, finance, or support the use of research-based instructional strategies, materials, or assessments. Teachers in the low-performing schools rely primarily on Title I or Special Education services to meet the wide range of learning needs of the low-performing students.

	Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization	Leads to Effective Implementation	Raises Awareness	Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective
4.4: DISTRICT USE OF DATA TO CLOSE ACHIEVEMENT GAPS: *District Use of Data to Close Achievement Gaps* refers to how the district uses student, program, and school data to identify targeted areas for curriculum, instruction, and other program improvements to support the academic achievement and social and emotional well-being for all students, including ELL, students with disabilities, ethnically diverse, and economically disadvantaged.	The district monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of its low-performing schools' use of assessment and other data to identify achievement gaps, to improve curriculum, instruction, and other programs, and to appropriately support all students. The district provides additional resources to support the schools' efforts to increase the achievement of all students, including ELL, students with disabilities, ethnically diverse, and economically disadvantaged.	The district uses assessment and other data to identify achievement gaps, provides meaningful feedback and support for implementing curriculum, instruction, and other program improvement to support all students, including ELL, students with disabilities, ethnically diverse, and economically disadvantaged.	The district uses assessment and other data to identify achievement gaps, but is infrequent and/or inconsistent with its support to its low-performing schools in identifying targeted areas for curriculum, instruction, and other program improvements to support all students, including ELL, students with disabilities, ethnically diverse, and economically disadvantaged.	The district uses minimal or no assessment and/or other data to identify achievement gaps, provide meaningful feedback for curriculum and instruction improvement, and appropriately provide other program improvements to support all students, including ELL, students with disabilities, ethnically diverse, and economically disadvantaged.
4.5: DISTRICT SUPPORT FOR INTERVENTIONS AND EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES: *District Support for Interventions and Extended Learning Opportunities* refers to the system of support that schools use to ensure that students performing below grade level have access to interventions and extended learning opportunities that ensure struggling students in the low-performing schools are making progress. These strategies can include: tutoring, summer school, intercession courses, after-school programs, and extended learning opportunities within the school day.	The district's low-performing schools implement a systematic approach to using interventions and extended learning opportunities to meet the needs of struggling students in the low-performing schools. The district monitors these interventions and extended learning opportunities for their impact and to ensure that struggling students are not being eliminated from higher level learning opportunities. Interventions and extended learning opportunities are modified to more effectively meet the learning needs of students.	The district has a systematic approach to assess the different learning needs of its struggling students and to target interventions and extended learning opportunities to the needs of individual students in the low-performing schools. The impact on student achievement is generally positive.	There are limited or inconsistent interventions and extended learning opportunities available to students performing below grade level, and participation in these opportunities is inadequate to address the learning needs of struggling students in the low-performing schools.	The district has no formal structure to ensure that students performing below grade level have access to individualized interventions and/or extended instructional time outside scheduled core classes in its low-performing schools. Academic support is limited to Title I or Special Education services.

Characteristic V: Professional Development and Staff Quality

Comprehensive district-wide professional development and recruitment strategies exist to ensure that high quality teachers are serving students in the low-performing schools.

DEFINITION	INDICATORS OF DISTRICT SUPPORT			
	Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization	**Leads to Effective Implementation**	**Raises Awareness**	**Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**
5.1: DISTRICT SUPPORT OF INITIAL EDUCATORS: *District Support of Initial Educators* is the systematic process that the district has implemented to support the orientation and mentoring needs of initial educators according to the state law (PI-34).	The district provides intensive and targeted support of initial educators through orientation, coaching, and mentoring programs. The district monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of its low-performing schools' efforts to improve orientation, coaching, and mentoring programs to address the changing needs of initial educators and provides for continuous improvement of district services to schools.	The district provides intensive and targeted support of initial educators through orientation, coaching, and mentoring programs. The district monitors the effectiveness of its system in its low-performing schools to improve the program and address the changing needs of schools.	The district has a system for identifying the needs of initial educators in its low-performing schools; and provides orientation, coaching, and mentoring programs, but it is not aligned with the identified goals of the district, and little monitoring, evaluation, and improvement of the system occurs.	The district has little or no evidence of an organized system for the orientation and mentoring of initial educators of its low-performing schools.
5.2: DISTRICT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL: *District Professional Development Model*, organized around district goals and program priorities, is a systematic, comprehensive, standards-driven approach and structure for providing high quality learning opportunities to district staff that focus on improving student learning and achievement.	The district has adopted a standards-based professional development model organized around a comprehensive set of program priorities. The model has been successfully implemented and is sustained and changed in order to meet the needs and goals of all students and staff, especially in its low-performing schools.	The district has adopted a professional development, standards-based model organized around a comprehensive set of district goals and program priorities that is focused on improving student learning and achievement in its low-performing schools, and is designed to meet the needs of a variety of staff members.	The district offers a variety of professional development activities for its low-performing schools, but it is not a standards-based, comprehensive model reflective of district and program priorities that is focused on improving student learning and achievement.	The district has little or no evidence of a comprehensive, professional development model for its low-performing schools based on professional development standards and district goals and program priorities that focuses on improving student learning and achievement.

	Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization	Leads to Effective Implementation	Raises Awareness	Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective
5.3: DISTRICT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF HIGHLY QUALIFIED, EXPERIENCED TEACHERS: *District Recruitment and Retention of Highly Qualified, Experienced Teachers* is the systematic process that the district has implemented to ensure that all teachers in the low-performing schools are licensed and effective.	The district monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of its efforts to recruit, place, and retain highly qualified, effective, and experienced teachers in its low-performing schools. The school climate/culture is supportive of continuous professional development, professional learning communities, and improved student learning. Retention rates for highly qualified, effective, and experienced teachers are similar to the district's schools with high levels of student learning.	The district can document that it consistently recruits and places highly qualified, effective, and experienced teachers in the low-performing schools. Strategies to improve school climate/culture and foster a professional learning community are in place in the school. Retention rates for highly qualified, effective, and experienced teachers are improving.	The district attempts to recruit and place highly qualified, effective, and experienced teachers in its low-performing schools and identifies strategies to improve school climate/culture and the retention of those teachers.	The district has little or no evidence that it prioritizes recruitment and placement of its most effective teachers in its low-performing schools.
5.4: DISTRICT SUPPORT OF ORIENTATION AND MENTORING FOR PRINCIPALS: *District Support of Orientation and Mentoring for Principals* is the systematic process that the district has implemented to support the orientation and mentoring needs of new principals and the on-going learning of all principals in its low-performing schools.	The district monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of its efforts to improve orientation and mentoring programs to address the changing needs of new principals that results in continuous improvement of district services to administrators. The district continually designs and evaluates the impact of professional development programs and strategies for principals in the low-performing schools.	The district monitors the effectiveness of its system for the orientation and mentoring of principals in its low-performing schools to improve the program and address the changing needs of schools. The district provides ongoing learning opportunities for principals in the low-performing schools.	The district has a system for the orientation and mentoring of new principals in its low-performing schools, but it is not aligned with the identified goals of the district and little monitoring and improvement of the system occurs. There are few and inconsistent learning opportunities for principals in the low-performing schools.	The district has little or no evidence of an organized system for the orientation and mentoring of principals, and/or systematic ongoing learning opportunities for all principals in its low-performing schools.

	Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization	Leads to Effective Implementation	Raises Awareness	Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective
5.5: DISTRICT SUPPORT OF PRINCIPALS AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS: *District Support of Principals as Instructional Leaders* refers to how the district ensures that school building administrators monitor, supervise, and support instruction as their top priority; and ensures that district leaders implement a system of interventions that addresses the needs of students performing below grade level.	The district has a systemic and systematic structure that monitors and supports building administrators and other leaders in its low-performing schools. These systems allow for analyzing student data to improve instruction, curriculum, assessment, professional development, and determination of appropriate interventions for students performing below grade level.	The district uses the results of principal evaluations and school monitoring to support building administrators and other leaders in its low-performing schools in improving student learning by using effective implementation of instruction, curriculum, assessment, and professional development. The district provides resources to principals in low-performing schools to implement a system of interventions for students below grade level.	The district articulates the link between instructional leadership, staff effectiveness, and student achievement to building administrators in its low-performing schools, but provides little/no differentiated support for improving student learning and planning interventions for low-performing students.	The district provides little/no support to administrators and other leaders of its low-performing schools for instructional leadership and implementation of a system of interventions for students performing below grade level.

The District Self-Assessment Process

These are suggested actions for beginning the District Self-Assessment. While the order of these actions could be modified, creating a well-rounded team, with strong leadership and clearly delineated tasks, is vital to the effectiveness of this process.

Form a Self-Assessment Team

The Self-Assessment Team is responsible for organizing and leading the Self-Assessment Process. Team members will be involved in determining what data exists and what data needs to be collected, analyzing of the data, reviewing the standards and indicators, and writing up analysis summaries. The Self-Assessment Team should be comprised of a cross section of district and school staff involved in district and school improvement, professional development, Elementary and Secondary Education Act coordination, special education, pupil services, fiscal matters, union representation, testing and data analysis, and curriculum and instruction. Parents and other community stakeholders should have a voice in the Self-Assessment Team. Moreover, participation of the superintendent is essential.

The Self-Assessment Team should be large enough to get diverse perspectives on district efforts, yet small enough to ensure that the team can meet regularly. The composition of this team may differ, depending on district size. Larger districts will have central office staff from which to draw. In smaller districts with no central administrative office, the team may be comprised of the superintendent, school principals, and staff who play a variety of leadership roles in the district. Regardless of district size, ensure that the aforementioned departments are represented on the Self-Assessment Team. Refer to Appendix C for a sample template to organize a Self-Assessment Team.

Select a Facilitator

It is highly recommended that the district secure an outside facilitator to lead the Self-Assessment process. An outside facilitator is more likely to have adequate time to lead the process and assist other Self-Assessment Team members. Our DPI has trained CESA staff to serve as Self-Assessment facilitators. The Self-Assessment Team will rely on their facilitator to help them collaborate, reflect on data, and meet deadlines. All participants should clarify the responsibilities of the facilitator and the Self-Assessment Team. A list of common responsibilities for a Self-Assessment facilitator can be found on the next page.

Conduct an Orientation Meeting

The orientation meeting will allow team members to become familiar with the Self-Assessment process and participate in initial discussions about roles and responsibilities of each member. At this meeting, team members will receive background information, understand the Self-Assessment process, review district expectations, and introduce the Characteristics and Indicators. The facilitator and superintendent may present a proposed timeline and corresponding tasks at the orientation meeting. Refer to Appendix D for a sample of an orientation meeting agenda.

Map Out a Calendar

It is important to create a calendar, detailing specific steps and expected results for the Self-Assessment process. Consider and include items such as involvement of stakeholders in each characteristic, data collection timelines, data analysis timelines, the compilation of the final report, and sharing the final report with stakeholders. Timelines for establishing goals and planning next steps after the Self-Assessment should be addressed. Refer to Appendix E for a sample template to organize a calendar.

Common Responsibilities of the Facilitator

✳ Coordinate the District Self-Assessment process

✳ Assemble the Self-Assessment process Self-Assessment Team along with key district leadership staff

✳ Organize and manage a schedule of meetings and tasks to be completed for the Self-Assessment Team

✳ Facilitate on-going discussions with the Self-Assessment Team about each of the Characteristics

✳ Determine and/or delegate responsibilities of each task to team members

✳ Oversee data collection plans

✳ Check-in with the Self-Assessment Team members to ensure excellent meeting attendance and participation

✳ Promote thoughtful dialogue between/among the team members

✳ Work toward ensuring that the voices of all group members are heard

✳ Work toward reaching consensus when there are different perspectives of group members

✳ Assist team members in reaching decisions on next steps to address areas of needed improvement

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The Process in Detail

In brief, the Self-Assessment includes five Characteristics comprised of a total of 23 Standards. The bulk of the District Self-Assessment process involves analyzing data gathered for these 23 Standards. As described in chapter one, this analysis process involves four steps designed to facilitate the gathering of data to assess the level of district support provided to the low-performing schools. (See graphic on the following page that describes this process.)

The four-step Standard analysis includes:

- **Step One: Prepare and Collect Data**
- **Step Two: Analyze Data**
- **Step Three: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard**
- **Step Four: Create a Report**

The culmination of the District Self-Assessment process involves two remaining summary steps. After the data for each Standard has been analyzed, a summary is created detailing the district strengths and needs related to each Characteristic. These Characteristic summaries are then used to form one overall Self-Assessment summary of districts strengths across all five Characteristics. Appendix J (Key Terms and Components) and Appendix B (Checklist for Completing – Start to Finish) are helpful tools for understanding the "big picture" of the District Self-Assessment process.

Directions for completing the four-step Standard analysis, as well as the Characteristic summaries and overall Self-Assessment summary, are found in Chapter 9 beginning on page 93. The Self-Assessment Team will develop a plan for completing these analyses and summaries. A final Self-Assessment report should be built, either during this process or after all analyzing and summarizing is complete.

The DPI has created an online reporting form, which can be found at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Any district that prefers to create a paper report may use the Standard Analysis worksheets, as well as the Characteristics summary, and overall Self-Assessment summary worksheets found in the back of this handbook.

Connection Among Parts of the Self-Assessment Process

| FOUR-STEP STANDARD ANALYSIS | → CHARACTERISTIC SUMMARY | → OVERALL SELF-ASSESSMENT SUMMARY |

Vision, Values, and Culture — 1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4 1.5 → Characteristic Summary I

Leadership and Governance — 2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 → Characteristic Summary II

Decision-Making & Accountability — 3.1 3.2 3.3 3.4 → Characteristic Summary III

Curriculum and Instruction — 4.1 4.2 4.3 4.4 4.5 → Characteristic Summary IV

Professional Development and Staff Quality — 5.1 5.2 5.3 5.4 5.5 → Characteristic Summary V

Overall Self-Assessment Summary

Four-step Standard Analysis

The four-step Standard analysis described within this section contains many references to the data collection and analysis resources contained on the Standard analysis pages of this handbook. Each of the 23 Standards has individualized data collection information.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Initially, the Self-Assessment Team makes decisions and preparations to gather data that will demonstrate the district's efforts under a particular Standard. Determine which Self-Assessment Team members should lead the data collection and data analysis for each Standard review. Consider forming ad hoc committees to help with the data collection and analysis process. In a larger district, the task of data collection may be spread out over more people, whereas in a smaller district fewer team members may jointly collect data over a longer period of time. Refer to documents in Chapter 9 for sample templates to organize action steps for each Standard.

When considering what data will best inform the current status of district practices related to a given standard, Teams may have some data readily available to them but may also need to collect new data. Data sources will vary from standard to standard and one source of data may be relevant to multiple standards. Examples of data sources include student, staff, and/or parent perception surveys, achievement data, financial allocations and usage rates, focus group findings, observations, interviews, professional development and credential records, teacher mobility rates, etc. Each standard includes a list of possible data sources relevant for that standard.

Directions:
- Read and review the Standard and its definition to have a perspective on which area of district support should be assessed under that Standard. Ensure that everyone understands the intent of the Standard and how it fits into the bigger picture of that Characteristic.
- Review the Indicators and become familiar with the descriptors of the different levels of district support. Confirm with Self-Assessment Team members that there is a common understanding of the definition for each Indicator. The group will be asked to choose the indicator that best describes the district's support after analyzing the data and reviewing the evidence for the Standard. See page 27 to develop a common understanding of the indicator levels.
- Gather data from a variety of sources. Look for qualitative and quantitative data. Check Appendix H for ways to analyze data. Some possible data sources may include:
  - ☐ Standardized Data ☐ Interviews ☐ Surveys
  - ☐ Focus Group ☐ Observations ☐ Documents & Other
- Review the list of possible data to gather. Included with each Standard are examples of specific data. Each Standard analysis page features specific examples of data to gather.
- Look ahead to the key questions to generate ideas for additional data sources.
- Map out a plan to collect or prepare data that will help in the assessment.
- Organize the data collection plan in a reader-friendly template. For a sample of a data collection template, refer to Appendix G.

Specific Examples of Data to Gather

Sample - Standard 1.1: District Vision and Mission
- District vision and mission statements
- Relevant sections of district and school improvement plans, policies, and/or practices
- Agendas and minutes from meetings with community members, parents, and/or school staff on vision and mission
- Surveys and interviews with relevant stakeholders on significance and/or effectiveness of the vision and mission
- Distributed publications and documents about and/or including vision and mission statements
- Focus group sessions on stakeholders' reflections of the district's vision and mission

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Step 2: Analyze Data

Collected data will be analyzed using key questions. The Self-Assessment Team will utilize the areas of reflection to generate probing and meaningful dialogue about the effectiveness of the district's support to its low-performing schools. During this step, team members should continue to keep in mind that the goal of the Self-Assessment is not to evaluate all of the district's functions, but to examine how effectively the district's policies, programs, and practices are impacting student achievement in the low-performing schools.

Directions:
- Review the key questions and use one or two of the accompanying reflection questions to discuss and analyze as a group. Create a process and protocol for the discussions related to the data analysis. Ensure all relevant data is reviewed and relevant stakeholders are consulted to provide rich input with each Standard. Refer to Appendix H for a data analysis activity.
- Analyze the collected data to help answer the key questions. Focus on reporting the most salient findings from the data analysis. Ensure that sufficient information is provided so that an outsider would be clear about the district's efforts to support its low-performing schools in each specific Standard.
- Create a *summary of findings* about what the data reveals about the district's impact on student achievement given the data gathered for this Standard.
- Catalog copies of the data sources for each Standard in a binder or box.
- Key questions are designed to help with the data analysis and can also be used to brainstorm sources of data to gather.

Key Questions

Sample - Standard 1.1: District Vision and Mission

Key Question A: Does the district have quality mission and vision statements?
Do these statements reflect a commitment to a quality education for all students? Do they promote a desire and drive for administrators, teachers, parents, and community members to improve student learning throughout the district and community? How do the goals of the district vision and mission serve to unite the work of the district, schools, and community? When was the vision and mission developed? Have there been opportunities to revisit the vision and mission?

Key Question B: Do the district vision and mission statements drive practice in the low-performing schools?
How are district and school improvement efforts and goals aligned with vision and mission statements? To what extent does the alignment of the district's vision and mission with district and school practices result in increased student achievement? Do school improvement teams see their work as part of the district vision and mission?

Key Question C: Do stakeholders from the low-performing schools support the district vision and mission statements?
Were the vision and mission statements collaboratively developed? How are parents, community members, and teachers involved? Do they represent a wide variety of stakeholders? Is there "buy-in" to the vision and mission? How are the district vision, mission, and goals articulated among principals, teachers, parents, and students in the low-performing schools?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Data Synthesis and Standard Rating is an important step in assessing the district's support of its low-performing schools. This step will be central in providing further guidance to the district and its stakeholders as action plans are developed to target areas for improving district support.

Directions:
Based on the data analyzed for that Standard, the Self-Assessment Team selects the indicator that best describes how well the district is supporting the low-performing schools. Remember that this rating should be assigned only after the data is gathered and analyzed. Choosing a rating level before reflecting on the data could minimize the process to a perception survey.

Standard Rating

Sample - Standard 1.1: District Vision and Mission

The district's *vision* provides a collaboratively developed descriptive picture of a district's preferred future. The district's *mission* is a collaboratively developed description of how the district will achieve its vision. Together the vision and mission guide district and school practices, policies, and goal development resulting in increased student achievement.

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district's low-performing schools have the capacity to lead school improvement using the district's vision and mission. There is an ongoing process to support the link between the district's vision and mission and school improvement efforts.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The alignment of the district's vision and mission with district and school practices and policies results in increased student achievement in the district's low-performing schools. Stakeholders are knowledgeable and supportive of the district's vision and mission.
• **Raises Awareness**	There is evidence that some alignment exists between district and school practices and policies, and the vision and mission in the district's low-performing schools, but it is inconsistent. There is some evidence of collaboration and communication with stakeholders in building the vision, but it is not systematic.
• **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	There is little or no connection between the district's vision and mission and district practices, policies, and goals. Few stakeholders are aware of the district's vision and mission.

- Look back to the summary of findings written in Step 2 to ensure that there is a clear connection between the summary and the selected level of district support. The link between the two should be obvious to an outside observer.
- Summarize the district's key strengths and areas for improvement. Provide a level of specificity about the strengths and areas for improvement that will allow the district to make plans in the future to target areas of need. Make pertinent connections to student achievement in the low-performing schools.

Step 4: Create the Report

Detailed instructions for completing the Characteristics of Successful District Self-Assessment Online Report can be found at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. If the team wishes to complete the report on paper (initially or in place of the online report), refer to Chapter 9 for helpful resources.

Once all data have been submitted, print and collate the final report. Data that are relevant to the key questions for each Standard should be included. The printed report generated from the online tool can be used to share findings with staff, Board members, and other stakeholders in the district.

Characteristic Summary

In the Characteristic Summary, the Self-Assessment Team makes final conclusions about the district's support for its low-performing schools related to a given Characteristic. This step is to be completed after all of the corresponding Standards have been analyzed and rated. Chapter 9 contains five Characteristic summary worksheets.

Directions
- Review the summaries in Step 3 (Synthesize Data and Rate Standard) for each Standard within a Characteristic.
- Work together with the Self-Assessment Team and other stakeholders to determine three or four areas of strength and areas for improvement most crucial in increasing support to the low-performing schools under each Characteristic.
- Focusing on the areas for improvement, determine what research-based strategies and next steps would most improve the district's support to its low-performing schools.
- Identify the resources needed to improve the district's system of support and to implement the research-based strategies and next steps. Consider assigning a Self-Assessment Team member to investigate possible research-based strategies and next steps for improving the district's support. Strategies can include improving existing district systems, enlisting the services of area experts, and/or researching the possibilities provided by state, regional, and national groups.
- Visit http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment to record this information.

Special Note from the IT Desk:

PDF files can be printed for each portion of the online Self-Assessment form. Although text can be copied from a Word document and inserted into the online application, apostrophes and quotation marks may need to be manually re-entered once on the screen.

Overall Self-Assessment Summary

To complete the Overall Self-Assessment summary, the Self-Assessment Team must review all five Characteristic Summaries and identify four areas of priority for improving district support to the low-performing schools. The overall Self-Assessment summary worksheet may be found in Chapter 9.

Directions:
- Compile the Characteristic Summaries for each of the five Characteristics and review these with the Self-Assessment Team.
- Facilitate the selection of three or four prioritized areas of improvement that will most improve district support to its low-performing schools. Record these areas of improvement in the "prioritized needs" column of the Overall Self-Assessment Summary page. Include only those prioritized needs that will make the strongest impact in providing support to the low-performing schools. It may be useful to include a group of stakeholders from the district, schools, and community in making these decisions.
- Visit http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment to record this information.

Facilitator Suggestions
- ✓ Guard against letting personal biases influence the Team's decisions about areas for improvement, strategies, and resources in order to allow the data and the stakeholder input to influence decisions.
- ✓ Consider financial, personnel, program support, and other resources when planning the targeted resources for improving the district's system of support. Try not to limit the possibilities with too much consideration of current district budget constraints, instead use the time to create an ideal future for the district.

Characteristic I: Vision, Values, and Culture

Definition:

The district's focus on vision and mission, communication with stakeholders, partnerships with community agencies/organizations, and promotion of positive school culture results in learning environments that are focused on student learning and success in the low-performing schools.

Standard 1.1: District Vision and Mission

The district's *vision* provides a collaboratively developed descriptive picture of a district's preferred future. The district's *mission* is a collaboratively developed description of how the district will achieve its vision. Together the vision and mission guide district and school practices, policies, and goal development, resulting in increased student achievement.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G—Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H—Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 1.1:

- District vision and mission statements

- Relevant sections of district and school improvement plans, policies, and/or practices

- Agendas and minutes from meetings with community members, parents, and/or school staff on vision and mission

- Surveys and interviews with relevant stakeholders on significance and/or effectiveness of the vision and mission

- Distributed publications and documents about and/or including vision and mission statements

- Focus group sessions on stakeholders' reflections of the district's vision and mission

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: Does the district have quality mission and vision statements?
Do these statements reflect a commitment to a quality education for all students? Do they promote a desire and drive for administrators, teachers, parents, and community members to improve student learning throughout the district and community? How do the goals of the district vision and mission serve to unite the work of the district, schools, and community? When was the vision and mission developed? Have there been opportunities to revisit the vision and mission?

Key Question B: Do the district vision and mission statements drive practice in the low-performing schools?
How are district and school improvement efforts and goals aligned with vision and mission statements? To what extent does the alignment of the district's vision and mission with district and school practices result in increased student achievement? Do school improvement teams see their work as part of the district vision and mission?

Key Question C: Do stakeholders from the low-performing schools support the district vision and mission statements?
Were the vision and mission statements collaboratively developed? How are parents, community members, and teachers involved? Do they represent a wide variety of stakeholders? Is there "buy-in" to the vision and mission? How are the district vision, mission, and goals articulated among principals, teachers, parents, and students in the low-performing schools?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. **Choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district's low-performing schools have the capacity to lead school improvement using the district's vision and mission. There is an ongoing process to support the link between the district's vision and mission and school improvement efforts.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The alignment of the district's vision and mission with district and school practices and policies results in increased student achievement in the district's low-performing schools. Stakeholders are knowledgeable and supportive of the district's vision and mission.
• **Raises Awareness**	There is evidence that some alignment exists between district and school practices and policies, and the vision and mission in the district's low-performing schools, but it is inconsistent. There is some evidence of collaboration and communication with stakeholders in building the vision, but it is not systematic.
• **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	There is little or no connection between the district's vision and mission and district practices, policies, and goals. Few stakeholders are aware of the district's vision and mission.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 1.2: District Communication with Stakeholders

District Communication with Stakeholders is a key strategy to foster two-way communication between stakeholders and the district by systematically sharing information and working collaboratively to achieve the district vision and mission. Stakeholders include students, parents, community members, university partners, staff, the Board of Education, and others. Parents/families are considered to be full partners in their child's education.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 1.2:

- Documents regarding district communication structures/methods/channels and styles
- Agendas and/or minutes from public meetings/forums with community members, parents, and/or school staff
- Surveys, interviews, and focus group sessions with relevant stakeholders on communication structures/methods/channels and styles
- District communication plans

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: Does the district have quality structures of communication with stakeholders from the low-performing schools?
What types of communication structures are used (i.e., newsletters, website, meetings, etc.)? Are parents, community members, and teachers included and involved, especially in the low-performing schools? Are translation services available and used for the appropriate groups? How are communication structures adjusted to best address concerns in the low-performing schools?

Key Question B: Is two-way communication effective between the district and stakeholders of the low-performing schools?
To what extent do stakeholder groups feel that the district communication strategies are effective? What evidence is there that the district and stakeholders are comfortable with giving input and feedback to each other? Do structures foster a two-way system that promotes positive relationships with stakeholders? Do communication structures ensure feedback from a cross-section of stakeholders, especially from the low-performing schools? How is feedback utilized for improvements?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. **Choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support		
•	**Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district supports ongoing, systemic, formal two-way structures for communicating and collaborating with key stakeholders in its low-performing schools. These structures are assessed for their effectiveness, and continuous improvements are made. Parents are actively involved and knowledgeable about district/school practices that support the needs of all students.
•	**Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district has formal, two-way structures for listening and communicating with stakeholders in its low-performing schools that result in meaningful feedback and building positive relationships. Parents/families may be involved in some school practices, but their involvement may be inconsistent or not tied to strategies that will have an impact on student learning in low-performing schools.
•	**Raises Awareness**	The district has an initial plan or informal structures in place to address communication with stakeholders about its low-performing schools, but these structures provide few ongoing opportunities to gather feedback, input, or updates from stakeholders. Involvement of parents/families is sporadic or not tied to student learning and achievement.
•	**Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district has no formal structures for listening to and communicating with stakeholders about its low-performing schools. There are few opportunities to involve parents/families in meaningful ways to support student learning and achievement

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 1.3: District Community Partnerships

District Community Partnerships enhance the achievement of students by providing external resources that benefit the district and its low-performing schools.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies. (See Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 1.3:

- Documents describing the district's various community partners, their services, and their resources

- Agendas and/or minutes from meetings with various community partners

- Surveys, interviews and focus group sessions with relevant community partners on communication and other concerns

- Distributed publications and documents about relevant news on the district and community partnerships

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: How effective are the district's partnerships with community groups/organizations?
What are the efforts to involve a wide variety of community groups/organizations in the district's low-performing schools? What school and student issues do the community partners address (i.e. academic, health, emotional and social)? Are the resources and services valued (i.e. high quality, reasonably priced) by the district?

How is the effectiveness of community partnerships evaluated? Are the evaluation results utilized for improving existing resources and services and/or seeking additional resources and services? How structured and self-sustaining are the partnerships?

Key Question B: What influence do community partnerships have on academic achievement in the low-performing schools?
How responsive are community partnerships to student academic needs and changes in the low-performing schools? How are community partnerships aligned with the academic needs and improvement goals of the district's low-performing schools? Do the community partnerships attract other relevant stakeholders to address and become involved in the academic issues of the low-performing schools?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. **Choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

	Indicators of District Support	
•	**Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	Partnerships between district and community agencies/ organizations are structured, self-sustaining, and continuously developing with a focus on increasing student performance in the district's low-performing schools. Partnerships are assessed for their impact on student/school success and are responsive to changing needs.
•	**Leads to Effective Implementation**	Partnerships between district and outside community agencies/organizations assist with aspects of student learning and success, resulting in increased student performance in the district's low-performing schools.
•	**Raises Awareness**	The district has fragmented or informal partnerships with outside resources and community agencies/organizations with little focus on addressing needs of the low-performing students and schools.
•	**Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district has limited or nonexistent partnerships with outside resources and community agencies/ organizations to better meet the needs of the low-performing schools.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 1.4: District Promotion of Positive School Culture

District Promotion of Positive School Culture reflects the norms, behaviors and practices of a district that ensure staff and student are connected and valued.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 1.4:

- District's documented programs, structures, and strategies regarding school culture

- Surveys, interviews, and focus group sessions on stakeholders' perceptions of school culture

- Surveys, interviews and focus group sessions on link between school culture and student performance

- Agendas and minutes from meetings with stakeholders on positive school culture

- Distributed publications and documents on school culture

- Relevant sections of the school improvement plans regarding school culture

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: What are the district's practices and processes to promote positive school culture in the low-performing schools?
What practices and processes are in place to promote positive school culture in the low-performing schools? How is the district core value of supporting all students regardless of socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, and/or other minority status reflected? How has the district addressed a school culture that is not positive or supportive of student and staff success in its low-performing schools?

How do the school improvement plans address the school culture needs? What are the results of improvement efforts in the low-performing schools related to school culture?

Key Question B: What are the stakeholders' perceptions and influences on school culture in the low-performing schools?
Are the district's practices and processes for promoting positive school culture communicated well to the stakeholders in the low-performing schools, and vice versa? What influence do parents, community organizations, and school staff have in promoting positive school cultures in the low-performing schools? To what extent do student needs drive the school culture? How does the district foster the connection between the stakeholders' input and influence, and the school culture?

Key Question C: What is the impact of school norms, behaviors, and practices on student performance in the low-performing schools?
How does the district examine the impact of school culture on students' academic performance in the low-performing schools? What programs and strategies are in place to address negative school norms and behaviors in the low-performing schools? How do different groups of students feel about the culture of their school? What evidence exists of an effective professional learning community that is valued by staff?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. **Choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support		
•	**Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district's processes to promote positive school culture result in clear, operational procedures that are integrated into daily practice in its low-performing schools. The values that support the learning and success of students are evident throughout the school.
•	**Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district has processes that effectively promote positive school cultures in its low-performing schools through communication, interaction, respect, and high-quality learning environments. School norms, behaviors, and practices result in improved relationships that benefit students in its low-performing schools.
•	**Raises Awareness**	The district has an inconsistent or unevenly applied process to effectively promote positive school cultures in its low-performing schools.
•	**Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district has limited or nonexistent processes to effectively promote positive school cultures in its low-performing schools.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 1.5: District Support for Safe Learning Environments

District Support for Safe Learning Environments are the district's plans, programs, and strategies that include behavioral expectations and consequences for actions, as well as knowledge and skills needed by students and staff to promote safe physical, emotional, and social environments.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G-Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 1.5:

- Documents, policies, and displayed visuals describing school practices that promote a culture for safe learning environments

- Documents that show professional development and programming that builds the knowledge and skills of students and staff

- Description of student support services that promote students' intellectual, physical, and emotional well-being

- Systematic school discipline plan

- District safety plan

- Climate surveys from staff, students, and other stakeholders assessing school safety and the quality of safe learning environments

Step 2: Analyze Data
Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: Does the district have quality plans, policies, and programs to support safe learning environments in the low-performing schools?
What specific plans, policies, and programs does the district implement to support safe learning environments in the low-performing schools? What processes are used to evaluate and improve the plans, policies, and programs? What are the results from the evaluations (i.e., are the plans, policies, and programs of high quality?) Are plans differentiated to support the low-performing schools? How do the district's discipline plans impact school climate? How does the district ensure that safe and orderly environments are embedded within daily practices at the low-performing schools?

Key Question B: What are the stakeholders' perceptions of safe learning environments in the low-performing schools?
To what extent do students, staff, and parents feel safe and comfortable at their schools? What do different groups of stakeholders feel about the quality of students' and staff's intellectual, physical, emotional, and/or social well-being? To what extent are students, teachers, parents and other stakeholders involved in improving existing plans, policies and programs to support safe learning environments? How are needs of students and staff assessed to provide appropriate additional services in the low-performing schools?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. **Choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district's procedures that ensure safe and orderly environments are embedded within daily practices at the district's low-performing schools. Data analysis and ongoing assessment are used to continuously improve safe learning environments.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district's processes for ensuring safe and orderly environments in its low-performing schools lead to maximized student learning and staff effectiveness.
• **Raises Awareness**	The district's implementation of procedures to ensure safe and orderly environments in its low-performing schools is inconsistent, incomplete, or ineffective.
• **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district lacks procedures to prevent violence, foster a drug-free environment, and/or create a safe learning environment in its low-performing schools.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Summary for Characteristic I

After identifying the data sources, summarizing findings, choosing an indicator level and reporting key areas of strength and improvement for Standards 1.1-1.5, report on the following information:

✓ **Identify overall areas of strength in the district for Characteristic I**

✓ **Identify overall areas for improvement in the district for Characteristic I**

✓ **Identify the research-based strategies and next steps to improve the district support in Characteristic I**

✓ **Identify targeted resources for improving the district in Characteristic I**

All responses are limited to 950 characters (including spaces). Appendix I provides a worksheet for completing this portion of the Self-Assessment. Go online to create the final report.

Characteristic II: Leadership and Governance

Definition:

The district's leadership and governance practices result in effective district administrative leadership team and school board policies, collaborative central office staff, effective building administrators, and targeted training and monitoring for supporting school improvement in the low-performing schools.

Standard 2.1: District Support for Leadership---
District Administrative Leadership Team and Board of Education

District Support for Leadership—District Administrative Leadership Team and Board of Education refers to the district administration and the Board's critical role in aligning policies, resources, and funding to the district's goals and priorities, and overseeing the impact of those funds.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G-Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H-Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 2.1:

- Documentation between the link between resource allocation and student achievement
- District budgets and allocations to the low-performing schools
- Agendas and minutes from meetings on operational and curricular discussions
- District administrative leadership team and the Board of Education's plans and procedures for alignment of resources and goals

Step 2: Analyze Data
Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: Do the district administrative leadership team and Board of Education's policies provide quality support for the low-performing schools?
What are the district administrative leadership team and the board's goals and priorities? To what extent are funds and resources differentiated and directed toward the district's goals and priorities in its low-performing schools? What systematic process does the district use to coordinate funding from all of its sources to ensure that resources are directed toward its low-performing schools?

Key Question B: Do the district administrative leadership team and the Board of Education have quality processes for monitoring/improving the use of funds in the low-performing schools?
How does district leadership ensure that funds directed toward its low-performing schools are being used effectively? How do schools document their use of funds? How do school improvement plans reflect targeted use of funds to address identified needs in the schools? In what ways can the district link the use of resources directed to its low-performing schools to increased student achievement? How is the use of district funds being monitored on an on-going basis?

Key Question C: How do the district administrative leadership team and the Board of Education impact student achievement in the low-performing schools?
Do the district administrative leadership team and Board members demonstrate an understanding of operational and curricular issues in the low-performing schools? Is there documentation showing to what extent district administrative leadership team and Board members discuss Title I schools and have a comprehensive understanding of the program?

In what ways can the district administrative leadership team link the use of resources directed to its low-performing schools to increased student achievement? Do schools feel an impact/influence from the Board? How do school improvement plans reflect targeted use of funds to address identified needs in the schools?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district administrative leadership team, in collaboration with the Board of Education, monitors how the district's low-performing schools effectively utilize and coordinate targeted funding, resources, and policies, resulting in increased student achievement.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district administrative leadership team, in collaboration with the Board of Education, provides additional, targeted district funding and resources to address the district's goals and priorities in its low-performing schools, ensure alignment of policies and funding, and monitor the impact of the use of the funding.
• **Raises Awareness**	The district administrative leadership team, in collaboration with the Board of Education, targets the effective use of Title I money and resources for the designated low-performing schools, but does not ensure alignment between these funds and local funding resources.
• **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district administrative leadership team, in collaboration with the Board of Education, accepts the report for the use of funds at the low-performing schools, without examining if these funds are targeted to the greatest need, only meeting minimal compliance with Title I requirements.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 2.2: District Support for Leadership—
Central Office and School Building Administrators

> *District Support for Leadership: Central Office and School Building Administrators* refers to the critical relationship between central office staff and school building administrators in planning, monitoring, and decision making regarding district programs and the use of resources that address improved student achievement. In smaller districts, this might involve key individuals who make decisions about programs and resources.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G-Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H-Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

> **More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 2.2:**
>
> - Interviews with central office staff and school administrators
>
> - Documentation of collaborative planning by district central office staff and school building administrators
>
> - Plans demonstrating central office and school administrators' involvement with decision making on student achievement
>
> - Descriptions, roles and responsibilities regarding collaborative decision making processes
>
> - Surveys assessing the effectiveness of collaborative planning by central office staff and administrators

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

> **Key Question A: How strong is the partnership between the central office and administrators of the low-performing schools?**
> How do the central office and school administrators feel about their working relationships? What are the district's expectations for the collaboration? To what extent does central office staff collaborate across divisions to achieve district goals? To what extent do school building administrators value the role of central office staff in addressing the gaps that exist in their schools? In what ways can this partnership be improved? How is central office self-evaluated? To what extent do school staffs in the low-performing schools value the collaborative partnership?
>
> **Key Question B: Do the central office and administrators of the low-performing schools work well together in making decisions and planning?**
> What evidence is there of systematic, collaborative, and ongoing planning and decision making between central office and school building administrators? Is there a system for effective

communication? In what ways do school improvement or district plans reflect central office's support for students and staff in the low-performing schools? Is there an ongoing review process to collaboratively assess district programs and resource use? What changes were made as a result of the review processes?

Key Question C: What impact does the collaboration have on student achievement in the low-performing schools?
To what extent does central office staff believe that they are contributing effectively to achieving the district's goals in the low-performing schools? What is the impact of the collaborative planning on student achievement? What processes can be improved for better student achievement?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district's planning, monitoring, and decision making processes include an ongoing review of how effectively central office staff and school building administrators collaborate, assess district programs, use resources, and how these practices impact student achievement in the district's low-performing schools.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district provides structured, regular opportunities for central office staff and school administrators to plan and monitor collaboratively, and make decisions about district programs and use of resources addressing student achievement in its low-performing schools.
• **Raises Awareness**	The district provides some opportunities for central office staff and school administrators from its low-performing schools to jointly plan and make decisions about district programs and use of resources addressing student achievement, but collaboration among these groups is infrequent and inconsistent.
• **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district's central office staff/departments operate independently with few opportunities for collaboration between school building administrators and other district central office staff to support the district's low-performing schools.

Step 4: Create the Report
Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 2.3: District Support for Teacher Leadership for Student Achievement

District Support for Teacher Leadership for Student Achievement recognizes the critical role that districts play in building teacher ownership of student achievement by providing opportunities for teachers to collaboratively plan and work together on school improvement and professional development.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G-Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H-Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 2.3:

- Evidence of teacher leaders in a variety of settings that impacts student achievement
- Teachers recognized for their motivation to impact student achievement
- Evidence of teachers independently engaging in collaboration activities
- Teachers actively involved in decision making that impacts student achievement
- Evidence of school cultures that reflect open communication and trust
- Teachers involved in planning professional development activities
- Evidence of teachers participation in conferences and sharing what they have earned
- Staff surveys examining the role and impact of teacher leaders

Step 2: Analyze Data
Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: Do strong partnerships exist between administration and teachers in the low-performing schools?
How do administrative and teaching staff perceive their working relationships? What are the district's and teachers' expectations for collaboration? Are teachers aware of district goals? Do administrative and teaching staff discuss the gaps in learning that exist in their schools? In what ways could conversations about this issue be increased or improved? Are school staffs in the low-performing schools choosing to engage in collaborative partnerships with school and district administrators?

Key Question B: What impact does the collaborative involvement of teachers have on student achievement in the low-performing schools?
In what ways are teacher leaders identified and what roles do they play in addressing student achievement goals? Do the administrators and teachers in the low-performing schools work well together in making decisions and planning?

What evidence is there of systematic, collaborative, and ongoing planning and decision making between administrative and teaching staff? Which processes can be improved for better student achievement? What level of teacher input is gathered as a part of professional development planning? What leadership roles do teachers take in professional development work at the schools?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization	The district has defined various roles for teacher leaders including collaboration opportunities and school improvement and professional development planning. The district can describe the impact of their leadership on student learning and achievement.
• Leads to Effective Implementation	The district partners with schools in promoting student achievement by deliberately building teacher leadership in its low-performing schools through support of teacher opportunities for collaborative planning, school improvement planning, and professional development planning opportunities.
• Raises Awareness	The district has begun acknowledging the role that teacher leadership plays in increasing student achievement, but efforts to support and build teacher leadership are inconsistent in its low-performing schools.
• Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective	The district has little or no evidence of building teacher leadership in its low-performing schools. School staff lacks ownership of the learning process of students.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 2.4: District Training for School Improvement Teams and District Monitoring of School Improvement Plans

District Training for School Improvement Teams and District Monitoring of School Improvement Plans are critical strategies that districts use to build the skills of school staff to collect and analyze data, make recommendations for actions, and monitor the effectiveness of school improvement plans in addressing the needs of students and staff.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 2.4:

- Evidence of successful school improvement planning and implementation

- Documentation of interventions targeted to specific school needs

- Collection of district resources to support training and monitoring of school improvement processes

- Documentation of program evaluation

- Documentation of student achievement trends

- Surveys and interviews with school improvement teams and school staff regarding school improvement efforts and district support/training

Step 2: Analyze Data
Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: How well does the district train school improvement teams in the low-performing schools?
How does the district facilitate orientation and training sessions for school improvement teams? Are the sessions valued and effective? What evidence is there of district professional development resources targeted to improving the effectiveness of school improvement planning?

In what ways do teachers have the opportunity to learn skills that will help them collect and analyze data, lead school improvement efforts, and monitor the effectiveness? What evidence is there that all staff contributes to the school improvement plans? What system is used to ensure that district support for school improvement planning is differentiated based on school needs?

Key Question B: How well does the district monitor school improvement plans in the low-performing schools?
Is there a systematic evaluation of school improvement plans and implementation of strategies that is based on the district's vision, mission, and values? How is it differentiated for the low-performing schools? What additional support for school improvement planning, data analysis, and monitoring do the low-performing schools receive? What system is used to ensure that district support for school improvement planning is differentiated based on school needs? How is the disaggregation and analysis of state, district, and school data in the low-performing schools reflected in action steps in the school improvement plans? What are the ongoing assessments used to monitor the effectiveness of the improvement plans?

Key Question C: Is there an evident link between school improvement efforts and student performance in the low-performing schools?
What evidence is there that school improvement efforts are effective in increasing student achievement? Is there documentation of interventions targeted to specific school and/or student needs in the school improvement plans? Are there differentiated efforts serving the students from the low-performing schools? Do the school improvement teams observe an increase in student achievement? Do data reports reflect the use of multiple sources of data tied to measurable objectives? How does the district use data to improve support for school improvement planning, especially in increasing student performance?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	School improvement teams collect and analyze data, monitor the effectiveness of school improvement plans, and make necessary changes to the plans to continuously increase student achievement. The district monitors results and provides additional support and resources in its low-performing schools.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district provides targeted support for training of school improvement teams, collecting and analyzing data from a variety of sources, and monitoring the effectiveness of school improvement plans, resulting in increased student achievement in its low-performing schools.
• **Raises Awareness**	The district plan for training and monitoring school improvement processes is not implemented systematically and does not provide targeted support to the district's low-performing schools.
• **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district provides little or no training for and monitoring of school improvement processes for the low-performing schools.

Step 4: Create the Report
Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Summary for Characteristic II

After identifying the data sources, summarizing findings, choosing an indicator level and reporting key areas of strength and improvement for Standards 2.1-2.4, report on the following information:

- ✓ **Identify overall areas of strength in the district for Characteristic II**

- ✓ **Identify overall areas for improvement in the district for Characteristic II**

- ✓ **Identify the research-based strategies and next steps to improve the district support in Characteristic II**

- ✓ **Identify targeted resources for improving the district in Characteristic II**

All responses are limited to 950 characters (including spaces). Appendix I provides a worksheet for completing this portion of the Self-Assessment. Go online to create the final report.

Characteristic III: Decision Making & Accountability

Definition:

The district supports the school's collection and analysis of different sources of disaggregated student data. These efforts result in effective decisions regarding the allocation of resources and school improvement initiatives based on student performance in its low-performing schools.

Standard 3.1: District Development of a Data System for School Improvement

District Development of a Data System for School Improvement is a comprehensive and systematic process developed by the district for collecting and using data that is accessible to school staff and includes strategies for stakeholders to continuously provide feedback.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 3.1:

- Spreadsheets and other school-based data systems documents

- Agendas and minutes from meetings of school-based data work groups

- Surveys, focus group sessions, and interviews with stakeholders regarding use and effectiveness of a student data system

- Plans and training sessions for data systems

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: Is there a quality student data system in place related to student achievement in the low-performing schools?
Is the system user-friendly? Are effective training sessions in place? To what extent does the data system allow school staff to access data and information on their students in a variety of perspectives? What other kinds of data has school staff added to the system to meet their needs? Is the system valuable for the low-performing schools? Are there manuals/training materials on how to access the system and interpret the data?

Key Question B: How well does the district support a comprehensive data system for the low-performing schools?
In what ways is this system improved continuously to meet the needs of district and school staff as they support their low-performing students? How does the district support the practice of adding building and student-level data to meet the low-performing schools' needs? In what ways does the district provide school staff with opportunities to learn how to use the data system effectively? Is there a plan to support district and school staff continuously learning about using the data system?

Key Question C: What are the perceptions of the stakeholders, from the low-performing schools, about the district's student data system?
To what extent does staff in the low-performing schools find the system valuable? How is the school staff using the system to address working with the low-performing students? Is all staff using the system in ways that will better support the students?

How does the school staff review their current data collection plan and make revisions to better meet the needs of their students? What documents demonstrate how staff has used the data system to improve student learning? What opportunities are there for stakeholders to improve the system? Are stakeholders provided with support in interpreting the data correctly?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district has a plan and system in place to add building-based qualitative and quantitative disaggregated student data that provides for continuous improvement in data collection and use in the low-performing schools.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district has a comprehensive system of targeted data that can be disaggregated by student subgroups, is enhanced and improved continuously, and includes strategies for stakeholders to provide feedback. The system is user-friendly, accessible to all staff, and available from a variety of locations.
• **Raises Awareness**	The district has a data system beyond WINSS that is accessible to staff. However, data is not always current or immediately available to the district's low-performing schools.
• **Minimal, Absent or Ineffective**	The district does not have a comprehensive system beyond WINSS for gathering and reporting disaggregated achievement, perception, and program data about its low-performing schools.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 3.2: District Use of Data for Resource Allocation to Improve Student Learning

District Use of Data for Resource Allocation to Improve Student Learning refers to a district system for targeting resources, including, money, staff, professional development, materials, and additional support to schools based on the analysis of data to determine district and school needs.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 3.2:

- Funding formula showing alignment of resource allocations to student needs

- Documents showing differentiation of resources based on student and school needs

- Evidence of resources allocated to specific programs and systems improvements

- Interviews with principals regarding resource allocation

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: Does the district have a strong system for targeting resources in the low-performing schools?

Is there a description of the funding formula or are guidelines used to determine how resources are allocated to the low-performing schools based on district data analysis? How are the formula or guidelines reviewed and revised to ensure appropriate resource allocation to the low-performing schools? What data sources are used to make decisions regarding the targeted use of resources? How does the ESEA Report document individual profiles of the low-performing schools?

In what ways does the analysis of district data impact budgets to show the differentiated use of resources? In what ways does the district use discretionary funds to address the low-performing schools based on data analysis? How does the analysis of district data impact the allocation of money, staff, professional development, materials, central office support (or additional staff) to its low-performing schools? What evidence is there of resources allocated to specific programs and systems improvements based on data analysis of student and school needs?

Key Question B: What are the stakeholders' feedback regarding the district's resource allocation decisions in the low-performing schools?
What are the perceptions of building level administrators and school staff in the low-performing schools regarding the resources that they receive? How is stakeholder feedback used to modify or adjust resource allocation? Do various stakeholders receive opportunities to help analyze data? What are some recommended steps from stakeholders to improve the system of resource allocation?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district has an objective system involving multiple stakeholders who use a variety of data that is disaggregated by student subgroups to allocate resources that sustains district operations and meets critical learning needs of students of the low-performing schools. The system is continuously evaluated and refined to improve resource allocation that meets the needs of the schools and the district.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district uses a variety of data that is disaggregated by student subgroups to make decisions concerning resource allocation and improved support to the district's low-performing schools. Use of resources is continually evaluated by the district for its impact. Input from school staff, parents, students, and the community is periodically gathered to make changes to balance allocation needs.
• **Raises Awareness**	The district uses data that is disaggregated by student subgroups to make some adjustments based on performance and operational needs; however, only a small portion of the resources is allocated based on targeting resources to the low-performing schools.
• **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district does not use data that is disaggregated by student subgroups for resource allocation purposes in its low-performing schools.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 3.3: District Use of Fiscal Resources

District Use of Fiscal Resources refers to how districts use resources from local, state, and federal programs to achieve their goals and priorities and how those resources are coordinated in the district.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 3.3:

- Evaluations of district and school plans and systems for fiscal resource allocation, and alignment of resources with district goals and priorities

- Documentation of collaborative planning to determine use of funds

- Process for reviewing and improving resource use and collaboration

- Fiscal records including carryover for state and federal funding

- Documentation of the process used by central office to review and adjust accounts and better utilize funding

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: How do stakeholders participate in coordinating the use of funds in the low-performing schools?
To what extent do key stakeholders, including district staff across all departments, meet to coordinate use of district improvement funds? How do stakeholders align the funding sources with the low-performing schools? What is the process that stakeholders use to review and improve how resources are allocated?

Key Question B: How well coordinated is the district use of funds in the low-performing schools?
Is there evidence of a coordinated, centralized plan for allocating resources that is targeted toward reaching goals in the low-performing schools? Who is included in the development of this plan? How does the district plan coordinate the use of federal and local funds? How is the plan evaluated? How do fiscal records demonstrate the effective use of funds, including carryover for state and federal funding?

Key Question C: What district systems are in place for monitoring the use of funds in the low-performing schools?
What processes are used by central office to review the use of funds and make improvements? How does the district monitor the full utilization of local, state, and federal resources at the district and the school level? Is the use of resources aligned to district goals and priorities? What systems do the schools use to ensure that they are using funds effectively and that they are aligned with district and school goals and priorities?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district has an ongoing process to evaluate and improve the use of fiscal resources and collaboration among programs and departments that are responsible for various funding sources. This evaluation and collaboration allows the district to more effectively achieve its goals and priorities in its low-performing schools.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The use of all district school improvement funds from Title I, II, III, V, or other programs are coordinated among key stakeholders and targeted toward reaching goals in the low-performing schools. Carryover of school improvement funds only occurs when funds are allocated for future support of specific school improvement activities.
• **Raises Awareness**	The district has attempted to create a centralized plan for coordinating school improvement funding, but there are gaps in coordination and targeting of funding to the low-performing schools. School improvement funds that are returned or carried over are generally ten percent or less of the original allocation.
• **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district has no centralized plan for allocating and coordinating school improvement resources to its low-performing schools. The district frequently turns back funds available for school improvement from Title I, II, III, V, or other programs.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 3.4: District Support for Schools' Data-Based Decision Making

District Support for School's Data-Based Decision Making refers to the practices and systems that the district has implemented to develop a school's capacity to use a variety of data that can be disaggregated by student subgroups to make effective decisions that benefit students.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 3.4:

- Evidence of staff collecting and analyzing data to impact instructional practice
- Professional development opportunities that promote the collection, analysis, and use of data
- Evidence of data analysis in school improvement plans
- Data retreats that promote effective decision-making to improve student achievement

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: What are the district's professional development programs for data-based decision making in the low-performing schools?
Is there evidence of a district plan to build the skills and capacity of school staff to use data effectively in making decisions? What specific practices and systems exist that ensure that the district is building the skills of school staff to use data effectively in making decisions that benefit students in the low-performing schools? Do continuous opportunities exist for staff to learn how to collect, analyze, and use data effectively? How is additional support and training in data-based decision making provided to staff at the low-performing schools?

To what extent does the district plan attempt to emphasize the importance of data-based decision making in successful school planning and improving student achievement? Are there regular data forums that bring key stakeholders together to look at student and school data in the low-performing schools? Is there evidence that the low-performing schools continually examine how to become more effective with their use of data?

Key Question B: How is staff using data in the low-performing schools?
In what ways is school staff collecting and analyzing data to impact and improve instructional practices? In what ways is data analysis evident in school improvement planning and implementation? Does the school have a data profile that is revised continually? How is data shared, discussed, and utilized in team and staff meetings on a regular basis?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard. (see Appendix H–Standards Worksheet).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	School staff in the district's low-performing schools use a variety of disaggregated student data to make decisions as an operational norm of the culture. Schools become more self-sufficient in their capacity to make data-based decisions. The district supports the schools' use of data through a continuous feedback loop.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district has a formal plan to build capacity for school-based, data-driven decision making in its low-performing schools. The district is extensively involved in helping its low-performing schools use a variety of disaggregated student data, resulting in improved student achievement.
• **Raises Awareness**	The district has a process that supports the use of disaggregated student data for school-level decision making, but the process is applied infrequently or inconsistently at the low-performing schools.
• **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district does not have a formal process that supports the use of disaggregated student data for school-level decision making in its low-performing schools.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Summary for Characteristic III

After identifying the data sources, summarizing findings, choosing an indicator level and reporting key areas of strength and improvement for Standards 3.1-3.4, report on the following information:
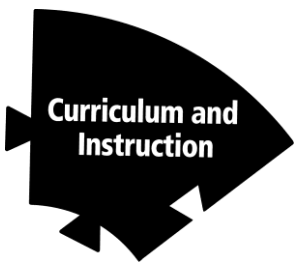
✓ **Identify Overall Areas of Strength in the district for Characteristic III**

✓ **Identify Overall Areas for Improvement in the district for Characteristic III**

✓ **Identify the Research-Based Strategies and Next Steps to Improve the district support in Characteristic III**

✓ **Identify Targeted Resources for Improving the district in Characteristic III**

All responses are limited to 950 characters (including spaces). Appendix I provides a worksheet for completing this portion of the Self-Assessment. Go online to create the final report.

Characteristic IV: Curriculum and Instruction

Definition:

The district ensures that curriculum, assessment, instructional practices, and programs lead to equitable educational opportunities and outcomes for all students in its low-performing schools.

Standard 4.1: District Curriculum and Instruction Framework

District Curriculum and Instruction Framework provides a district-wide picture with levels of specificity to what is taught in all grades and in all subject areas, including the core content, grade level benchmarks, instructional strategies, and assessments.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 4.1:

- Grade level benchmarks to plan curriculum
- Grade level assessments (standardized, district-wide criterion-referenced, classroom formative and summative) to form a cohesive plan
- School improvement plans that target implementation and access to rigorous curriculum
- Description of district monitoring, evaluation, and support processes for effective implementation of curriculum and instruction
- Transcripts that reflect course-taking patterns
- Documentation of cross-disciplinary team structures and research-based instructional strategies being implemented

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: What is the district's curriculum and instruction framework for its low-performing schools?
Is there evidence of a district curriculum and instruction framework that includes grade level benchmarks? Are grade level assessments (standardized, district wide criterion-referenced, classroom, common, formative and summative) included to form a cohesive assessment plan? How does the plan address transitions between levels throughout the district? How does the district ensure consistency of curriculum and instruction throughout all of its schools so that students, especially those who are mobile, are guaranteed consistent educational opportunities? How are teachers contributing to the framework? How are teachers using the framework to plan instruction?

Key Question B: What are the systems and structures for supporting the curriculum and instruction framework in the low-performing schools?
Do school improvement plans target access and implementation of a rigorous curriculum? How does the district provide systematic opportunities for staff to improve their curriculum and instruction knowledge and skills? How is staff development targeted toward areas of need based on a thorough analysis of data? How does the district monitor, evaluate, and support processes for consistent and effective

implementation of curriculum and instruction between schools and across grade levels in its low-performing schools? Are teachers and administrators involved in these processes? How does the district ensure that research-based instructional strategies are implemented in its low-performing schools?

Key Question C: How well does the district analyze data to target gaps in curriculum and instruction in the low-performing schools?
How are transcripts used to analyze course-taking patterns? Is an analysis of grade point averages or other periodic data collection in middle and high schools used to target gaps in curriculum and instruction? How does the district audit course offerings (i.e., remedial, honors, AP) that are used to assess participation of all students in all classes? How are individual students assessed and monitored for expected growth during the academic year? How are individual educational plans implemented?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district's low-performing schools monitor, evaluate, and improve implementation of the curriculum and instruction framework to maintain the integrity of the core content, grade level benchmarks, instructional strategies, and assessments for growth of student achievement. With the help of school staff and administrators, the district provides additional support to teachers and principals to implement the framework, and provides additional support for curricular and instructional transitions between grades and disciplines within and among district schools, when necessary.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district process for supporting teachers and principals in the implementation of the curriculum and instruction framework results in rigorous and relevant curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the district's low-performing schools. The framework provides for curricular and instructional transitions between grades and disciplines within and among district schools.
• **Raises Awareness**	The district has developed a curriculum and instruction framework including the core content, grade level benchmarks, instructional strategies, and assessments, but provides inconsistent or infrequent support to teachers and principals for implementing the framework in its low-performing schools.
• **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district does not have a curriculum and instruction framework with levels of specificity to what is taught in all grades and in all subject areas, including the core content, grade level benchmarks, instructional strategies, and assessments.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 4.2: District Curriculum Alignment

District Curriculum Alignment describes the systematic and systemic processes, support, and training for the use of curriculum aligned with state and district standards, resulting in common, high expectations and a shared vocabulary for curriculum, instruction, and assessment in the district's low-performing schools.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 4.2:

- Documents illustrating alignment of curriculum to WI Model Academic Standards and WKCE-CRT frameworks

- Documents or other evidence that show how the curriculum frameworks are used to create classroom instructional units (i.e., curriculum mapping, standards-based lesson planning, etc.)

- District-wide, standards-based report card

- School Improvement Plans targeting curriculum alignment

- Documents and/or description of district monitoring, evaluation, and support processes for effective implementation of curriculum alignment

- Evidence that district resources support effective implementation of curriculum, assessment, instructional practices

- Evidence that programs lead to equitable educational opportunities and outcomes for all students, including subgroups of students

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: What is the quality of curriculum alignment in the low-performing schools?
What documents demonstrate effective implementation of aligned curriculum? Is there evidence in school plans that staff utilizes the established district vocabulary for curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote the school's planning and implementation of improved instructional and assessment practices? To what extent is there evidence that aligned curriculum, instruction, and assessment is leading toward more equitable educational opportunities and results for all students, including relevant subgroups? To what extent do common high expectations and vocabulary for classroom instruction, curriculum and assessment exist in the low-performing schools? Can teachers and

administrators articulate the valuable role that common district standards, high expectations, and vocabulary play in improving curriculum and instruction at the school level?

Key Question B: How is the district monitoring, evaluating and providing support to the low-performing schools' successful application of curriculum alignment?
What evidence demonstrates how the district provides support to schools to align their curriculum to WMAS and WKCE? Is a standards-based report card implemented throughout the district? How does the district find evidence that demonstrates school staff utilizes alignment processes, support, and training to impact classroom instruction? In what ways are resources being allocated to support the effective implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment? How does the district promote high expectations for all students?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district's low-performing schools ensure the use of aligned curriculum in their classrooms and utilize the district's established expectations and vocabulary for curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote the school's planning and implementation of improved instructional and assessment practices. The district monitors the successful application of aligned curriculum, classroom instruction and assessment, and provides additional support when necessary.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district's processes, support, and training for the use of curriculum aligned to both the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards (WMAS) and the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE) assessment frameworks lead to common expectations and vocabulary for instruction, curriculum, and assessment that foster improvement of instructional and assessment practices in the low-performing schools. The district provides targeted staff development and follow-up support for schools to ensure classroom instruction aligns with the curriculum.
• **Raises Awareness**	The district supports processes that result in curriculum aligned to both the WMAS and the WKCE assessment frameworks, but provides little additional support or training in the low-performing schools to ensure that common expectations and vocabulary for classroom instruction, curriculum, and assessment assist with the school's improvement of instructional and assessment practices.
• **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district has provided few or no resources and/or processes to assist schools with curriculum alignment, resulting in no common vocabulary for classroom instruction, curriculum, and assessment.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 4.3: District Support for Research-based Instruction

District Support for Research-based Instruction refers to the effective support that the district provides to teachers and schools regarding the use of research-based instructional strategies, materials, and assessments to effectively meet the needs of a wide range of student learners – including English Language Learners (ELL), students with disabilities, gifted, ethnically diverse, and economically disadvantaged – in their classrooms.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

> **More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 4.3:**
>
> - Documents and descriptions of district monitoring, evaluation, and support processes
>
> - Assessments that demonstrate the effectiveness of professional development offerings on differentiated instruction and assessment
>
> - School improvement plans that target implementation of differentiated instructional strategies, materials, and assessments
>
> - School-based assessments that demonstrate the effective implementation of differentiated instruction in classrooms
>
> - Interviews with stakeholders of at-risk students regarding effective implementation and evaluation of differentiated instruction
>
> - Documentation of resources allocated to support schools in using differentiation strategies (e.g., inclusion of special education students in general education classrooms)

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

> **Key Question A: What resources and support does the district provide to staff in the low-performing schools on research-based instruction?**
> What kinds of resources (professional development, funds, and materials) are allocated to support the low-performing schools in using research-based instructional strategies, materials, and assessments? To what extent does the district provide targeted additional resources and training to support research-based methods? Does staff at the low-performing schools have the skills, materials, and support to consistently implement research-based instruction to meet the needs of all its students, including English Language Learners, students with disabilities, gifted, ethnically diverse, and low-socioeconomic status? Are district professional development offerings on research-based instruction differentiated to meet the needs of the teachers and learners in the low-performing schools? Do School Improvement Plans target

implementation of and continuing professional development for research-based instructional strategies, materials, and assessments? What are the perspectives on effective implementation of research-based instruction from teachers, school counselors, and other school staff that teach English Language Learners, students with disabilities, gifted, ethnically diverse, and low-income?

Key Question B: How well does the district evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of research-based instruction in the low-performing schools?
How is the district assessing and improving the effectiveness of professional development offerings on research-based instruction and assessment for all students including English Language Learners, students with disabilities, gifted, ethnically diverse, and low socioeconomic status? How are multiple assessments, including standardized, district wide criterion-referenced, common assessments, classroom formative and summative performance, portfolios, etc. used to examine the effectiveness of research-based instruction in the low-performing schools? How are improvements made in district support processes for research-based instruction? How is school staff feedback used to provide evaluation and improvement of the successful use of research-based instruction? To what extent are parents informed of the school's use of research-based instructional strategies, materials, and assessments? What are parents' and students' perceptions of the effectiveness of the school's use of research-based instructional strategies to meet learning needs of all students?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district requires, finances, supports, monitors, and evaluates the effectiveness of its low-performing schools' implementation of the research-based instructional strategies, materials, and assessments, resulting in multiple, effective opportunities at the classroom level for all students to meet state standards. The district provides additional targeted resources and training to support research-based instruction in its low-performing schools. The use of differentiated instruction is improving student achievement, and referrals to Title I and Special Education have decreased.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district requires, finances, and supports research-based instructional strategies, materials, and assessments in its low-performing schools, resulting in multiple, effective opportunities at the classroom level for all students, including ELL, students with disabilities, gifted, ethnically diverse, and economically disadvantaged to meet state standards. All classroom teachers in the low-performing schools are providing effective differentiated instructional strategies.
• **Raises Awareness**	The district requires that research-based instructional strategies, materials, and assessments be applied at the classroom level, but provides little additional, targeted support to reinforce the use of research-based instruction, materials, and assessments in its low-performing schools. Professional development is provided to classroom teachers to build their skills at providing differentiated instruction, but application of these strategies varies from teacher to teacher.
• **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district does not require, finance, or support the use of research-based instructional strategies, materials, or assessments. Teachers in the low-performing schools rely primarily on Title I or Special Education services to meet the wide range of learning needs of the low-performing students.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 4.4: District Use of Data to Close Achievement Gaps

District Use of Data to Close Achievement Gaps refers to how the district uses student, program, and school data to identify targeted areas for curriculum, instruction, and other program improvements to support the academic achievement and social and emotional well-being for all students, including English Language Learners (ELL), students with disabilities, ethnically diverse, and economically disadvantaged.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 4.4:

- Data profile and analysis of achievement gaps

- Disaggregated student outcome data that is user-friendly and accessible

- Description of district monitoring, evaluation and support processes for ensuring high level performance of all students

- Process for evaluating schools' use of data to drive decisions

- School Improvement Plans that align appropriate programs and services to low-performing/struggling students

- School Improvement Plans that include revisions to curriculum and instruction based on data analysis

- Professional Development plans that are driven by data results

- New programs that are developed to meet needs of low performing/struggling students

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: How does the district use data/assessments to target resources and ongoing support to low-performing students in the low-performing schools?
What systematic assessments are used in the low-performing schools by district and school staff to determine areas of need? Do schools throughout the district produce and analyze a data profile that results in focused areas of need and improvement? How does the district support this practice? In what ways is the district providing support to its low-performing schools to improve and modify instruction so all students can demonstrate proficiency? In what ways does the district provide additional support for school staff to address the needs of low-performing students in its low-performing schools?

How do School Improvement Plans show that data analysis leads to the implementation of appropriate programs and services for low-performing/struggling students? Do plans include revisions to curriculum and instruction based on data analysis? What new programs are developed, evaluated, and revised continuously to meet the needs of low performing/struggling students? Does the district maintain disaggregated student outcome data that is user friendly and readily accessible to teachers?

Key Question B: What are the district's monitoring and evaluation efforts to close achievement gaps in the low-performing schools?
What monitoring, evaluation, and support processes are implemented at the district and school level to ensure high level performance of all students and all student subgroups? What district systems are in place to identify achievement gaps and provide meaningful feedback to its low-performing schools on curriculum, instruction, and assessment improvements? How is data disaggregated and presented in a user-friendly format? How does the district monitor the school's use of data to improve instruction and supports for low-performing students?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of its low-performing schools' use of assessment and other data to identify achievement gaps, to improve curriculum, instruction, and other programs, and to appropriately support all students. The district provides additional resources to support the schools' efforts to increase the achievement of all students, including ELL, students with disabilities, ethnically diverse, and economically disadvantaged.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district uses assessment and other data to identify achievement gaps, provides meaningful feedback and support for implementing curriculum, instruction, and other program improvement, to support all students, including ELL, students with disabilities, ethnically diverse, and economically disadvantaged.
• **Raises Awareness**	The district uses assessment and other data to identify achievement gaps, but is infrequent and/or inconsistent with its support to its low-performing schools in identifying targeted areas for curriculum, instruction, and other program improvements to support all students, including ELL, students with disabilities, ethnically diverse, and economically disadvantaged.
• **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district uses minimal or no assessment and/or other data to identify achievement gaps, provide meaningful feedback for curriculum and instruction improvement, and appropriately provide other program improvements to support all students, including ELL, students with disabilities, ethnically diverse, and economically disadvantaged.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 4.5: District Support for Interventions and Extended Learning Opportunities

District Support for Interventions and Extended Learning Opportunities refers to the system of support that schools use to ensure that students performing below grade level have access to interventions and extended learning opportunities that ensure struggling students in the low-performing schools are making progress. These strategies can include: tutoring, summer school, intercession courses, after-school programs, and extended learning opportunities within the school day.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 4.5:

- Clearly stated and consistently implemented plan for support and interventions

- Evidence that district plan is articulated across the district

- Evidence of strategies for assessing and improving the effectiveness of the district plan

- Surveys of principals regarding the effectiveness and consistency of support and interventions

- School-based plans reflect support and interventions

- Records of data analysis of the district's low-performing schools

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: What are the district's plans for providing support and extended learning opportunities for students in its low-performing schools?
Does the district have a clearly stated and consistently implemented plan for support and interventions for the low-performing schools? To what extent is the District Support and Intervention Plan being implemented throughout the district? How familiar is all staff with the district plan? How is the plan evaluated? Do school improvement plans reflect a wide range of support, interventions, and extended learning opportunities for students?

Key Question B: What impact does district support have on the district's low-performing schools?
In what ways do the District Support and Intervention Plan and extended learning opportunities have an impact on student learning and teacher professional development in the low-performing schools? How

are schools documenting the impact of specific intervention strategies? What trends do the data reveal that demonstrates the impact of the district plan? How are these trends used to make changes in the plan where needed?

Key Question C: What is the stakeholders' feedback on the effectiveness of the district's support, intervention plans, and extended learning opportunities for students in its low-performing schools?
Does collected feedback include information from teachers, parents, and staff in the low-performing schools? To what extent is school staff across the district aware of the supports, interventions, and extended learning opportunities the district provides to students in its low-performing schools? Do stakeholders view these intervention strategies as leading to positive outcomes in the low-performing schools? How is the feedback from stakeholders incorporated into improving the plan? What specific changes have staff and schools made that have benefited students in the low-performing schools? What impact has the district plan had on students in the low-performing schools?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district's low-performing schools implement a systematic approach to using interventions and extended learning opportunities to meet the needs of struggling students in the low-performing schools. The district monitors these interventions and extended learning opportunities for their impact and to ensure that struggling students are not being eliminated from higher level learning opportunities. Interventions and extended learning opportunities are modified to more effectively meet the learning needs of students. Student achievement and school achievement is improving.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district has a systematic approach to assess the different learning needs of its struggling students and to target interventions and extended learning opportunities to the needs of individual students in the low-performing schools. The impact on student achievement is generally positive.
• **Raises Awareness**	There are limited or inconsistent interventions and extended learning opportunities available to students performing below grade level, and participation in these opportunities is inadequate to address the learning needs of struggling students in the low-performing schools.
• **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district has no formal structure to ensure that students performing below grade level have access to individualized interventions and/or extended instructional time outside scheduled core classes in its low-performing schools. Academic support is limited to Title I or Special Education services.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Summary for Characteristic IV

After identifying the data sources, summarizing findings, choosing an indicator level and reporting key areas of strength and improvement for Standards 4.1-4.5, report on the following information:
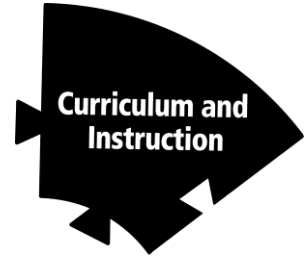
- ✓ **Identify Overall Areas of Strength in the district for Characteristic IV**

- ✓ **Identify Overall Areas for Improvement in the district for Characteristic IV**

- ✓ **Identify the Research-Based Strategies and Next Steps to Improve the district support in Characteristic IV**

- ✓ **Identify Targeted Resources for Improving the district in Characteristic IV**

All responses are limited to 950 characters (including spaces). Appendix I provides a worksheet for completing this portion of the Self-Assessment. Go online to create the final report.

Characteristic V: Professional Development and Staff Quality

Definition:

Comprehensive district-wide professional development and recruitment strategies exist to ensure that high quality teachers are serving students in the low-performing schools.

Standard 5.1: District Support of Initial Educators

District Support of Initial Educators is the systematic process that the district has implemented to support the orientation and mentoring needs of initial educators according to the state law (PI-34).

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 5.1:

- Written description of the district program for the support of initial educators with roles and responsibilities clearly defined

- Levels of support provided by mentors to initial educators are based on need

- Mentoring provides consistent, structured support and coaching around instructional strategies, classroom management, and meeting the individual needs of students

- Evidence of evaluation system for continuous improvement of initial educator orientation and mentoring program

- Allocation of district resources for mentoring

- Documentation of experiences and connections of initial educators with mentors

- Evidence that initial educators find the district plan of value to them in their first three years of teaching

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: What are the district's plans for supporting initial educators in the low-performing schools?

Is there a written description of the district program for the support of initial educators with roles and responsibilities clearly defined? Does the district program go beyond orientation activities to more sustained, meaningful, and practical support such as mentoring and coaching opportunities for initial educators? How is the district's plan for support to initial educators aligned to the district's goals and priorities?

Key Question B: How well does the district implement the initial educator support plans in the low-performing schools?
What evidence exists of allocation of district resources for mentoring and adequate staff devoted to oversight of the program in the low-performing schools? Are levels of support provided by mentors to initial educators based on level of support needed? Does mentoring include structured support and coaching on instructional strategies, classroom management, and meeting the individual needs of students?

Key Question C: How well does the district evaluate the initial educator support plans in the low-performing schools?
Is there an evaluation system for continuous improvement of the initial educator orientation and mentoring program? How is the impact of mentoring support for initial educators measured? What is the retention rate of new teachers? To what extent do initial educators find the district plan of value to them in their first three years of teaching?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
● **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district provides intensive and targeted support of initial educators through orientation, coaching, and mentoring programs. The district monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of its low-performing schools' efforts to improve orientation, coaching, and mentoring programs to address the changing needs of initial educators and provides for continuous improvement of district services to schools.
● **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district provides intensive and targeted support of initial educators through orientation, coaching, and mentoring programs. The district monitors the effectiveness of its system in its low-performing schools to improve the program and address the changing needs of schools.
● **Raises Awareness**	The district has a system for identifying the needs of initial educators in its low-performing schools; and provides orientation, coaching and mentoring programs, but it is not aligned with the identified goals of the district, and little monitoring, evaluation, and improvement of the system occurs.
● **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district has little or no evidence of an organized system for the orientation and mentoring of initial educators of its low-performing schools.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 5.2: District Professional Development Model

District Professional Development Model, organized around district goals and program priorities, is a systematic, comprehensive, standards-driven approach and structure for providing high quality learning opportunities to district staff that focus on improving student learning and achievement.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 5.2:

- Evidence that model addresses differentiated needs of all staff to support student learning

- Staff Development model assessments by varied stakeholders

- Evidence of professional development model's impact on systems and structures that support student learning, *and* student achievement

- Evidence that needs and goals are articulated in determining professional development needs

- Student data analysis used to influence programming decisions

- Model addresses all core curricular areas

- Evidence of resources that support planning and implementation of professional development

- Evidence of effective incentives for staff participation in specific, targeted professional development around school and district needs

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: Does the district's professional development model address goals, priorities, and needs in the low-performing schools?

How is the model aligned to the district's goals and priorities? To what extent is the district model aligned to professional development standards? To what extent does the model address the needs of all staff that support student learning? How does the model ensure professional development opportunities are embedded? How is the model differentiated to meet staff needs with a range of methods and delivery strategies? Does the model address all curricular areas?

What evidence is there of effective incentives for staff participation in specific, targeted professional development around school and district needs? How does teacher input and feedback contribute to the district's plan for professional development?

Key Question B: How well does the district use data to drive professional development in the low-performing schools?
How does student data analysis influence professional development programming decisions in the low-performing schools? How does the district use data to provide additional, ongoing professional development in the low-performing schools? How is school staff input incorporated into the development of district professional development activities? How does the district use observations and administrator evaluations to target areas of need in the professional development model and programming?

Key Question C: How well does the district evaluate and support professional development in the low-performing schools?
How is the effectiveness of the model evaluated to ensure that it is continuously improved? How is feedback collected from a variety of stakeholders in a variety of ways? What evidence is there of the impact between professional development and improved systems and structures that support student learning? What evidence is there of a link between classroom instruction and professional development practices? Is there evidence of resources to support planning and implementation of professional development? What evidence is there of differentiated, targeted support focused on the areas of concern in the low-performing schools?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district has adopted a standards-based professional development model organized around a comprehensive set of program priorities. The model has been successfully implemented and is sustained and changed in order to meet the needs and goals of all students and staff, especially in its low-performing schools.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district has adopted a professional development, standards-based model organized around a comprehensive set of district goals and program priorities that is focused on improving student learning and achievement in its low-performing schools, and is designed to meet the needs of a variety of staff members.
• **Raises Awareness**	The district offers a variety of professional development activities for its low-performing schools, but it is not a standards-based, comprehensive model reflective of district and program priorities that is focused on improving student learning and achievement.
• **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district has little or no evidence of a comprehensive, professional development model for its low-performing schools based on professional development standards and district goals and program priorities that focuses on improving student learning and achievement.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 5.3: District Recruitment and Retention of Highly Qualified, Experienced Teachers

District Recruitment and Retention of Highly Qualified, Experienced Teachers is the systematic process that the district has implemented to ensure that all teachers in the low-performing schools are licensed and effective.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data
Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 5.3:

- Evidence of teacher recruitment programs

- Evidence of new teacher support programs

- Policies demonstrating district placement of new teachers in the low-performing schools

- Evidence of professional development that promotes collaboration and support for new teachers

- Evidence of school cultures that reflect open communication and trust

- Staff surveys soliciting the perceptions of new teachers

Step 2: Analyze Data
Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: What are the district's practices for recruiting highly qualified, experienced teachers in the low-performing schools?
What practices does the district use to attract its best teachers to its low-performing schools? What communication networks and technologies are available and utilized to support recruitment? How does the district recruit highly qualified, experienced teachers from outside the district? How does the district access information from teachers and administrators about barriers, real and perceived, to teaching in the low-performing schools? What strategies are used to identify contextual barriers to recruitment? How does the district directly address these barriers?

Key Question B: What are the district's practices for retaining highly qualified, experienced teachers in the low-performing schools?
What communication networks and technologies are available and utilized to support retention? What opportunities for teacher leadership are offered to highly qualified, experienced teachers in the low-performing schools? How does the district support schools in utilizing the skills of highly skilled teachers? What district support is provided to highly qualified, experienced teachers in the low-

performing schools? What evidence is there that highly qualified, experienced teachers are valued by both district and school staff in the low-performing schools? What additional compensation does the district offer to highly qualified teachers in the low-performing schools?

Key Question C: How well does the district evaluate its practices for recruitment and retention of highly qualified, experienced teachers in the low-performing schools?
How does the district track the percentage of highly qualified, experienced teachers in its low-performing schools? How does the district compare to other schools? What strategies are used to identify contextual barriers to retention? What strategies are used to monitor climate in the low-performing schools? What strategies are used to monitor Professional Development and support activities for specific targeted teacher population? How are recruitment and retention strategies assessed for effectiveness? How often? How does the district access feedback from its highly qualified teachers in its low-performing schools? How is this information utilized to modify/change existing recruitment and retention strategies? How has the district established a feedback loop among teachers, building administrators, and central office staff to inform all parties about changing needs and modifications to recruitment and retention strategies?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of its efforts to recruit, place, and retain highly qualified, effective, and experienced teachers in its low-performing schools. The school climate/culture is supportive of continuous professional development, professional learning communities, and improved student learning. Retention rates for highly qualified, effective, and experienced teachers are similar to the district's schools with high levels of student learning.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district can document that it consistently recruits and places highly qualified, effective and experienced teachers in the low-performing schools. Strategies to improve school climate/culture and foster a professional learning community are in place in the school. Retention rates for highly qualified, effective, and experienced teachers are improving.
• **Raises Awareness**	The district attempts to recruit and place highly qualified, effective, and experienced teachers in its low-performing schools and identifies strategies to improve school climate/culture and the retention of those teachers.
• **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district has little or no evidence that it prioritizes recruitment and placement of its most effective teachers in its low-performing schools.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 5.4: District Support of Orientation and Mentoring for Principals

District Support of Orientation and Mentoring for Principals is the systematic process that the district has implemented to support the orientation and mentoring needs of new principals and the on-going learning of all principals in its low-performing schools.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 5.4:

- Evidence that practices established by the principals are impacting student achievement

- Principals recognized for their motivation to impact student achievement

- Leadership teams or other regular meetings that allow Principals to be actively involved in decision making that impacts student achievement

- Evidence that Principals are supported in creating a school culture that reflect open communication and trust

- Policies that encouraged Principals to participate in professional development activities

- Examples of Principals sharing what they have learned at conferences and other professional development activities

- Evidence of a system for providing performance feedback to Principals

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: What systems are in place to support principals that are new to the district?
What are the components of the system for supporting new principals? Does a strong channel of communication exist between central office and new administrators in the schools? Which documents are parts of this communication system? What is the extent of training and orientation given to prepare new principals? In what ways has this training and orientation been improved? Are new principals in the low-performing schools given a different level of support than other principals? What are the supports for new principals that come from outside the district?

Key Question B: How is mentoring made continuously available to all principals?
Is the mentoring ongoing? What is the duration and frequency of the mentoring for new principals? Do new principals express the need for a greater level of mentoring or do they feel sufficiently supported? How are their perceptions gathered? What is the job description or role of mentors? How does that role change for principals in the low-performing schools? How is this professional development for principals connected to the professional development for teachers?

Key Question C: How is the district monitoring the effectiveness of efforts to orient and mentor principals?
What evidence is there that principals are getting the support they need? What systems are in place to gather mentee perceptions about the effectiveness of the level of support they have received? Has your district found a measurable connection between principal support and student achievement? Are there different supports available to new and more experienced principals? What changes have been made as a result of mentoring processes?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
●	**Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of its efforts to improve orientation and mentoring programs to address the changing needs of new principals that results in continuous improvement of district services to administrators. The district continually designs and evaluates the impact of professional development programs and strategies for principals in the low-performing schools.
●	**Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district monitors the effectiveness of its system for the orientation and mentoring of principals in its low-performing schools to improve the program and address the changing needs of schools. The district provides ongoing learning opportunities for principals in the low-performing schools.
●	**Raises Awareness**	The district has a system for the orientation and mentoring of new principals in its low-performing schools, but it is not aligned with the identified goals of the district and little monitoring and improvement of the system occurs. There are few and inconsistent learning opportunities for principals in the low-performing schools.
●	**Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district has little or no evidence of an organized system for the orientation and mentoring of principals, and/or systematic ongoing learning opportunities for all principals in its low-performing schools.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Standard 5.5: District Support of Principals as Instructional Leaders

District Support of Principals as Instructional Leaders refers to how the district ensures that school building administrators monitor, supervise and support instruction as their top priority; and ensures that district leaders implement a system of interventions that addresses the needs of students performing below grade level.

Step 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Before evaluating this standard, develop a data collection plan with details, such as types of data, dates, persons responsible, stakeholders involved, expected measures, and whether data exist or need to be collected (see Appendix G–Data Collection Plan Sample). Gather data from a variety of sources, such as standardized data, interviews, surveys, focus groups, observations, documents, and other strategies (see Appendix H–Data Analysis Activity). A detailed description of this four-step standard analysis process is found on pages 24-28 of this handbook.

More specific examples of data to gather for Standard 5.5:

- Performance evaluations of school administrators

- District plans/workshops for professional development of school administrators

- District plans for implementation of standards-based classroom practices

- Agendas and minutes from school meetings discussing instruction and classroom practices

- Surveys and interviews with school staff on value/impact of school administrators

- Documentation of visibility of school leadership/collaboration

Step 2: Analyze Data

Let these **key questions** guide the data analysis.

Key Question A: How does the district support administrators of the low-performing schools?

To what extent do evaluations of school administrators in the low-performing schools result in identification of issues that need to be addressed? How does the district address these needs? How are evaluations and district support differentiated for the low-performing schools? To what extent does the district foster and/or encourage further professional development to school administrators? To what extent is there a systematic and systemic structure that supports school administrators in analyzing student data and in improving instructional leadership? How are the structures differentiated for administrators of the low-performing schools?

Key Question B: How does the district ensure administrators of the low-performing schools are focused on monitoring and support of instruction?
Are there clear, research-based descriptions of expected classroom practices that will achieve high priority results, and address gaps in the low-performing schools? To what extent are teaching and learning issues at the core of staff and team meetings at the low-performing schools? To what extent do principal evaluations in the low-performing schools reflect the school building administrator and other leaders' attention to supervision, monitoring, and support of curriculum and instruction?

To what extent do principals ensure that there is a systematic structure for academic interventions? To what extent does the evaluation system for building leaders result in identification of issues that need to be addressed? How does the district address these needs? How are evaluation and district support of administrators differentiated in the low-performing schools?

Key Question C: Does the district have a system of interventions and support for administrators of the low-performing schools?
What district supports are in place to help schools, building administrators, and other leaders address interventions for students performing below grade level? Is the system being implemented consistently in all classrooms?

To what extent is there a systematic and systemic structure that supports school building administrators in analyzing student data and in improving instructional leadership? How are these structures evaluated and modified to meet the needs of building administrators in the low-performing schools? What is the impact of interventions for students performing below grade level?

Step 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

Working with the relevant stakeholders, **identify data sources** and create a **summary of findings** showing what the data reveal about the district's level of support for this standard. Based on the data collected and the resulting analysis, **choose the indicator level** that best matches the district's support and identify the district's **key strengths** and **areas for improvement** for this standard (see Chapter 9).

Indicators of District Support	
• **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	The district has a systemic and systematic structure that monitors and supports building administrators and other leaders in its low-performing schools. These systems allow for analyzing student data to improve instruction, curriculum, assessment, professional development, and determination of appropriate interventions for students performing below grade level.
• **Leads to Effective Implementation**	The district uses the results of principal evaluations and school monitoring to support building administrators and other leaders in its low-performing schools in improving student learning by using effective implementation of instruction, curriculum, assessment, and professional development. The district provides resources to principals in low-performing schools to implement a system of interventions for students below grade level.
• **Raises Awareness**	The district articulates the link between instructional leadership, staff effectiveness, and student achievement to building administrators in its low-performing schools, but provides little/no differentiated support for improving student learning and planning interventions for low-performing students.

•	**Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**	The district provides little/no support to administrators and other leaders of its low-performing schools for instructional leadership and implementation of a system of interventions for students performing below grade level.

Step 4: Create the Report

Prepare data sources and accompanying analyses, then visit the Online District Self-Assessment at http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/SSOS_SelfAssessment. Print and collate the final report, compiling the data sources that are relevant to the key questions for this standard.

Summary for Characteristic V

After identifying the data sources, summarizing findings, choosing an indicator level, and reporting key areas of strength and improvement for Standards 5.1-5.5, report on the following information:

✓ **Identify Overall Areas of Strength in the district for Characteristic V**

✓ **Identify Overall Areas for Improvement in the district for Characteristic V**

✓ **Identify the Research-Based Strategies and Next Steps to Improve the district support in Characteristic V**

✓ **Identify Targeted Resources for Improving the district in Characteristic V**

All responses are limited to 950 characters (including spaces). Appendix I provides a worksheet for completing this portion of the Self-Assessment. Go online to create the final report.

Self-Assessment Summary and Action Plan

Now what??? You've completed the District Self-Assessment process and have gathered a lot of information. You have mountains of data. You've identified some very specific needs. This section will provide you with guidelines and suggestions for planning and implementing next steps to improve support to the district's low-performing schools. Do not be limited by these ideas. You know best the context in which reform can be successful in your district. Make it work for you!

I. **Synthesizing the Information**
Bring your District Self-Assessment Team together. Review the summary pages for all five Characteristics. From these summaries, determine three or four areas for improvement that the district considers to be top priorities on which to focus. For each of these priorities, provide the following information:

  ✓ **Summarize the identified need**
  ✓ **Summarize the research-based strategies and next steps to support the identified need**
  ✓ **Summarize the targeted resources for improving the identified need**

Chapter 9 provides a worksheet for completing this portion of the Self-Assessment. Go online to create the final report.

II. **Review of Current District and School Improvement Plans**
Have the district leadership team review how the findings of the Self-Assessment interface with other current district priorities. How can the identified needs be embedded into current plans?

III. **District Leadership Input and Planning**
Bring principals from the low-performing schools together along with key district leaders in the areas of literacy and mathematics to discuss the findings. Together, design a district improvement plan that provides focus and support to the low-performing schools. Bring teachers together from the impacted schools to reflect on the findings and generate strategies that will accelerate student achievement at their schools.

IV. **Systemic Support**
Create a structure that ensures both support and accountability. In larger districts, a central office team working collaboratively can provide on-going technical assistance, professional development, and support to the school so that student achievement is accelerated. In smaller districts, key individuals can provide the needed assistance.

V. **Design or Revise Current District and School Improvement Plans**
Generate new action plans or revise current plans at both the district and school levels to ensure that there is accountability for improved student achievement. Include: *Goals, Measurable Objectives, Action Steps, Person/Groups Responsible, Evaluation Strategies, and Timeline.*

Characteristic I: Vision, Values, and Culture

Mark the Standard for which this information applies:

☐ Standard 1.1 ☐ Standard 1.2 ☐ Standard 1.3 ☐ Standard 1.4 ☐ Standard 1.5

Indicator Rating:

☐ **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	☐ **Leads to Effective Implementation**	☐ **Raises Awareness**	☐ **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**

STEP 1: Prepare and Collect Data

Mark all that apply.

☐ Standardized Data ☐ Interviews ☐ Surveys
☐ Focus Group ☐ Observations ☐ Documents & Other

STEP 2: Analyze Data

A summary of what the data reveals

STEP 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

The District's Strengths for this Standard

The District's Areas of Improvement for this Standard

STEP 4: **Enter the Information on the Online Report**

Characteristic II: Leadership and Governance

Mark the Standard for which this information applies:

☐ Standard 2.1 ☐ Standard 2.2 ☐ Standard 2.3 ☐ Standard 2.4

Indicator Rating:

☐ **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	☐ **Leads to Effective Implementation**	☐ **Raises Awareness**	☐ **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**

STEP 1: Prepare and Collect Data
Mark all that apply.

☐ Standardized Data   ☐ Interviews   ☐ Surveys
☐ Focus Group   ☐ Observations   ☐ Documents & Other

STEP 2: Analyze Data

A summary of what the data reveals

STEP 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

The District's Strengths for this Standard

The District's Areas of Improvement for this Standard

STEP 4: Enter the Information on the Online Report

Characteristic III: Decision Making and Accountability

Mark the Standard for which this information applies:

☐Standard 3.1 ☐Standard 3.2 ☐Standard 3.3 ☐Standard 3.4

Indicator Rating:

☐ Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization	☐ Leads to Effective Implementation	☐ Raises Awareness	☐ Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective

STEP 1: Prepare and Collect Data
Mark all that apply.

☐ Standardized Data　　☐ Interviews　　☐ Surveys
☐ Focus Group　　☐ Observations　　☐ Documents & Other

STEP 2: Analyze Data

A summary of what the data reveals

STEP 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

The District's Strengths for this Standard

The District's Areas of Improvement for this Standard

STEP 4: Enter the Information on the Online Report

Characteristic IV: Curriculum and Instruction

Mark the Standard for which this information applies:

☐Standard 4.1 ☐Standard 4.2 ☐Standard 4.3 ☐Standard 4.4 ☐Standard 4.5

Indicator Rating:

☐ **Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization**	☐ **Leads to Effective Implementation**	☐ **Raises Awareness**	☐ **Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**

STEP 1: Prepare and Collect Data
Mark all that apply.

☐ Standardized Data ☐ Interviews ☐ Surveys
☐ Focus Group ☐ Observations ☐ Documents & Other

STEP 2: Analyze Data

A summary of what the data reveals

STEP 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

The District's Strengths for this Standard

The District's Areas of Improvement for this Standard

STEP 4: Enter the Information on the Online Report

Characteristic V: Professional Development and Staff Quality

Mark the Standard for which this information applies:

☐ Standard 5.1 ☐ Standard 5.2 ☐ Standard 5.3 ☐ Standard 5.4 ☐ Standard 5.5

Indicator Rating:

☐	☐	☐	☐
Leads to Continuous Improvement and Institutionalization	**Leads to Effective Implementation**	**Raises Awareness**	**Minimal, Absent, or Ineffective**

STEP 1: Prepare and Collect Data
Mark all that apply.\

☐ Standardized Data   ☐ Interviews   ☐ Surveys
☐ Focus Group   ☐ Observations ☐ Documents & Other

STEP 2: Analyze Data

A summary of what the data reveals

STEP 3: Synthesize Data and Rate Standard

The District's Strengths for this Standard

The District's Areas of Improvement for this Standard

STEP 4: Enter the Information on the Online Report

Summary for Characteristic I:
Vision, Values, and Culture

After reviewing the information, analyses, and summaries collected for each standard in this Characteristic, identify the priority areas for each question below.
Identify Areas of Strength in the District Support for Characteristic I
Identify Areas for Improvement for Characteristic I
Identify the Research-Based Strategies and Next Steps for Characteristic I
Identify Targeted Resources for Characteristic I

Summary for Characteristic II:
Leadership and Governance

After reviewing the information, analyses, and summaries collected for each standard in this Characteristic, identify the priority areas for each question below.
Identify Areas of Strength in the District Support for Characteristic II
Identify Areas for Improvement for Characteristic II
Identify the Research-Based Strategies and Next Steps for Characteristic II
Identify Targeted Resources for Characteristic II

Summary for Characteristic III:
Decision Making and Accountability

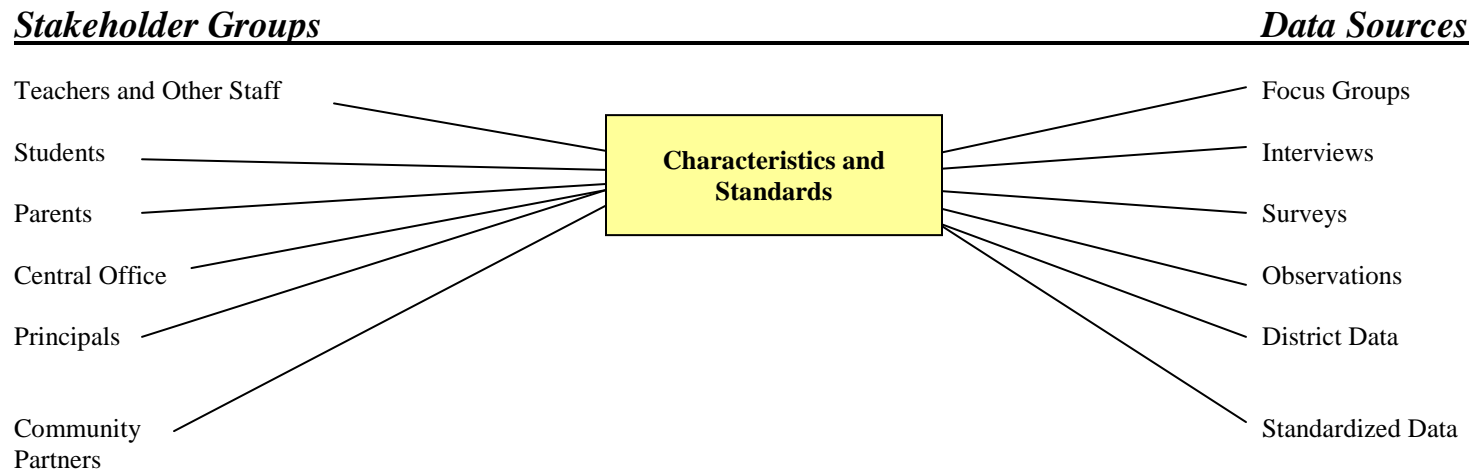| After reviewing the information, analyses, and summaries collected for each standard in this Characteristic, identify the priority areas for each question below. |
|---|
| **Identify Areas of Strength in the District Support for Characteristic III** |
| **Identify Areas for Improvement for Characteristic III** |
| **Identify the Research-Based Strategies and Next Steps for Characteristic III** |
| **Identify Targeted Resources for Characteristic III** |

Summary for Characteristic IV:
Curriculum and Instruction

After reviewing the information, analyses, and summaries collected for each standard in this Characteristic, identify the priority areas for each question below.
Identify Areas of Strength in the District Support for Characteristic IV
Identify Areas for Improvement for Characteristic IV
Identify the Research-Based Strategies and Next Steps for Characteristic IV
Identify Targeted Resources for Characteristic IV

Summary for Characteristic V:
Professional Development and Staff Quality

After reviewing the information, analyses, and summaries collected for each standard in this Characteristic, identify the priority areas for each question below.
Identify Areas of Strength in the District Support for Characteristic V
Identify Areas for Improvement for Characteristic V
Identify the Research-Based Strategies and Next Steps for Characteristic V
Identify Targeted Resources for Characteristic V

Overall Self-Assessment Summary

Using the data you have gathered and the summary sheets you have completed from each Characteristic, list the district's top four prioritized needs for differentiating support to its low-performing schools.		
Prioritized Need	**Research-Based Strategies & Next Steps**	**Targeted Resources**
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

District Self-Assessment Process

Charge: Participate in a comprehensive District Self-Assessment process that involves a variety of stakeholders reflecting on multiple sources of data in order to improve district policies, programs, and practices that support the low-performing schools.

Stakeholder Groups		*Data Sources*
Teachers and Other Staff		Focus Groups
Students		Interviews
Parents	**Characteristics and Standards**	Surveys
Central Office		Observations
Principals		District Data
Community Partners		Standardized Data

Appendix B

Checklist for Completing the District Self-Assessment from Start to Finish

☐ Form a District Self-Assessment Team

☐ Select a facilitator

☐ Conduct an orientation meeting

☐ Create a timeline for conducting the District Self-Assessment

☐ Analyze Characteristic I: Vision, Values, and Culture
    ☐ Review the Characteristic Definition
    ☐ Review the Standard Definitions for all Standards in this Characteristic
    ☐ Complete the **Four-Step Standard Analysis** for each Standard 1.1-1.5
    ☐ Complete the **Characteristic Summary** for Characteristic I: Vision, Values, and Culture

☐ Analyze Characteristic II: Leadership and Governance
    ☐ Review the Characteristic Definition
    ☐ Review the Standard Definitions for all Standards in this Characteristic
    ☐ Complete the **Four-Step Standard Analysis** for each Standard 2.1-2.4
    ☐ Complete the **Characteristic Summary** for Characteristic II: Leadership and Governance

☐ Analyze Characteristic III: Decision-Making and Accountability
    ☐ Review the Characteristic Definition
    ☐ Review the Standard Definitions for all Standards in this Characteristic
    ☐ Complete the **Four-Step Standard Analysis** for each Standard 3.1-3.4
    ☐ Complete the **Characteristic Summary** for Characteristic III: Decision-Making and Accountability

☐ Analyze Characteristic IV: Curriculum and Instruction
    ☐ Review the Characteristic Definition
    ☐ Review the Standard Definitions for all Standards in this Characteristic
    ☐ Complete the **Four-Step Standard Analysis** for each Standard 4.1-4.5
    ☐ Complete the **Characteristic Summary** for Characteristic IV: Curriculum and Instruction

☐ Prepare to analyze Characteristic V: Professional Development and Teacher Quality
    ☐ Review the Characteristic Definition
    ☐ Review the Standard Definitions for all Standards in this Characteristic
    ☐ Complete the Four-Step Standard Analysis for each Standard 5.1-5.5
    ☐ Complete the Characteristic Summary for Characteristic V: Professional Development and Teacher Quality

☐ Complete the Overall Self-Assessment Summary

☐ Finalize Online Report, including the Characteristic Summaries and the Overall Self-Assessment Summary

Appendix C

District Self-Assessment Process—Self-Assessment Team

Name	Areas of Expertise	Characteristic Assignment	Data Collection Responsibilities/Role

Appendix D

District Self-Assessment Process—Orientation Meeting

Invitees: Self-Assessment Team
8:00 am – Noon

Time	Topic	Who	Purpose/Result
8:00	**Welcome** **Purpose of the Meeting** **Agenda Overview**	Chair	Get the group started Clarify where we're headed
8:10	**Background Information** ✱ What the Statewide System of Support is and the NCLB requirements ✱ Components of the System of Support ✱ Philosophy and Goals of the Self-Assessment	Chair	Provide team with critical information that enhances their understanding of the process Questions and discussion
8:40	**Review of Self-Assessment** ✱ Review one Characteristic to become familiar with the different parts of the process ✱ Skim through all Five Characteristics ✱ Generate Questions and Reflections	Group	Become familiar with one Characteristic
9:40	**Self-Assessment Process: Directions and Suggestions** ✱ Review steps in the process	Chair	Develop an understanding of process in completing the Self-Assessment
10:10	**Map Out a Calendar and Key Steps** ✱ Using a backward mapping process, identify when you want to have the process completed. Then, determine major portions of the process and set timelines. ✱ Determine how to delegate work, e.g. assign a member to lead the work on each standard.	Group	Design a timeline for tasks that need to be completed
11:00	**Data Collection Plans** ✱ Discuss process for beginning data collection ✱ Identify next steps	Group	Develop a plan to begin the data collection
11:40	**Next Steps**	Group	Review what needs to happen next
11:50	**Check Out**	Group	Reflections on the meeting
Noon	**Adjourn**		

Appendix E

DISTRICT SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS—
MAPPING OUT THE BIG PICTURE

August	September	October	November	December
•	•	•	•	•

January	February	March	April	May
•	•	•	•	•

Appendix F

DISTRICT SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS—TASKS & TIMELINE

*Characteristic:*_____

*Standard Number:*_____

Tasks	By When	Person(s) Responsible	Resources/Support Needed

DISTRICT SELF-ASSESSMENT—DATA COLLECTION PLAN

This data collection plan is a template provided to assist team members in mapping out the individual plans for gathering existing data and collecting new data that will help in assessing each of the Standards in a Characteristic. The following directions may be used as the group maps out data collection for individual Standards.

1. Identify the Standard for which the group is collecting data on the top line.

2. Place the name of the data source in the appropriate column, along with any helpful notes that describe the data in the space provided. Mark all existing data sources with an "X." For a sample of a filled-in data collection plan, refer to the example at the end of this appendix.

3. Review the comprehensive picture of what data exists for reviewing the Standard. Be sure to examine what stakeholder input is included in each data source—a list of stakeholder groups is provided in the far left column.

4. Assign a group member to gather data from each existing data source.

5. Identify the gaps in the existing data: *from which group(s) of stakeholders do we not have data? Is there some essential information that we need to collect that does not currently exist? Is there data not on the list that we need to include in our plan?*

6. Determine what additional data needs to be created and collected. Write the name of the data source in the appropriate column, and mark this "gap" data with an "O."

7. Determine who will be responsible for collecting the "gap" data. Place the name(s) of the person(s) responsible for the data collection in the column as well.

8. When designing the plan, consider ways to use the same data collection strategy to address more than one Standard or more than one Characteristic. It is important to pay attention to the capacity to do the data collection plan, given the district's resources.

STANDARD:							
DATA COLLECTION PLAN FORM							
*Please enter each data collection plan in the correct cell with relevant dates, estimated duration, names of persons/stakeholders responsible and/or involved, and the expected measures. Please distinguish whether it is data/processes that exist or need to be collected. (i.e., "X" for existing data and "O" for data to be collected) Please refer to the next section of Appendix G, Data Collection Plan Sample, for an example of how this plan can be filled out.							
	Standardized Data	**Focus Groups**	**Interviews**	**Observations**	**Surveys**	**Documents**	**Other**
Stakeholder Groups: Teachers, Parents, Principals, Central Office Staff, etc.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

Appendix G (page 3 of 3)

STANDARD 1.1 : District Vision and Mission						
DATA COLLECTION PLAN SAMPLE						
Please enter each data collection plan in the correct cell with relevant dates, estimated duration, names of persons/stakeholders responsible and/or involved, and the expected measures. Please distinguish whether it is data/processes that exist or need to be collected. (i.e., "X" for existing data and "O" for data to be collected)						
	Standardized Data	**Focus Groups**	**Interviews**	**Observations**	**Surveys**	**Documents**	**Other**
Stakeholder Groups: Teachers, Parents, Principals, Central Office Staff, etc.		X: Collaborative planning with teachers for development of Vision and Mission (1/11-3/11)	O: Interview teachers—can they articulate how Vision and Mission drive their work? (Team member assigned to collect data: Carl Smith)	O: Observe teachers—Vision and Mission drive the work of the school and SIP team	X: Evidence of "buy-in," *Climate Survey 2007* with teachers O: Survey students—do they connect to Vision and Mission? (Team member assigned?) X: Evidence of "buy-in," *Climate Survey 2006* with principals	X: Principals' V&M development meeting minutes 5/2011 X: Teachers' V&M development meeting minutes 5/2011	

Appendix H

Data Analysis Activity: Data Roundtable

This activity can be adapted to meet the needs of the Self-Assessment Team and stakeholder groups when analyzing the data and evidence. The focus of the activity is to allow a diverse team of stakeholders to review the data and formulate the strengths and challenges the district faces in supporting its low-performing schools in a specific Standard.

✔ Preparing for the Analysis

1) Choose a facilitator for the analysis of the Standard.

2) Gather all the data relevant to assessing a specific Standard.

3) Group the data into categories in different "data stations." For example, a category/station may be set up for each of the following data/evidence sources: standardized data, surveys, observations, documents, stakeholder feedback, etc.

4) Break the team for analyzing the Standard into groups; it works well to have the same number of groups as "data stations."

5) Place the data statement form (available at the end of this appendix) at each table. Fill in the data station and Standard information on the forms. Note that rather than using the form, it may be more useful to the team to write the data statements on a large piece of chart paper.

✔ Conducting the Roundtable Activity

1) Allow time for each group to consider the data at each data station. (15-30 minutes, with variations depending on the data sources to consider).

2) While at each data station, the team should develop and record a statement about the data on the data statement form. Statements should be simple, and not to include ideas about solutions or possible causes of concerns. The data statement forms should be left at each table when the team moves to the next station.

3) Each team should review the previous team's data statement and add modified or new statements.

4) After each team has created a data statement for each data station, the facilitator should collect the statements.

✔ Analyzing the Data

1) Make copies of the data statement forms for each team member. (If using chart paper, post the charts from each data station). Allow time for all team members to read and review each data statement.

2) Have the facilitator lead a discussion about the statements. Utilize the key questions and the areas for reflection from the Characteristics to guide the discussion. Be sure to focus on how the data statements provide information about how the district supports its low-performing schools, and how the statements can lead the team in selecting the indicator that best describes the level of district performance.

3) Use the data statements to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. Record the ideas on step three of the Characteristics, which is rating the Standard.

Data Statement Form

Data Station:
e.g. Stakeholder Interviews, Standardized Data, Observations, Documents, etc . . .
Standard Number:
e.g. 1.1: District Vision and Mission

Data Statements

Key Terms and Components

The following terms are useful to know while conducting the Self-Assessment process. These terms are listed in the order they are used in the process.

Characteristics
> The five key areas that have the potential to impact the improvement and success of a district's support to its low-performing schools makes up the *Characteristics*.

Characteristic Definition
> The overarching focus of each Characteristic is reflected in the *Characteristic Definition.*

Standards
> Within each Characteristic, four or five *Standards* describe an area of performance in which districts should strive to excel.

Standard Definition
> The description of each Standard within a Characteristic is the *Standard Definition*.

Indicators
> Descriptors of varying performance levels within a standard provide *Indicators* for a district's level of performance.

Possible Data to Gather
> A list of possible sources from which a district might gather quantitative and qualitative data/evidence to best reflect the district's level of performance comprises *the Possible Data to Gather.*

Key Questions
> Within each Standard, two or three *Key Questions* provide important areas of focus to assist a district in reviewing its data.

Summary of the Findings
> A reflection and report on how a district demonstrates proficiency at the level that it has identified and its impact on student achievement is reflected in the *Summary of the Findings.*

Characteristic Summary
> The *Characteristic Summary* provides an opportunity for the district to prioritize needs, next steps, and resources under one Characteristic.

Overall Self-Assessment summary
> The *Overall Self-Assessment summary* compiles the top three to four areas of need across all the Standard analyses and Characteristic summaries.

Supporting Research

	Applies to Characteristics…				
	I	II	III	IV	V
American Federation of Teachers. (2000). *Doing what works: Improving big city school districts* (Educational Issues Policy Brief No. 12). Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved August 9, 2006, from http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/downloads/teachers/policy12.pdf	✔				
Annenberg Institute for School Reform. (2002). *School communities that work for results and equity.* Providence, RI: Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University. Retrieved August 9, 2006, from http://www.schoolcommunities.org/Archive/images/Results.pdf	✔	✔	✔		
Baldrige National Quality Program. (2004). *Education criteria for performance excellence.* Gaithersburg, MD: Author. Retrieved August 9, 2006, from http://www.quality.nist.gov/PDF_files/2004_Education_Criteria.pdf	✔	✔	✔		
Dailey, D., Fleischman, S., Gil, L., Holtzman, D., O'Day, J., & Vosmer, C. (2005). *Toward more effective school districts: A review of the knowledge base.* Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research. Retrieved August 9, 2006, from http://www.ped.state.nm.us/div/psb/dl10/AIR%20Toward%20more%20effective%20school%20districts.pdf	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Datnow, A., & Stringfield, S. (2000). Working together for reliable school reform. *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk, 5*(1&2). http://www3.ksde.org/sfp/csr/csr_cd/6_Working_Together_for_Reliable_School%20Reform.pdf		✔			✔
Elmore, R. F. (2004). *Knowing the right thing to do: School improvement and performance based accountability.* Washington, DC: National Governors' Association, Center for Best Practices.		✔	✔	✔	✔
Elmore, R. F. (2000). *Building a new structure for school leadership.* Washington, DC: Albert Shanker Institute. Retrieved August 9, 2006, from http://www.shankerinstitute.org/Downloads/building.pdf	✔	✔			
Marsh, J. A. (2000). *Connecting districts to the policy dialogue: A review of literature on the relationship of districts with states, schools, and communities* (CTP Working Paper). Seattle, WA: Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy. Retrieved August 9, 2006, from http://depts.washington.edu/ctpmail/PDFs/District_Lit.pdf		✔			

Reference	Applies to Characteristics…				
	I	II	III	IV	V
McLaughlin, M., & Talbert, J. (2003). *Reforming districts: How districts support school reform* (Research Report R-03-6). Seattle, WA: Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy. Retrieved August 9, 2006, from http://depts.washington.edu/ctpmail/PDFs/ReformingDistricts-09-2003.pdf	✔	✔	✔		✔
New American Schools. (2003). *Framework for high-performing school districts.* Unpublished manuscript. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research.	✔	✔	✔		
North Carolina State Board of Education/Department of Public Instruction. (2000). Improving student performances: The role of district-level staff. http://eus.sagepub.com/content/33/3/235.citation	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
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Our appreciation goes out to Great Lakes West Comprehensive Center for their research support.