

Frequently Asked Questions on Strategies and Support Document

1. Is this document close to being finalized? Should we be acting on these requirements at this time or is there a likelihood that some of the requirements may change?

Some requirements may change but this edition needs to be approved by the State Board of Education before the 2010-2011 school year begins. However, overall, we are not anticipating many changes before that time. The final document will be released in June.

2. When will a revised 2010-2011 Strategies and Support for DA document be released for Charter Schools?

This document will be updated to reflect the 2010-2011 changes and released in June.

3. When one of the cells has an “X” and (Lowest 5%), does the requirement only apply to the Lowest 5%?

The “X” only refers to “lowest 5” schools. The “X” has been removed in the final draft for clarity.

4. On page 4 there is a requirement for the district to replace leadership as necessary. Are the guidelines for changing leadership guidelines or mandated? Are the guidelines the only criteria we use, or can we include other considerations?

These are guidelines for districts. Districts can use other factors in addition to those noted.

5. On page 5, (Educator Quality) the document states “[t]he District shall not employ teachers for the school who are designated less than satisfactory by the teacher evaluation instrument.” What about D schools (C2) since it applies to D schools in P2 status?

Yes, you are correct. This should also apply to “D” schools in Correct II for consistency. The change will be made.

6. On pages 5 and 6 reference is made to using a three year average to determine learning gains. How is this to be calculated? Does it refer to gains over a three year period or determining the amount of gains each year for three years and then finding the average? Or, is this referring to the state Growth Model (which is based on growth over a three year projection)?

It is taking the combined learning gains of a teacher for each year for all of her/his classes in reading or mathematics, adding those numbers together, and then dividing by 3.

7. On Page 5, (Educator Quality), the document states that “[t]he school must be fully staffed by the first day of school.” The X’s in the cells suggest that this applies to all P2 schools, but only the Lowest 5% for C1, C2 and Intervene.

Yes, this could be clearer. This requirement will apply to C1 lowest 5 schools; PII D schools; CII D, F, and Lowest 5; and Intervene schools.

8. On page 5 there is a requirement to provide a reading, mathematics and science coach. This represents an additional coach, since last year it was math or science.

Correct. A science coach has been added considering the progress those schools are making in science as a result of a full-time science coach and the availability of funds through the School Improvement Grant for schools identified in the Lowest 5%.

9. Does this requirement (a full-time science coach) only apply to Lowest 5% schools and C2 (D & F schools)?

Yes.

10. What is the waiver process for a district to be excused from a requirement? (A waiver is referenced regarding the coaching requirement, but the process is not described.)

The same process will be used as last year. The form will be sent to districts and submitted to the Regional Executive Director (RED) for review and approval.

11. On page 5, there is a requirement for instructional coaches to maintain a daily log and not provide pull-out instruction. Reading coaches use PMRN to log activities; will there be another database for science and math coaches?

The district may use and develop their own log for math and science coaches but the RED can provide you with an example if you are interested.

12. This coaching requirement applies to all DA schools, but the requirement to provide coaches does not apply to all DA categories.

Yes, you are correct. The changes will be made to ensure consistency. The contradiction was due to the fact that reading coaches in Prevent I and Correct I schools are required to complete PMRN logs.

13. How can activities be restricted for positions not mandated under DA?

See above. The change will be made for consistency.

14. On page 6, the requirement to review and replace teachers who have not contributed to Learning Gains of 65% or greater in reading and mathematics or those teachers who did not contribute to improving the school's performance appears to apply to all P2 and C2 schools and Lowest 5% (C1, C2, Intervene).

Yes, this could be clearer. This requirement will apply to C1 lowest 5 schools; CII F and lowest 5; and Intervene schools.

15. Thus, are we correct in assuming this does not apply to P1 and C1 schools?

Yes, only lowest 5% schools in Correct I.

16. Is this requirement to review and replace teachers a mandate or a recommendation?

This is a requirement.

17. How do you measure "or those teachers who did not contribute to improving the school's performance", especially for specials teachers and teachers in grades K-2?

This is a decision that districts can make as long as the basis of the decision is objective, applied consistently, and based on student achievement.

18. On page 8 (Professional Development), the document states that “District must ensure that appropriate resources are provided to redesign the master schedule to allow for common planning time for data-based decision making, job-embedded professional development, and Lesson Study.” The X’s in the cells suggest that this is required for the Lowest 5% (C1 & C2 & Intervene), and D schools (P2) -- it doesn’t make sense that D and F schools that are C2 would not be included (unless we are reading the chart incorrectly).

Yes, this could be clearer. This requirement will apply to Lowest 5% schools and F schools.

19. Are these the only schools that are therefore required to have common planning for PLCs?

Yes.

20. Are these schools required to implement Lesson Study?

All DA schools are required to implement Lesson Study.

21. If Lesson Study is supposed to be conducted by content area within a grade level, how do small schools with departmentalization meet this requirement? (They may have only one teacher per grade level teaching each content area.)

We recommend that small schools network with nearby schools to meet this requirement.

22. As schools begin to implement Lesson Study, is there a grade level that is recommended for beginning the process, or is it up to each school?

The process is up to the school; the Department will be releasing a guide on Lesson Study soon that will assist schools in implementing the Lesson Study process.

23. On page 8 there is a requirement for the district to maintain a pool of highly-qualified reading, math, and science teachers and instructional coaches to serve in DA schools. This seems to apply to Lowest 5% schools only.

Yes, specifically for those schools but those coaches could be placed in other DA schools.

24. What is meant by “maintains a pool”?

Maintains a pool refers to a group of potential coaches.

25. On page 9, the requirement for district to extend the learning day seems to apply to Lowest 5% (C1 and C2) and High School Intervene schools.

This is correct. This requirement applies to Lowest 5% schools only.

26. If a Lowest 5% school is C2, then this would apply. However, according to the current chart, it would not apply to a Lowest 5% elementary school that is Intervene.

The chart will be updated for clarity on this point. The requirement applies to all lowest 5% schools, regardless of the grade span it serves.

27. Is this extended learning opportunities? If not and is a requirement for all staff, it is a condition of employment and will require bargaining.

A memo was issued to provide clarity regarding extending the learning day. As a quick summary, this requirement can take many forms. Extending the learning day or year, which, as you indicate, would require bargaining. Other options include before or after school remediation or enrichment or weekend activities. However, it is important to note that ALL students will need to be offered extended learning opportunities for remediation or enrichment.

28. On page 13, there is a requirement to establish a position to lead the turnaround effort at the district level, with selected employee reporting directly to the superintendent. The School Improvement Grant (SIG) stipulates that this position may report to the superintendent or Chief Academic Officer-why is this not aligned to SIG?

The requirements should be aligned.

29. Removing schools entirely from the Area Office creates a void for other services that Area Offices provide and would require that the new position include other staff and resources, which would have budgetary impact

Each district and its challenges regarding the need for this position is different. Please discuss the positives and negatives of this position with your RED and describe your plan in the SIG application for review.

30. On the conference call, it was mentioned that a waiver was being requested to waive the requirement to submit corrective action and restructuring plans for Title I schools as a result of Differentiated Accountability. Is there any additional information available for review?

Yes, the waiver was approved and an official memo to districts will be sent soon.

31. Are there any other implications as a result of receiving this waiver? For example, will parent notifications need to be altered to let parents know that the Differentiated Accountability Plan will serve as the restructuring plan?

No additional requirements are necessary at this time.

32. How will this affect the required input of parents and teachers in the development of the restructuring plans when the components are already developed?

Section 1116(b)(8)(C)(ii)(II)Restructuring plans and the requirements associated with restructuring will no longer be required.

33. Will this affect Choice with Transportation receiving schools? What is the benefit of a Title I Correct I or Correct II school transferring a student to a non-Title I Correct I or Correct II school? If they are both significantly changing the governance of their school as a corrective action or restructuring method through Differentiated Accountability, why would the non-Title I school continue to be a receiving school?

The point is understood. However, it is a larger issue that focuses on perceived flaws of the choice system. It may be helpful to discuss this issue with the Title I Office.