

2009-2010 School Improvement Plan Frequently Asked Questions

General

What are the major changes to the 09-10 School Improvement Plan (SIP) template?

We worked with education stakeholders and with other Bureaus in the Department to reduce duplication in school reporting requirements and to ensure that the new template assists schools in defining the strategies to improve student achievement. The new template consolidates many of the sections that were required under the old SIP, includes Differentiated Accountability requirements, and removes sections that were not required by state or federal law. It also reduces the amount of narrative required by requesting targeted information in table formats. Two new sections replace the previous "Schoolwide Improvement Model" section to capture information on the implementation of Response to Intervention/Instruction (RtI) and Florida's Continuous Improvement Model. We hope you find the new template more streamlined.

Will the template fulfill all federal and state SIP requirements?

Yes, completing the Department SIP template fulfills all state and federal requirements regarding SIPs. While some requirements may not be stand alone questions in the SIP, all requirements are embedded in the SIP.

Are there any sections in the SIP that are only required for Title I schools?

Yes, there are two sections that need to be completed only by Title I schools. These sections are Coordination and Integration and NCLB Public School Choice. If a Title I school is not identified as In Need of Improvement, then the school does not need to complete the NCLB Public School Choice Section. Non-Title I schools do not need to complete these sections.

Will there be training to help schools and districts complete the new SIP template?

Yes, training will be provided by the Regional Teams for districts and schools this spring. The Department has also disseminated a Model SIP which includes sample responses and guiding questions. We will continue to update the FAQ document posted on the Web site as questions arise.

Who is required to complete a SIP?

Section [1001.42\(18\)](#), Florida Statutes requires all schools to complete a SIP. All Title I Schools identified as In Need of Improvement and Differentiated Accountability (DA) schools identified as Intervene, Correct II, Prevent II, Correct I, or Prevent I are required to submit their SIP to the Department using the DOE's SIP template. If a school is not identified under NCLB or DA, the school may still choose to complete the Department's SIP and submit via the on-line system.

When will SIPs be due for the 09-10 school year?

SIPs should be submitted via the on-line system no later than September 11, 2009. The on-line system will be available starting in July. We recommend that schools begin to analyze data and assess school needs right away. We also recommend that schools use the Word template to complete their SIP and once finalized, copy and paste responses into the on-line system.

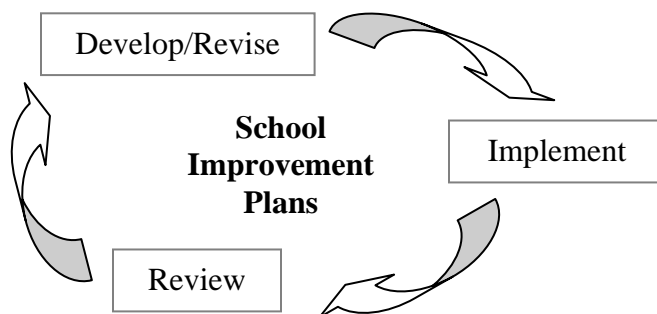
Some schools treat SIP development as simply a compliance task while others have an ongoing process. How should the SIP be used?

School Improvement is an ongoing process. Schools should meet with all stakeholders to identify needs, areas of weakness, and areas of strengths. After this discussion, the SIP should be developed and/or revised. Even though the Department has a deadline by which schools should submit their SIP, the plan should be considered fluid so that changes and updates can

2009-2010 School Improvement Plan Frequently Asked Questions

happen as needed. For example, if your school finalizes the 09-10 SIP in August and then has an Instructional Review in October, you should review your SIP again and make any necessary revisions. We expect to close the on-line system in mid-September and then re-open the system for revisions in November. We are working with our Web design team to have a "Date Last Updated" appear in the 'print-view' format of the school SIP.

The following graphic may help to illustrate the SIP process:



Will there be a section for baseline data?

Yes; this information is also due on the on-line system by September 11, 2009.

Part I: Current Schools Status

Why is so much information being requested in the School Profile/Demographics section?

As we mentioned previously, we have worked to reduce the amount of narrative required by requesting more targeted information. Most schools included this information in the past, but it was not broken down before. The information included in the Profile/Demographics section is very important in understanding the school. The SIP should be a tool for the district, state, community, and parents to see where your school is presently and how you intend to continue improvements. The school profile provides that information.

Will the Student Achievement Data section be pre-populated?

The Student Achievement Data section includes links that will take you directly to your school's achievement data. You should use this data and other school-based student achievement data to develop your SIP. The AYP, School Grades, and FCAT trend data that are provided in the links will automatically appear at the end of your school's SIP when you select 'print-view.'

Under the Highly Qualified Administrators section, are schools expected to delineate school grades and AYP for each administrator and for each year?

Yes, it is important to determine if administrators have a demonstrated record of turning around low-performing schools and/or are effectively improving student achievement. The key to school improvement is leadership. Without instructional leadership and sound administration, schools rarely improve. Also, schools that have been chronically low-performing should not be led over a long period of time by the same leadership team.

How should schools align data with performance of coaches if coaches change schools frequently?

We understand that it may be difficult to gather such data, but it is important to determine if coaches have a demonstrated record of turning around low-performing schools and/or are effectively improving student achievement. You should use school grades and AYP data for the

2009-2010 School Improvement Plan Frequently Asked Questions

school year that the coach was at the school. If this is the first year the coach is in this role and was previously a teacher, you should use data showing how the teacher performed in the classroom.

Strategies to recruit high quality, highly qualified teachers are typically a district function in a large district, what sort of activities do you expect schools to participate in?

Schools should actively recruit the best teachers and have activities or strategies to help retain highly-effective teachers. School-based activities may include: meetings with the principal, mentors, learning communities, classroom observations, or peer groups. You may include the district's strategies as well.

Are schools allowed to list specific teacher or administrators names in the SIP?

SIPs typically include lists of names for various sections. For example, in the Highly Qualified section of the SIP, text boxes that request names should include specific names. Please note that the SIPs submitted on-line are available to be viewed by the public. We do not ask for any private information such as phone numbers, home addresses, or social security numbers. Schools should be careful not to input or upload any private information.

Who should be included in the Staff Demographics section, and how can the school obtain this information?

You should include information on any and all teachers who are teaching at least one class. You may consider using information from your human resources office, teachers' records, or a school-based survey.

Why do all schools complete the Coordination and Integration section?

Coordination of services and integration of federal, state, and local funds reduces duplication of services and ensures that all student needs are met. You should include information regarding the funds you receive, such as: Title I, school improvement, supplemental academic instruction, grants, etc. Schools should work with their districts to determine the funds allocated to their schools. This ensures transparency and accountability.

Our school is in the beginning stages of RtI and will be at this initial stage for the 09-10 school year. How should we complete the RtI section?

Full implementation of RtI is required by 2010. This section requires schools to plan critically for full implementation.

Can the RtI section be incorporated into other sections of the SIP?

While many facets of RtI are already incorporated throughout the SIP, we felt that it was important to separate this section to show the importance of RtI implementation. Also, for many schools and districts, RtI is just beginning to be implemented. They may not be prepared to incorporate RtI throughout the plan and may need more specific and guiding questions to start the process.

Our school is just beginning to implement Professional Learning Communities (PLC). How should we respond to this section?

Your responses regarding topics, staff members, and when sessions meet should be as descriptive as possible. PLC meetings can take place during common planning time or after school. Schools should have a plan of what topics will be addressed in these meetings and when the PLC meetings will take place (e.g. Monday mornings, Wednesday after school).

2009-2010 School Improvement Plan Frequently Asked Questions

Part II: Expected Improvements

Since FCAT scores are released late in the school year, should the school consider other more readily accessible district testing?

FCAT scores are an essential component in identifying your school's academic needs. You may use additional assessment information as well when developing goals and strategies and for progress monitoring.

Should a school's SIP be reflective of the district's goals as well as individual school goals?

We want to allow schools to specify their specific needs. These goals may or may not be exact matches to the district's overall goals.

Under the column "Person Responsible for Monitoring the Action Step" should the school list actual names or positions?

For the Goals sections and corresponding Professional Development sections, positions will be sufficient. Additionally, you may not know in the beginning of the year when the target date for professional development activities will take place. You should try to be as specific as possible, but you may indicate timeframes such as "spring" or "third nine-weeks."

In the Needs Assessment where will the actual results be reported?

Schools should identify how they will measure the effectiveness of their actions in the columns "Process Used to Determine Effectiveness of Action Step and Evaluation Tool." Progress may be updated during the mid-year reporting process.

For the Parent Involvement Goal, who determines the needs?

The SAC and school principal are responsible for the SIP, and they should take the lead in identifying all of the needs associated with the SIP. Each Title I school must have a school-level parental involvement policy, which should be evaluated annually. This evaluation may assist the SAC in identifying the school's parent involvement needs. Schools may use information from the Title I parent involvement policy or may include more general parental involvement objectives that may not be included in the policy.

Are "Other Goals" required or optional?

This is an optional section. Some schools include additional goals related to drop-out prevention, school safety and bullying, and technology.

What is required in the DA Compliance section?

This section is new to the SIP. Any school that is identified as Intervene, Correct II, Prevent II, Correct I, or Prevent I must comply with the DA requirements listed in the 09-10 Crosswalk of Differentiated Accountability Requirements. The Department has created Checklists to assist in determining your school's level of compliance with DA. Your school must complete the appropriate checklist and upload your findings into the SIP. The Crosswalk and Checklists can be obtained from your Regional Executive Director. These documents will be available on the Bureau of School Improvement's Web site.