Instructional System

Practices and Progress Indicators

The Instructional System focuses on the primary elements that drive teaching and learning in schools: curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Research on effective practices for supporting instruction in a district identify a progression of stages centered on the district having identified a vision centered on student outcomes and a mission addressing adult practice around instruction. These stages start with Curriculum Design and Content to develop a framework for what is taught and how it will be taught. Curriculum Resources, based upon this design, ensure proper support of learning. The district then applies these concepts in teaching and learning by engaging in the Implementing Curriculum practices. Finally, the district Evaluates Curriculum and Teaching to ensure fidelity.

CURRICULUM DESIGN AND CONTENT

PRACTICE	IN#	GETTING STARTED	GETTING BETTER	KEEP IMPROVING
1. **The district's curriculum is based upon its vision and identified approaches to learning, which are grounded in scientific research.**	1	The district identifies student competencies for each grade level.	The district identifies learning approaches grounded in scientific research and the inclusion of student competencies.	The district's content-rich curriculum is grounded in scientific research which identifies student competencies and learning expectations for students at each grade or developmental level.
2. **The district's curriculum is aligned to learning progressions and measurable learning outcomes.**	2	The district has a common framework for the curriculum that identifies topics by content strand and grade level.	The district has a common framework for the curriculum that identifies learning outcomes and identifies topics around these outcomes by content strand and grade level. The framework incorporates assessment information for gauging student learning.	The district has a district-wide curriculum framework that maps identified learning outcomes for how the curriculum will be structured, delivered, and assessed. The framework incorporates learning progressions and measurable learning outcomes.

PRACTICE	IN#	GETTING STARTED	GETTING BETTER	KEEP IMPROVING
3. *The district's curriculum includes essential academic and non-academic learning (curricular) outcomes that are aligned to the district's vision.*	3	The district has a plan for supporting the whole child by addressing academic and non-academic outcomes. The district identifies opportunities for deeper learning and development of student competencies within the curriculum.	The district specifically maps out deeper learning opportunities and student competencies within the curriculum. Based on the district's vision for learners, the district develops and implements a plan for addressing outcomes based on academic standards and non-academic outcomes and instructional needs to support the whole child.	The district develops a curriculum aligned to the district's vision for learners, the academic standards and non-academic outcomes where deeper learning and student competencies are prioritized.
4. *The district's curriculum is aligned (horizontally and vertically) and ensures coherence, equity, and rigor.*	4	The district has a curriculum that identifies grade-level and subject-area topics. There is some alignment to state standards.	The district has a curriculum that identifies grade-level and subject-area content standards and learning outcomes for students. These are mapped across grade levels and subject areas to show learning progressions for students and coherence among grade-level classrooms across the district. The curriculum is aligned to state standards to address vertical and horizontal alignment.	The district has a curriculum that identifies grade-level and subject-area content standards and learning outcomes for students. There is a protocol used to ensure that the curriculum addresses vertical and horizontal alignment that includes research-based learning progressions for learners. Monitoring processes and teacher collaboration at the grade level ensures coherence, equity, and rigor among grade-level classrooms across the district.

CURRICULUM RESOURCES

PRACTICE	IN#	GETTING STARTED	GETTING BETTER	KEEP IMPROVING
5. The district's curriculum resources for teaching are aligned to the district's vision for learners.	5	The district provides a set of resources for each subject area and grade level identified in the district curriculum that are generally aligned in topic, content, scope, and sequence.	District-selected curriculum resources, including textbooks, teachers' instructional guides and resources, identify research or evidence-based instructional strategies, content understandings, student skills, and competencies. Curriculum resources are aligned in topic, content, scope, and sequence.	The district provides curriculum resources that * are based on current student learning research and evidence-based practices and reflect the district's vision for learners, * are appropriate for the subject area and grade level, * are aligned to specific learning/content standards, * are organized based on known learning progressions, * support content-specific instructional strategies, and * identify differentiated learning support for students.
6. The district's system of assessments for academic and non-academic skills are aligned to the curriculum.	6a.	The district ensures that assessments are available for each core topic. These include summative assessments and state-mandated benchmark and diagnostic assessments in core areas.	The district ensures that a system of assessments are available and used for each area of learning identified in the district curriculum. These include common summative assessments, state-mandated benchmark, and diagnostic assessments in classrooms of the same topic or grade level.	The district provides a system of common assessments for each area of learning identified in the district curriculum. These include * common summative assessments * benchmark assessments aligned to national norms, and * diagnostic assessments for use in identifying needs for tiered learning supports for academic content.

PRACTICE	IN#	GETTING STARTED	GETTING BETTER	KEEP IMPROVING
	6b.	The district identifies a set of assessments to address non-academic skills and competencies at each developmental level.	The district uses a common set of assessments to address non-academic skills and competencies at each developmental level, and applies these to guide instructional practices and intervention strategies.	The district uses a range of assessments to address non-academic skills and competencies at each developmental level, and applies these to guide instructional practices, intervention strategies, and learning supports for students. These are part of a comprehensive, balanced-assessment system.

IMPLEMENTING CURRICULUM

PRACTICE	IN#	GETTING STARTED	GETTING BETTER	KEEP IMPROVING
7. *The district's instructional models are aligned to the district's vision for learning.*	7	The district identifies a variety of instructional models relevant to student developmental levels or content area.	The district provides opportunities for teachers to begin to understand, implement, and integrate instructional models into practice.	The district implements instructional models within grade levels and content areas which addresses the curriculum and provides greater consistency across learning environments. The models align to the district's vision for learning.
8. *The district provides ongoing, job-embedded professional learning for all educators to continuously improve instructional practices and student support. (*connected to SSS-11)*	8	The district provides resources for individualized professional learning opportunities for teachers to explore and develop their own instruction. The district also provides collective professional learning experiences around areas of need or district priorities.	The district provides occasional, job-embedded professional learning to support instruction based on identified student and teacher data. This professional learning may include teacher collaborative routines and/or content-area focused instructional peer-to-peer observations and coaching. Grade-level or subject-area group professional learning may be used to inform teachers about instructional practices or curricular resources.	The district provides regular and frequent ongoing, job-embedded professional learning based on identified student and teacher data. The district utilizes a combination of teacher collaboration, individual or group coaching, and other professional learning that focus on practice, using data and observations to identify opportunities for improvement. Professional learning addresses district goals and vision through individualized guidance and learning based on classroom practice and outcomes.
9. *The district's allocation of time and resources are aligned to student need and district-defined essential learning.*	9	Instruction may vary in terms of content coverage, time, and resources devoted to the district-defined essential learning.	Instruction within grade-levels and/or content areas are somewhat coherent in terms of content coverage, time, and resources devoted to the district-defined essential learning.	The district ensures that content coverage is consistent in all equivalent learning environments and that all students have appropriate time and resources devoted to the district-defined essential learning.

PRACTICE	IN#	GETTING STARTED	GETTING BETTER	KEEP IMPROVING
10. *The districts's academic and non-academic support matches individual student need. (*connected to SSS-6)*	10	The district has a compliant Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) based upon individual student need for state required areas of study (i.e. early literacy).	The district provides a Multi-Tiered System of Supports for mandated and additionally selected areas of academic and non-academic content and instruction.	The district provides an effective Multi-Tiered System of Supports in all core academic and non-academic areas of instruction matched to individual student need. The system utilizes a range of diagnostic student assessments to identify intervention strategies and learning supports which includes mastery-level interventions for advanced learners.
11. *The districts's use of data supports continuous improvement practices. (*connected to SSS-13)*	11	The district monitors instructional practice, curriculum implementation, and student outcomes using common indicators of engagement and learning. Data may or may not be used to suggest changes in practice.	The district monitors instruction, curriculum implementation, student outcomes, and teacher and student self-reporting of instruction and learning. Data is analyzed regularly to make broad decisions regarding supports for students and educators.	The district monitors implementation of the district curriculum and instructional practices using data, from a combination of: * classroom observations; * teacher and student self-reporting of instruction and learning; * instructional coaching, feedback, and teacher collaboration; * analysis of student outcome data, including both standardized assessment data, classroom outcomes with common assessment data, and examples of student work. Data is reviewed regularly to support continuous improvement practices.

EVALUATION OF CURRICULUM AND TEACHING

PRACTICE	IN#	GETTING STARTED	GETTING BETTER	KEEP IMPROVING
12. The district's assessment of teaching and learning is aligned to the district's vision.	12	The district regularly engages in the use of their identified instructional model for the process of educator evaluation to assess teaching and learning.	The district: * applies the evaluation model to their own instructional and curricular framework, * develops crosswalks and observational tools to ensure that the purpose and scope of evaluation are understood, * applies the evaluation model through occasional observations, and * uses observation sessions to focus on identified instructional practices.	The district: * assesses the quality of teaching and learning through the evaluation model aligned to their instructional and curricular frameworks, * utilizes crosswalks and observational tools to ensure that the purpose and scope of evaluation are understood, * applies the evaluation model through frequent observations, and * uses multiple observation and coaching cycles to focus and improve upon identified instructional practices.
*13. The district uses improvement cycles to monitor short-term routines in order to achieve long-term goals. (*connected to SSS-13)*	13	The district routinely gathers instructional practice data for review; the data are not used to make decisions or to inform and improve practices.	The district data on learning outcomes are combined with data on adult actions to make operational decisions about instructional practice and to inform policies and programs decisions.	The district, through an Improvement Cycle process: * correlates data from instructional practice (adult actions and student outcomes), including short-term actions and long-term goals, * gathers instructional data for analysis, and * makes regular decisions about relevance for future district, building, and classroom actions.

PRACTICE	IN#	GETTING STARTED	GETTING BETTER	KEEP IMPROVING
14. *The district's evaluation and assessment of curriculum and its resources ensure equity for every child. (*connected to SSS-14)*	14	The district develops a curriculum review and revision process using both teacher input and student outcome data.	The district's curriculum review and revision process utilizes known protocols for content decisions and includes the mapping of content into the existing district curriculum. The protocol includes a review of student outcomes for both the aggregate population and various student groups, and uses teacher input when determining new curriculum for the district.	The district engages in regular review and revision of the curriculum using protocols for considering student outcome data, disaggregated outcome data based on a variety of student populations, new research on student learning, approaches to learning that align with the district vision, and the incorporation of new state standards or other resources that would influence the district curriculum. These protocols are refined on an annual basis based upon student learning outcomes, both in total and for a variety of student groups, and teacher input in the process.