

OIP Implementation: Getting Started!

These new intervention options require implementation of the *Ohio Improvement Process (OIP)*, a four-stage process that involves (1) using data to identify the district's critical needs; (2) developing a single coherent plan (CCIP) with a limited number of focused goals and strategies for addressing those needs; (3) implementing fully the plan across the district; and (4) monitoring the degree of implementation and evaluating the effects of the improvement process on student performance.

The first step in preparing for OIP implementation at the district level is the establishment (or re-establishment) of a district leadership team (DLT). The use of leadership teams to distribute key leadership functions and direct district-wide implementation of effective practices facilitates the intentional alignment of resources to address identified weaknesses. It also shifts the focus from the individual as leader to a team of individuals responsible for doing the right work, doing it collectively across the system, and holding each other accountable for the desired effect on student performance.

The right work, or the essential practices that must be implemented across the system for sustainable improvements to be made, is defined across six core areas by the *Ohio Leadership Advisory Council (OLAC)*. These six areas include: (1) data and the decision-making process; (2) focused goal setting process; (3) instruction and the learning process; (4) community engagement process; (5) resource management process; and (6) board development and governance process.

In districts and schools that have shown steady and sustainable improvement, leadership teams use data to identify a few district goals and strategies around instruction and achievement, intentionally focus effort across the district on implementing strategies and action steps to achieve the goals, and continually monitor the degree of implementation and its desired effect on student performance. April Dominie, OLAC member and superintendent of Big Walnut Local Schools, describes the importance of focus when she says,

“All the leadership standards depend on one thing - the will to focus. Leaders must insist that we target all resources, focus every discussion/decision and continuously communicate the focus until every classroom demonstrates the vision. A mentor always said to me, “Leadership is saying no to good ideas” and this has never been more true. If we don’t learn to do this in education, we will continue to have a history of disconnected good ideas that frequently change and never see large scale change in every classroom.”

At stage one of the OIP, the DLT uses the *Ohio Decision Framework* to review relevant data and answer essential questions, helping to focus the team on the most important problems or critical needs of the district. The OLAC performance assessment rubric, an electronic tool for use by teams in benchmarking their performance against OLAC essential leadership practices, provides a source of data for use in answering questions about leadership. Completion of the decision framework results in a district profile that should be used to affirm priority areas for goals and strategies.

OIP Guiding Principles

- Improvement is everyone's responsibility – at all levels of the district and in all districts.
- Leadership – the purpose of which is the improvement of instructional practice and performance, regardless of role – is a critical component of the OIP and must be addressed in more meaningful ways to ensure scalability and sustainability of improvement efforts on a district-wide basis.
- State-developed products and tools, including professional development, must be designed for universal accessibility and applicability to/for every district in the state.
- A unified state system of support requires the intentional use of a consistent set of tools and protocols by all state-supported regional providers, rather than allowing for multiple approaches across the state, based on preference.

At stage two, the DLT develops a focused plan with a limited number of goals and strategies based on the decision framework profile and directs building leadership teams (BLTs) to complete the building decision framework, reviewing relevant data and identifying any additional focused action steps – related to district goals – that are relevant to their building. Each BLT develops a school improvement plan with action steps aligned to the district goals and strategies. Stages 1 and 2 should be completed about every five years unless the district encounters significant changes that would warrant an intensive review of the data and the re-establishment of district goals. Otherwise, it is anticipated that district goals would remain stable over time.

At stages three and four, the focus is on full implementation of the district and school plans, the ongoing collection and review of data by the DLT and BLTs to gauge the degree of implementation, and the evaluation of the effects of implementation on the achievement of all students and student groups. A five-year *OIP Implementation Schedule* that includes major steps and target time lines is provided on page 4. See the center OIP Graphic for a description of each stage of the OIP.

Five-Year OIP Implementation Schedule

Stage	Target Time Frame	Steps
Prepare for Plan DEVELOPMENT	Early Fall of Year 1	Superintendent meets with external facilitator to receive introduction to OIP
		Superintendent convenes/reconvenes DLT and provides orientation to OIP
		DLT takes OLAC performance assessment
Stage 1: Identify Critical Needs	By early November	DLT understands structure and organization of the Decision Framework (DF), including collection and organization of local data
		DLT completes the DF, which becomes CCIP needs assessment*
		DLT identifies and affirms critical needs for student performance content and expectations and conditions areas
Stage 2: Develop Focused Plan	By early January	DLT develops up to four (4) focused SMART goals based on DF profile results
		DLT develops a limited number (3 to 5) of research-based strategies per goal and indicators for each strategy
	By mid-February	DLT develops district action steps and completes project “management” template
		DLT works with Building Leadership Teams (BLT) to complete building DF and complete OLAC performance assessment
By early April	DLT works with BLTs to develop building action steps aligned to district goals and strategies and completes project management template	
	June	DLT submits district and school improvement plans as the district's CCIP
Stage 3: Implement the Focused Plan	Years 2-5	DLT/BLTs work with district employees and providers/partners to implement the district plan and school improvement plans (SIPs)
	Annually (years 2-5)	DLT approves SIPs and provides resources and assistance to schools to support plan implementation
	Ongoing (Years 2-5)	DLT collects data on strategy indicators and refines district plan based on such data and, on a quarterly basis, updates progress on the project management template
Stage 4: Monitor the Improvement Process	Ongoing (Years 2-5)	DLT provides regular progress reports to superintendent for informing board of education
	Ongoing (Years 2-5)	DLT evaluates degree of plan implementation, changes in educator practices, and impact on student achievement
	Ongoing (Years 2-5)	DLT uses monitoring and evaluation data to modify instructional practice and revise plan

*The CCIP is a unified grants application that requires district personnel to work together in the development of one coherent plan that aligns and focuses the work across the district.

More than Compliance

Differentiated accountability provides a vehicle for moving away from a focus on external controls imposed from outside the school district to a focus on internal accountability that holds all adults in the system accountable for improving instructional practice and student learning. Rather than focusing on making improvement on a “school-by-school” basis, the OIP provides a more systematic approach using a connected set of processes and tools for helping districts redefine expectations for how people operate collectively across the district as a system. Recent meta-analytical studies on the impact of district and school leadership on student achievement provide strong support for the creation of leadership teams to clarify shared leadership roles/responsibilities at the district and school level, and validate leadership team structures needed to implement quality planning, implementation, and ongoing monitoring on a system-wide basis. When school board members, superintendents, central office staff, principals, and teachers “stay the course” on the right work, as defined by focused goals for instruction and achievement, student learning increases.



*For more information about the OLAC Leadership Development Framework, contact the Ohio Department of Education, Center for School Improvement, at 614.466.5834, or the Buckeye Association of School Administrators at 614.846.4080.

Ohio's Differentiated Accountability Model:

Promoting Flexibility, Innovation for District-wide Improvement of Instructional Practice and Student Performance



In spring 2008, Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings invited states to participate in a pilot to implement a differentiated accountability model for distinguishing between schools and districts in need of intensive intervention and those that are closer to meeting their goals. The pilots are intended to provide states with additional flexibility for innovation in providing more targeted and effective interventions for districts and schools in need of improvement.

Differentiated accountability represents a significant new development in accountability policy and practice by using federal requirements/funds as a lever for building district/school capacity to improve student performance and by better targeting state support for district-wide continuous improvement under NCLB authority. However, states' differentiated accountability models must maintain the current measurement of adequate yearly progress (AYP) under section 1111 of NCLB.

Overview of Ohio's Model

As one of six states awarded the opportunity to use differentiated accountability, Ohio's model offers a systematic approach that assists districts and their schools in using data to target improvement efforts by identifying their greatest needs and aligning work around a limited number of focused goals. It does not change how districts or schools make or miss Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), local report card indicators, or school or district designations. It does:

- Allow student progress to be considered when determining improvement status, reducing the impact of how long a district or school has missed AYP;
- Place districts and/or schools that miss AYP into categories based on degree of complexity and level of support needed instead of how long a district or school has missed AYP;
- Categorize districts and their schools based upon the collective percentage of student groups not meeting AYP in reading and mathematics; and
- Require districts and their schools to move through the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP) together, rather than being treated as individual disconnected entities.

Under the current system of federal accountability under NCLB, a series of sanctions is applied based on the length of time a school or district has been in improvement status. Each year the district or school continues to miss AYP, increasing consequences are imposed that range from offering transfer options and tutoring for students to restructuring school or district governance. Under the current law, the consequences are the same whether the district/school missed AYP for one group of students in one subject area, or missed the mark for multiple groups of students in both reading and mathematics.

For districts in corrective action (i.e., those that failed to meet AYP for more than four years), consequences can include replacing district personnel; removing particular buildings from the jurisdiction of the district and establishing alternative governance and supervision arrangements; appointing a receiver/trustee to administer the affairs of the district in place of the superintendent and local school board; and abolishing or restructuring the district.

In contrast to the current system, Ohio's Differentiated Accountability model treats districts and their schools as part of a system – rather than as fragmented entities within the system – and requires the district and its buildings to move through the improvement process as a unit. Instead of focusing on the number of years that a school or district missed AYP, Ohio's new model categorizes districts and schools into three risk categories (low-, medium-, and high-support) based on the aggregate percentage of student groups not meeting AYP in reading and mathematics, and provides them with different options for interventions in addition to those required by law.

Features of Ohio's Differentiated Accountability Model

- Defines leadership as essential practices that should be implemented at all levels of the system
- Takes into account the role and responsibility of the district in making/sustaining improvement
- Organizes district/school data to customize interventions/solutions to critical needs as determined through a comprehensive needs assessment
- Accelerates support and better targets resources and assistance to the districts and schools that need the most support
- Provides high quality consistent training and support through a unified regional infrastructure



Support Categories for Districts Under Ohio's Differentiated Accountability Model

LOW SUPPORT	MEDIUM SUPPORT	HIGH SUPPORT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District and all buildings in improvement status fail to meet less than 20 percent of AYP measures Supported by Educational Service Centers (ESCs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District and all buildings in improvement status fail to meet 20-29 percent of AYP measures Supported by State Support Teams (SSTs) and/or ESCs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District and all buildings in improvement status fail to meet more than 29 percent of AYP measures Supported by SSTs

Required/Optional Interventions Under Differentiated Accountability	District Level of Support Needed					
	LOW		MEDIUM		HIGH	
	Required	Optional*	Required	Optional*	Required	Optional*
Public school choice required for all identified Title I funded buildings	✓		✓		✓	
Supplemental Educational Services (SES) required for all Title I funded buildings identified and failing to make AYP for three or more years	✓		✓		✓	
State notifies parents that the district is identified as a (low/medium/high) support district	✓		✓		✓	
Use the state's Decision Framework to create district and building needs assessments	✓		✓		✓	
Develop district and building focused improvement plans based on state's planning guidance	✓		✓		✓	
10 percent of Title I funds directed to Professional Development (PD)—at the building and/or district level as appropriate	✓		✓		✓	
Annual measurable objectives for each affected disaggregated group	✓		✓		✓	
Establish a District Leadership Team (DLT) and Building Leadership Teams (BLT), which conduct business in accordance with the OLAC framework		✓	✓		✓	
On-site review and follow-up by the State Diagnostic Team as selected by the State					✓	
On-site review by a state approved Diagnostic Team with aggressive implementation of critical items (critical items are those associated with the reasons the schools/district were identified for improvement)				✓		✓
District/buildings implement their improvement plans under the oversight of the State Support Team						✓
Reopen the school as a public charter school						✓
Replace all/most of the building staff (which may include the principal) or, in the case of medium support, replace the staff relevant to the issues				✓		✓
Institute and fully implement a new curriculum including PD for teachers				✓		
Significantly decrease management authority at the building level				✓		
Appoint an outside expert to advise the building on its progress				✓		
Extend the school year or school day for the building				✓		
Restructure the internal organizational structure of the building				✓		
Enter into a contract with an entity to operate the public school						✓
Additional options for districts failing to provide consistent oversight of improvement efforts and/or failing to demonstrate significant district improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defer programmatic funds or reduce administrative funds Replace district personnel related to the failure to make AYP Remove particular buildings from the jurisdiction of the district and establish alternative governance procedures Appoint a receiver or trustee to administer the affairs of the district in place of the superintendent and local school board Initiate the Academic Distress Commission if the district missed AYP for four consecutive years and is labeled as in Academic Emergency using state accountability measures 						✓

*Optional denotes additional items from which the district/school or state would select one or more

NOTE: Districts and buildings remaining in the same risk/support category and not making significant progress would be required to add an additional intervention once every three years. Significant progress is defined as an average increase in scores over the latest three years of assessments for each identified student group that, if maintained, indicates all students in identified groups will be proficient by 2013-2014. The state would not impose additional interventions on buildings in any category that are demonstrating significant progress.

WHO is involved?

District/Building Leadership Teams

- DLT Role**
- Complete the Decision Framework, the foundation for data-driven decision making on a system-wide basis
 - Identify and affirm critical needs

- BLT Role**
- Complete the building level Decision Framework, the foundation for data-driven decision making
 - Identify and affirm critical needs

WHO can help?

State Diagnostic Teams (SDTs) work with selected high-support districts
 State Support Teams (SSTs) work with high- and medium-support districts and schools
 Educational Service Centers (ESCs) work with medium- and low-support districts and schools, and other districts requesting assistance

WHO is involved?

District/Building Leadership Teams

- DLT Role**
- Provide data and reports to the Superintendent to inform the Board of Education
 - Evaluate degree of plan implementation, impact on student achievement and changes in educator practices
 - Use monitoring data to modify instructional practice and revise plan

- BLT Role**
- Provide data and reports to the DLT
 - Evaluate degree of plan implementation, impact on student achievement and changes in educator practices
 - Use monitoring data to modify instructional practice and revise plan

WHO can help?

State Diagnostic Teams
 State Support Teams
 Educational Service Centers
 Regional Managers
 Single Point of Contact

Ohio Improvement Process

STAGE 1
 Identify Critical Needs of Districts and Schools

STAGE 2
 Develop a Focused Plan

STAGE 4
 Monitor the Improvement Process

STAGE 3
 Implement the Focused Plan

WHO is involved?

District/Building Leadership Teams

- DLT Role**
- Create few SMART goals with performance indicators
 - Develop research-based strategies, district actions and progress indicators aligned to goals
 - Intentionally align resources to goals, strategies and actions

- BLT Role**
- Develop research-based actions aligned to district goals and strategies
 - Intentionally align resources to actions

WHO can help?

State Diagnostic Teams
 State Support Teams
 Educational Service Centers

WHO is involved?

District/Building Leadership Teams

- DLT Role**
- Facilitate the development and use of collaborative structures at the district and building levels
 - Broker or facilitate high quality PD consistent with district goals
 - Monitor performance against the indicators
 - Approve school plans and provide resources and support to schools

- BLT Role**
- Facilitate opportunities for teachers to learn from each other and greater opportunity for teacher leadership
 - Broker or facilitate high quality PD consistent with plan
 - Monitor performance of the plan

WHO can help?

Regional Service Providers
 External Vendors
 Higher Education

District and building leadership teams form the foundation for implementation of the Ohio Improvement Process. These teams, referred to as DLTs and BLTs by the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council, serve to distribute key leadership functions and create a common culture of expectations for focusing and following through on the right work. They help district and school personnel move past a programmatic focus to a focus on collective work to improve instruction and student learning.

While membership varies by district, most DLTs are comprised of the district superintendent or assistant superintendent, selected central office personnel, teacher and principal representatives, and others (e.g., treasurer or person in charge of business operations; parent/family members, school board representatives). BLTs include the principal or assistant principal, teacher representatives, and often others as noted above. Both DLTs and BLTs maintain a district-wide focus on high achievement for all learners.