



## Comprehensive Needs Assessment Rubric and User Guide

### What Is the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA)?

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment is the foundation of Connecticut's school improvement process. It provides a clear, evidence-based picture of a school's current systems, practices, and outcomes. The CNA helps teams understand not only *what* is happening, but *why*, so they can design strategies that meaningfully improve student learning and school conditions.

Rather than a compliance exercise, the CNA is a structured inquiry process that brings school teams together to analyze evidence, identify strengths, uncover gaps, and determine root causes across four domains: Talent, Academics, Culture & Climate, and Operations.

The CNA rubric included in this guide provides the criteria that teams use to evaluate each indicator consistently and accurately.

### Why a Rubric?

A rubric ensures that schools across the state use a consistent, objective process to understand their current state. Without a rubric, teams may rely on perception, anecdotes, or individual experiences, leading to subjective or inconsistent conclusions.

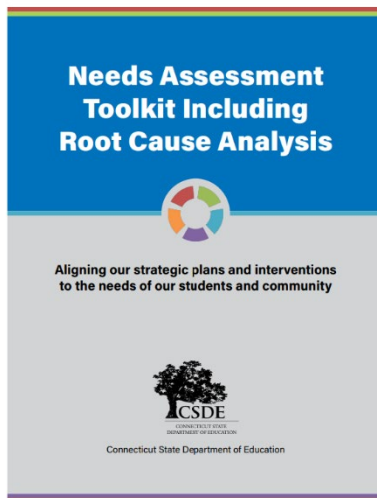
The CNA rubric:

- Establishes clear expectations for what strong practice looks like
- Helps teams evaluate systems using common language

- Promotes calibrated, evidence-based judgments
- Grounds improvement planning in current reality, not aspiration
- Supports alignment with the CT Turnaround Rubric

Using this rubric ensures that all schools, regardless of size, context, or leadership structure, evaluate their systems with the same level of rigor.

## Connection to the CSDE Needs Assessment Toolkit



The [CSDE Needs Assessment Toolkit](#) provides schools with a structured, step-by-step process for engaging in meaningful needs assessment conversations. It guides teams through activities such as identifying focal problems, analyzing evidence, understanding underlying causes, and selecting root causes that require immediate attention. The Toolkit focuses on how teams engage in the needs assessment process.

This CNA Rubric & User Guide complements the Toolkit by providing the criteria and rating system teams need to describe the *current state* of each major school system accurately and consistently. While the Toolkit helps teams facilitate the process, the CNA rubric helps teams evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the systems being discussed.

Together, the Toolkit and this CNA Rubric provide a complete, aligned approach to needs assessment.

## How the Two Tools Work Together

The [Needs Assessment Toolkit](#) and the Comprehensive Needs Assessment Rubric are designed to work in tandem. Each tool plays a distinct and essential role in supporting schools through a meaningful, accurate, and action-oriented needs assessment process. When used together, they ensure that schools both engage in the right conversations and evaluate their systems using clear, evidence-based criteria.

### **The Toolkit provides the process.**

The Needs Assessment Toolkit is a facilitative resource that guides teams through the experience of conducting a needs assessment. It helps schools engage in thoughtful, structured conversations and activities that deepen understanding of current conditions. It walks schools through activities such as:

- Examining evidence
- Identifying patterns
- Prioritizing needs
- Exploring causes
- Engaging stakeholders in conversation

The Toolkit is grounded in real school-based experience and designed to guide teams through each step of the work together. Its purpose is to help teams develop insight, surface perspectives, and collaborate in meaningful ways. It focuses on process quality, ensuring teams take the right steps and engage the right voices.

### **The CNA Rubric provides the criteria.**

While the Toolkit supports the *process*, the CNA Rubric provides the standards against which school systems are evaluated. The rubric describes what practice looks like at each performance level across the four domains: Talent, Academics, Culture & Climate, and Operations. It gives teams:

- Clear definitions of “Below,” “Developing,” “Proficient,” and “Exemplary”
- Indicators across the TACO domains
- A common language for describing current practice
- Consistency across school teams and districts

The rubric offers a structured way for school teams to evaluate their systems and identify areas for improvement. Its purpose is to help teams anchor their judgments in evidence, apply the Turnaround Rubric consistently, and describe their current state using objective and transparent criteria.

### CNA Rubric to CSDE Needs Assessment Toolkit Crosswalk

Domain & Indicator	Description	Toolkit Pages
<b>TALENT</b>		
<b>Hiring, Recruitment and Retention</b>	Recruiting, hiring, retention systems	Pages 6–12 (Evidence) Pages 9–13 (Analysis)
<b>Evaluation and Coaching Systems</b>	Feedback, accountability, performance management	Pages 9–13 (Analysis) Pages 12–15 (Brainstorming Factors)
<b>Professional Learning Plan</b>	Professional learning systems, collaboration, job-embedded support	Pages 6–12 (Evidence) Pages 18–23 (Next Steps)
<b>Leadership</b>	Mission, vision, continuous improvement	Pages 4–5 (Cycle) Pages 9–13 (Analysis)
<b>ACADEMICS</b>		
<b>Curriculum &amp; Academic Programming</b>	Curriculum, pacing, visuals	Pages 6–12 (Evidence) Pages 9–13 (Analysis)
<b>Instructional Framework</b>	Instructional practices, cognitive demand	Pages 9–13 (Analysis)
<b>Differentiation &amp; Supports for Diverse Learners</b>	English Learner/Multilingual supports, Multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS), subgroups	Pages 6–12 (Evidence) Pages 9–13 (Analysis)
<b>Assessment Practices &amp; Data Use</b>	Formative assessment, data teams	Pages 9–13 (Analysis) Pages 18–23 (Next Steps)

<b>CULTURE &amp; CLIMATE</b>		
<b>School Environment</b>	Belonging, routines, safety, branding	Pages 6–12 (Evidence)
<b>Attendance</b>	Student/teacher attendance, MTSS tiers	Pages 6–12 (Evidence) Pages 9–13 (Analysis)
<b>Behavior Management</b>	Behavior systems, interventions	Pages 9–13 (Analysis) Pages 12–15 (Brainstorming Factors)
<b>Equitable Partnerships</b>	Family/community engagement	Pages 6–12 (Evidence) Pages 18–23 (Next Steps)
<b>OPERATIONS</b>		
<b>Scheduling Structures</b>	Instructional time, intervention blocks	Pages 6–12 (Evidence)
<b>Use of Time</b>	Transitions, common planning	Pages 9–13 (Analysis)
<b>Technology, Facilities &amp; Operational Planning</b>	Learning environment, technology integration	Pages 6–12 (Evidence)
<b>Resource Allocation</b>	Budget alignment, sustainability	Pages 18–23 (Next Steps)

## How Schools Should Use the Two Documents Together

The Needs Assessment Toolkit and the CAN Rubric are designed to work in a clear, intentional sequence. Each tool plays a distinct role as one guides the process, and the other provides the criteria for evaluating school systems. When used together, they ensure the CNA is accurate, evidence-based, calibrated, and useful for improvement planning.

### Step 1: Use The Toolkit to Gather and Analyze Evidence

Teams begin by collecting and examining the full range of available evidence. This includes demographic trends, perceptual data, school process documentation, and student outcome data, as well as artifacts that reflect current systems and practices.

Teams should **not** complete the CNA Rubric based on perception, prior assumptions, or anecdotal experience. All rubric ratings must be grounded in the evidence gathered during this step. The purpose of the rubric is to objectively evaluate the school's systems; therefore, it can only be applied accurately when evidence has been collected, reviewed, and discussed. Completing the rubric without evidence undermines calibration, clarity, and the core intent of the CNA.

### Step 2: Use this CNA Rubric to Rate Each Indicator

Once evidence has been gathered, teams apply the rubric descriptors to each indicator across the Talent, Academics, Culture & Climate, and Operations domains.

Teams should explicitly reference the evidence from Step 1 when assigning ratings and should document the specific artifacts, data sources, or observations that justify the level selected. Teams should calibrate as a group to ensure ratings are accurate, consistent, and anchored in evidence rather than individual interpretations.

This step produces a clear picture of current practice, strengths, gaps, and system-level patterns.

### Step 3: Return to the Toolkit to Analyze Causes and Determine Priorities

After rating each indicator, teams use the Toolkit to explore *why* the documented patterns exist. The facilitative activities guide schools through root cause analysis, prioritization, and deeper reflection on the drivers behind system strengths and challenges.

This conversation moves the work from *what* is happening toward *why* it is happening, ensuring priorities are grounded in root causes and not symptoms.

#### **Step 4: Use the CNA Findings to Inform the School Improvement Plan**

The rubric ratings and root cause analysis together form the foundation of the School Improvement Plan. Ratings anchor the plan in the school's current reality, and the Toolkit's analysis supports the development of strategies that are focused, actionable, and aligned to student needs.

### **Bringing It All Together**

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment Rubric & User Guide is designed to anchor the needs assessment process in clarity, evidence, and shared expectations. By combining the structure of the Needs Assessment Toolkit with the detailed criteria of the CNA Rubric, schools gain a complete system for accurately diagnosing current conditions and planning strategically for improvement.

This document serves as both a reference and a roadmap. The rubric clarifies what strong practice looks like across the Talent, Academics, Culture & Climate, and Operations domains, while the guidance provided throughout the document ensures teams know how to gather evidence, calibrate ratings, and analyze systems in ways that are thoughtful, inclusive, and grounded in the real experiences of students and staff.

A high-quality CNA is not merely a rating exercise. It is a cornerstone of the continuous improvement process. Schools that invest time and care into this work build a more accurate understanding of where they are and what they need to move forward. This clarity strengthens the development of the School Improvement Plan, ensuring that strategies address true root causes, leverage existing strengths, and reflect the most urgent needs of students.

As teams complete the CNA and transition into planning and implementation, this document should remain a living resource. Revisit the rubric as systems evolve, use the calibration guidance to stay aligned, and apply the evidence expectations to strengthen monitoring over time. Returning to this document throughout the year reinforces coherence, promotes disciplined reflection, and supports teams as they engage in the ongoing cycle of Evidence, Analyze, Implement, Monitor, and Reflect.

Ultimately, the goal of the CNA process is to create the conditions where every student experiences consistently high-quality teaching, supportive relationships, and an environment where they can thrive. This guide, paired with the Needs Assessment Toolkit, offers schools a clear path toward that vision.



## Needs Assessment Rubric

The district is asked to identify the school's level of implementation for each of the talent, culture and climate, and operations indicators and record the level of implementation in the appropriate section of the School Plan.

TALENT				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
<b>1.1. Hiring, Recruitment and Retention</b>	The school and/or district lack a proactive plan for recruiting and developing talent with turnaround-specific competencies.	The school and/or district have a partially implemented plan for recruiting and retaining educators, which includes some components such as mentoring and induction.	The school and/or district proactively plan for recruiting and developing talent with turnaround specific competencies.	The school and/or district have a highly effective, long-term plan for recruiting, developing, and retaining talent with turnaround-specific competencies.
	There is a lack of effective human capital systems in place to recruit, identify, and hire highly effective educators and staff.	Initial efforts are made to identify and hire highly effective educators and staff, but matching the most effective educators to the students with greatest needs is not yet systematically achieved.	Human capital systems are in place to recruit, identify, and hire highly effective educators and staff. Efforts are made to match the most effective educators to the students with the greatest needs.	Advanced human capital systems are in place to not only recruit and hire highly effective educators and staff but also to ensure they are matched to students with the greatest needs.
	The school lacks systems and strategies to retain top teachers and leaders. Retention of high-quality staff is a significant concern.	Some strategies are in place to recognize and retain staff members, but retention of high-quality teachers is not consistently high.	There are mechanisms and strategies to proactively recognize and retain exemplary staff members. Retention of high-quality teachers is high.	Proactive and innovative mechanisms and strategies are employed to recognize and retain exemplary staff members, resulting in consistently high retention rates of high-quality teachers.
<b>1.2. Evaluation and Coaching Systems</b>	Leaders rarely provide feedback or hold individuals accountable for effort and results.	Leaders provide some feedback and attempt to hold individuals accountable for effort and results, though this is not consistent.	Leaders provide feedback and hold individuals accountable for effort and results.	Leaders consistently provide high-quality feedback and rigorously hold individuals accountable for both effort and results.
	Expectations for roles within the system are unclear or not communicated.	Leaders create and share basic expectations for roles within the system, but these may lack clarity or comprehensive understanding.	Leaders create and share expectations for all roles in the system.	Leaders establish, communicate, and reinforce clear expectations for all roles within the system.
	Performance management processes are either	They have initiated the development and implementation of performance	Leaders develop and implement comprehensive performance management processes.	Leaders develop, implement, and continuously refine

	undeveloped or not implemented.	management processes, but these are not fully comprehensive or consistently applied.		comprehensive performance management processes.
	Few, if any, tools are used to evaluate staff performance, resulting in minimal actionable feedback, limited development opportunities, and ineffective strategic staffing.	A limited set of tools is used to evaluate staff performance, providing some feedback and development opportunities, but strategic staffing remains a challenge.	Multiple tools are utilized to evaluate staff performance over time, allowing for actionable feedback, targeted development, and strategic staffing.	A wide array of tools is utilized to evaluate staff performance, providing highly actionable feedback, precise targeted development, and optimal strategic staffing.
	Coaching cycles are absent or misaligned with school goals and staff development needs.	Coaching cycles are in place but are not fully aligned to school goals or staff development needs.	Coaching cycles are aligned to school goals and staff development needs.	Coaching cycles are not only aligned to school goals and staff development needs but also integrate innovative practices that drive exceptional outcomes.
<b>1.3. Professional Learning Plan</b>	The school provides infrequent and inconsistent professional learning (PL) opportunities.	The school provides PL opportunities, but they are not always targeted or job-embedded.	The school offers targeted, job-embedded PL throughout the school year.	The school consistently offers rich, targeted, and job-embedded PL throughout the school year that leads to effective teaching practices and improved student outcomes.
	There is no comprehensive plan to support staff development, and any available learning opportunities lack alignment with staff development areas and student needs.	A partial plan exists to support staff development, including some scheduled school and district learning opportunities, but it is not fully comprehensive or consistently applied.	A comprehensive plan exists to support staff development, including a calendar of school and district learning opportunities.	A highly comprehensive and strategic plan supports staff development, including a detailed and well-coordinated calendar of school and district learning opportunities.
	There are no established schedules or protocols for vertical and horizontal collaboration.	Some schedules and protocols for vertical and horizontal collaboration are in place, but they are not consistently utilized.	Schedule and protocols exist for facilitation of vertical and horizontal collaboration.	Schedules and protocols for vertical and horizontal collaboration are effectively implemented and regularly utilized.
	PL opportunities are not tailored to individual needs, and most teachers do not feel these opportunities help improve their classroom practices.	The quality and responsiveness of PL opportunities vary, and only some teachers feel these opportunities help improve their classroom practices.	High quality individualized and responsive PL opportunities are designed to build the capacity needed for rapid school improvement.	High-quality, individualized, and responsive PL opportunities are meticulously designed to build the capacity needed for rapid and sustained school improvement.
	Teachers struggle to translate and incorporate PL strategies into their daily instruction.	Teachers are inconsistently able to translate and incorporate PL strategies into their daily instruction.	Most teachers feel PL opportunities help them improve their classroom practices. Most teachers are able to translate and incorporate PL strategies into their daily instruction.	Nearly all teachers feel PL opportunities significantly enhance their classroom practices and are able to effectively translate and incorporate PL strategies into their daily instruction.

<b>1.4. Leadership</b>	No clear mission or strategic direction for improvement; team operates in a reactive mode without established goals.	The mission and strategic direction are not well communicated and there is a lack of clear systems (policies, structures, expectations). A school improvement plan does not consistently guide daily activities and decision-making.	Leadership sets the strategic and logistical direction for the school's improvement by establishing and communicating clear systems (policies, structures, and expectations) to work towards improvement goals. Develops goals informed by assessments of recent performance trends.	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school has a manageable set of goals and a clear set of strategies to achieve those goals. The plan is being implemented and monitored with fidelity. Leadership conveys deep urgency.
	No continuous improvement cycle in place.	Initial steps towards a continuous improvement cycle are taken but not fully realized.	A continuous improvement cycle is in place and beginning to impact school performance.	A robust continuous improvement cycle is well-established, driving ongoing and measurable school performance improvements.
	Leadership teams are not established.	Leadership teams are informally established or not fully functional.	Functional leadership teams are in place but may lack full cohesion or effectiveness.	Leadership teams are well established, cohesive, and highly effective in guiding the school's strategic direction and improvement.
	Lacks high academic standards and effective instructional practices.	Academic standards and instructional practices are inconsistent or not fully implemented.	There is a common vision of what effective instruction looks like including high academic standards and instructional practices that are communicated to staff, monitored, and ensure access to rigorous standards-based curricula.	High academic standards and instructional practices are rigorously implemented and continuously refined to ensure the success and achievement of all students.
	Does not promote a positive school culture.	Developing a positive school culture by establishing systems for focused collaborative work, recognizing student effort, and academic mastery, and recognizing staff work and improvements.	Maintains/creates and promotes a positive school culture by establishing systems for focused collaborative work, recognizing student effort, and academic mastery, and recognizing staff work and improvements.	Sustains a positive school culture and capitalizes on the cultural competence and diversity of the community as an asset to strengthen education.

ACADEMICS				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
<b>2.1 Curriculum and Academic Programming</b>	Rigorous, standards-based curricula do not exist, or teachers are not aware of the curricula for English language arts, math, and science content areas for all grade levels.	Rigorous, standards-based curricula are lacking in one core content area.	Rigorous, standards-based curricula exist for all content areas for all grade levels.	Rigorous, standards-based curricula and/or scope and sequence exist for all grade levels and content areas rostered (advisory, intervention, electives).
	The curriculum is not implemented with fidelity; as a result, the pacing is inconsistent.	Curricula are being implemented with fidelity across classrooms; however, teachers are not consistent in their pacing.	Curricula are being implemented with fidelity across classrooms with teachers demonstrating consistent pacing.	Curricula are being implemented with fidelity across classrooms with teachers demonstrating consistent pacing.
	There are limited classroom visuals and/or visuals are ineffective. They are unclear, poorly organized, and do not contribute to student understanding of content and skill goals from the curriculum. Visuals are rarely updated, often irrelevant to the current lesson, and do not support diverse learning styles.	Classroom visuals (e.g., learning targets and success criteria, anchor charts, word walls) support content or skill goals from the curriculum and are aligned to grade-level standards or prerequisite standards; however, they are not introduced and/or referenced throughout the lesson to support student learning.	Classroom visuals (e.g., learning targets and success criteria, anchor charts, word walls) support content or skill goals from the curriculum and are aligned to grade-level standards or prerequisite standards. The supports are introduced and/or referenced throughout the lesson to support student learning.	Classroom visuals are student-created, or students are led through the process of unpacking the content or skills goals from the curriculum that are aligned to grade-level standards.
<b>2.2 Instructional Framework</b>	There is little to no evidence of an instructional framework. Alignment with curriculum standards and best practices is weak or non-existent. The framework does not effectively promote student engagement or critical thinking.	The instructional framework is somewhat organized and partially implemented. Alignment with curriculum standards and best practices is partial and may have gaps. The framework supports basic student engagement and learning but may not fully promote critical thinking.	The instructional framework is well-organized and effectively implemented. Alignment with curriculum standards and best practices is generally strong. The framework effectively promotes student engagement and supports critical thinking.	The instructional framework is comprehensive, well-structured, and consistently implemented. There is strong alignment with current curriculum standards and evidence-based best practices. The framework promotes inquiry, student engagement, critical thinking, and independent learning.
	Instructional activities are teacher centered. There is no evidence of student-centered instructional activities.	Instructional tasks/activities provide opportunities for students to recall facts, terms, or concepts and demonstrate their understanding thereof.	Instructional tasks/activities provide opportunities for students to apply, differentiate, synthesize, hypothesize, and construct new meanings.	Instructional tasks/activities include the opportunity for students to reflect and assess their own learning and metacognition.

	Instructional tasks focus on memorization and answering recall-type questions.	Instructional tasks require students to apply knowledge and to comprehend content.	Instructional tasks allow students to construct meaning and students are encouraged to think critically and process information at deeper levels beyond recall/memorization.	Instruction is designed with opportunities for students to actively engage in creating, understanding, reflecting, and connecting to knowledge.
	Questions require low cognitive challenge and single correct responses focused on the recall/retell level.	Questions invite some thoughtful response, but rigor is predominately low. There is limited opportunity for inquiry or student discourse.	Questions are scaffolded to move students to higher levels of thinking and require students to explain and justify their thinking. Adequate time is provided for multiple students to respond.	Lessons include a range of carefully scaffolded questions that advance students to higher levels of thinking and require them to not only explain and justify their reasoning but also to critically evaluate and synthesize multiple perspectives and evidence.
	Few students are engaged both cognitively and behaviorally. Participation in learning activities is minimal, and critical thinking is rarely evident. The school lacks effective strategies to promote engagement, or existing strategies are not implemented consistently.	Some students are engaged both cognitively and behaviorally, but engagement levels vary. Participation in learning activities is inconsistent, and critical thinking is sometimes evident. The school has strategies to promote engagement, but they may not be fully effective or consistently implemented.	Most students are cognitively and behaviorally engaged in active learning strategies individually or in small groups. Students have opportunities to work collaboratively to explore, reflect, and problem-solve with opportunities to share their own ideas. The school has effective strategies in place to promote engagement, and these strategies are periodically reviewed and adjusted as needed.	Students are consistently highly engaged both cognitively and behaviorally. Students actively participate in learning activities with their voice being dominant, demonstrate understanding and critical thinking, and show enthusiasm for learning. The school implements innovative strategies to promote engagement and these strategies are regularly reviewed and refined.
<b>2.3 Differentiation and Supports for Diverse Learners</b>	Lessons take a one-size-fits-all approach and are structured for one learning modality or style. The content uses below grade-level concepts or skills, failing to challenge students appropriately.	Lessons are structured to include a limited number of learning modalities and styles using grade-level concepts and skills.	Lessons are structured to include multiple learning modalities and styles using grade-level concepts and skills.	Lessons provide opportunities for extension activities to provide enrichment.
	There is little to no evidence of support for multilingual learners (ML) in the instruction or classroom environment.	ML support is somewhat limited, requiring significant improvements to address language barriers, cultural relevance, and language development needs adequately.	There are linguistic and academic supports in the classroom environment, and the teacher implements scaffolds in the instruction to support the development of multilingual learners' language and content.	ML support is comprehensive, incorporating language accessibility, cultural relevance, language development support and collaborative learning opportunities effectively.

	The MTSS framework is poorly implemented with significant gaps in support across tiers. Instructional support is minimal or poorly coordinated, and decisions are rarely based on data. Monitoring and adjustments are infrequent or absent. There is limited collaboration with staff, families, and community partners, and the MTSS program shows little to no impact on student outcomes.	The MTSS framework is partially implemented with some gaps in support across tiers. Instructional support is present but may be inconsistently applied or not aligned with student needs. Monitoring and adjustments based on data are infrequent. Collaboration with staff, families, and community partners is limited, and the program has a variable impact on student outcomes.	The MTSS framework is effectively implemented and supports multiple tiers of intervention. Instructional support is generally well-coordinated, and data informed. Regular monitoring and adjustments are made based on student data. Staff, families, and community partners are involved, and the MTSS program shows a positive impact on student outcomes.	The MTSS framework is fully implemented with fidelity across all tiers. Instructional support is well-coordinated, data-driven, and tailored to meet diverse student needs. There is ongoing, effective monitoring and adjustment based on comprehensive data. Collaboration among staff, families, and community partners is robust, and the MTSS program demonstrates a significant positive impact on student outcomes.
	The school is inadequately meeting the needs of its high-needs students. There are significant achievement gaps between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments, and no evidence of progress.	The school typically meets the needs of its high-needs students. There are significant gaps between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments and marginal progress over time.	The school consistently meets the needs of its high-needs students. There are small gaps between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments, and some signs of progress toward closing the gaps.	The school is successfully closing the achievement gap for its high-needs students. Generalists and specialists work collaboratively to support students. There is no achievement gap between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments.
<b>2.4 Assessment Practices and Data Use</b>	Teachers do not check for student understanding. Teacher's feedback to students is general and not provided in a timely manner.	Teachers monitor student understanding through whole group check-ins or questioning. Teacher's feedback to students is uneven and its timeliness is inconsistent.	Teachers monitor student understanding through whole group check-ins, review of student work, exit tickets, one-to-one conferencing, or questioning and adjust instruction as needed. Teacher's feedback to students is timely, actionable and specific.	Teachers employ a diverse array of formative assessment strategies while continuously analyzing student data to make real-time, responsive adjustments to instruction that are tailored to individual and group needs. Teacher's feedback to students is timely and of high quality, and students are expected to make use of the feedback in their learning.
	The school lacks a comprehensive assessment system (including summative and benchmark assessments).	The school has some consistent assessments; however, there are major gaps in certain grades and content areas.	The school implements a clear system of benchmark assessments.	Teachers consistently administer assessments throughout the year. Assessments are standards-based and provide real-time data. Teachers embed formative assessments in their daily lessons.

	Teachers do not collect, analyze, and/or discuss data. Data teams do not exist or infrequently meet.	There are some efforts to collect and use data. Data teams are scheduled to meet regularly, but they are occasionally interrupted, cut short, or cancelled.	Data teams are a priority in the schedule and are rarely displaced by other events. Collaboratively, the grade-level team examines the data to identify and agree upon instructional strategies to implement before the next meeting, and the team develops a plan to measure success.	The school has strong processes to collect, analyze, and use data to inform instruction and interventions. There are vertical and school-wide data teams. Collaboratively, these teams chart the data, analyze, and interpret the data, and use the data to identify grade-level and schoolwide trends that impact school improvement. The schoolwide trends are communicated to teachers.
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CULTURE AND CLIMATE				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
<b>3.1 School Environment</b>	The school environment lacks a consistent and welcoming atmosphere. Efforts to promote a sense of belonging are minimal or ineffective. Communication and resources may be inadequate, and new students and families may not feel adequately supported or integrated into the school community.	The school environment is somewhat welcoming but may have inconsistencies in creating a warm and inclusive atmosphere. Communication and resources are available but may not fully meet all needs. There are basic systems in place to welcome new students and families, but additional efforts are needed to enhance support and engagement.	The school environment is generally warm and welcoming. Efforts are made to promote a sense of belonging and inclusivity through effective communication and accessible resources. New students and families are welcomed and supported, though there may be some areas for further enhancement in engagement or accessibility.	The school environment is exceptionally warm and welcoming to all students, families, and staff. The school actively promotes a sense of belonging through inclusive practices, clear communication, and accessible resources. There are strong systems for welcoming new students and families, and diverse needs are met with high levels of support and engagement.
	The school environment is disorganized and lacks structure, raising concerns about the safety of both students and staff. Movement of students is chaotic and noisy with little adult intervention. Adults are not present during transitions; therefore, there is very little redirection.	The school is somewhat chaotic and/or disorderly, particularly in certain locations and during certain times of day. Some staff try to maintain procedures and routines; however, staff presence is minimal, and redirection of misbehavior is lacking.	The school environment is calm and orderly in most locations and during most of the day. Rules and procedures are fairly clear, consistent, and evident. Routines seem somewhat apparent and institutionalized. Adults are present to reinforce norms.	The school environment is calm and orderly. Rules and procedures are clear, specific, consistent, and evident. Routines are largely unspoken and institutionalized. Adults are consistently present to reinforce norms.

	The school has little to no data or student work displayed, and efforts to brand the school and convey high expectations are not observed.	Though the school has some data and student work displayed, efforts to brand the school and convey high expectations are very minimal.	The school has made an effort to foster school identity through branding and consistent messaging in classrooms and communal spaces.	The school's branding is exceptionally clear and well-defined, with a strong and cohesive visual identity and messaging that reflects the school's mission and values and promotes school identity and pride.
	There is a weak sense of community. Interactions between staff and students are negative or disrespectful and/or the staff does not promote positive social interactions among students or each other.	There is a moderate sense of community. Interactions between staff and students are generally positive and respectful and/or the staff inconsistently makes attempts to promote positive social interactions among students and each other.	There is a good overall sense of community. Interactions and communications between staff and students are consistently positive and respectful and the staff regularly promote positive social interactions among students and each other.	There is a strong sense of community. The school fosters an environment where students proactively demonstrate positive social interactions and conflict-resolution skills and involves learners in promoting a respectful learning environment.
<b>3.2 Attendance</b>	Student average daily attendance is $\leq 88\%$ and/or chronic absenteeism is $> 20\%$ .	Student average daily attendance is between $89\%$ and $93\%$ and/or chronic absenteeism is between $16\%$ and $20\%$ .	Student average daily attendance is between $94\%$ and $97\%$ and/or chronic absenteeism is between $11\%$ and $15\%$ .	Student average daily attendance is $> 97\%$ and chronic absenteeism is $\leq 10\%$ .
	A small group of staff meets regarding students who are already chronically absent or extremely chronically absent. However, most of the responsibility falls on one person, e.g., the school counselor or social worker.	The attendance team meets periodically, is made up of mostly student support staff, and the school administrator or their designee does not lead the group.	The school attendance team meets biweekly and is led by the school administrator or their designee and is made up of various roles in the school, e.g., student supports, special education, school nurse, attendance clerk, and teacher.	The school attendance team meets weekly. Roles are clearly defined.
	The school has few, if any, strategies to increase attendance. The school does not incorporate attendance improvement strategies into a Multi-Tiered System of Support. The focus for improvement is on referrals for truancy and education neglect.	The school has some strategies to increase attendance. The school has a supportive/restorative data-informed Multi-Tiered System of Support with a focus primarily on Tier 3. There are no measures for monitoring the strategy implementation.	The school has multiple, effective strategies to increase attendance. The school has a supportive, data-informed Multi-Tiered System of Support for students with a plan for all three tiers. Implementation is monitored for quality and effectiveness.	The school implements effective strategies to increase attendance and on-time arrival. The school has a supportive/restorative data-informed Multi-Tiered System of Support with a focus on strong Tier 1 strategies and monitoring of the effectiveness of Tier 2 and 3 strategies. Community providers are engaged as partners to help meet the needs of families and students.



	Teachers are frequently absent, with an attendance rate below 80%. Frequent absences significantly disrupt student learning and progress.	Teachers are occasionally absent, with an attendance rate between 90-90%. Occasional absences cause some disruption to student learning and progress.	Teachers are rarely absent, with an attendance rate between 90-95%. Rare absences have minimal impact on student learning and progress.	Teachers are consistently present, with an attendance rate above 95%. Consistent presence positively impacts student learning and progress, with no disruption.
<b>3.3 Behavior Management</b>	The suspension rate is $\geq$ than 12 percent.	The suspension rate is between $\geq 10$ percent and $<12$ percent.	The suspension rate is between $\geq 8$ percent and $<10$ percent.	The suspension rate is $<8$ percent.
	A school-wide behavior management plan may exist, but there is little evidence of implementation. Student misbehavior is a significant challenge and creates regular distractions. Disciplinary approaches appear to be inconsistent; students and staff do not have a common understanding of behavioral expectations. Discipline is mostly punitive.	A school-wide behavior management plan is in place, and there are some signs of implementation. Student misbehavior is a challenge and creates frequent disruptions. There may be confusion among students and staff regarding behavioral expectations. Discipline is primarily punitive, and there is inconsistent reinforcement of desired behaviors.	A school-wide behavior management plan is in place and effectively implemented most of the time. Student behavior is under control. Misbehavior is infrequent, with periodic distractions to instruction. Students and staff have a common understanding of the behavior policy. There is positive reinforcement of desired behaviors.	A school-wide behavior management plan is consistently and effectively implemented. All students exhibit calm, orderly, and respectful behavior throughout the school day. Classroom distractions are minimal and are promptly and appropriately addressed when they occur. The behavior policy is clearly understood and consistently applied across the entire school.
	Limited identification and support for students needing targeted behavioral interventions. Inconsistent data use.	Some identification and support for students needing targeted behavioral interventions. Data use is emerging but inconsistent.	Effective identification and support for students needing targeted behavioral interventions. Data is regularly used to guide interventions.	Highly effective identification and support for students needing targeted behavioral interventions. Data is consistently and effectively used to guide and refine interventions.
<b>3.4 Equitable Partnerships with Stakeholders</b>	The school offers infrequent opportunities to involve parents in the school community. Family involvement is minimal. Communication is infrequent, one-way, and not tailored to family needs.	The school offers several family events throughout the year. Communication is somewhat consistent but may still be one-way. There are some efforts to use different communication methods.	The school offers periodic, meaningful opportunities for parents/families to engage in student's education. Communication is regular, two-way, and responsive to family needs. Multiple methods are used to reach families.	The school frequently engages parents/family as partners in student's education. Communication is continuous, two-way, and highly responsive. Diverse methods are effectively used, ensuring accessibility to all families.
	The school offers inadequate supports to address students' nonacademic needs. There are limited wraparound services. The school makes little or no effort to engage community	The school offers some support to address students' nonacademic needs through wraparound services. Community and partner	The school offers a range of wraparound services to address students' nonacademic needs. The school has several sustained community partnerships.	The school has a clear process for evaluating students' needs and connecting students to appropriate wraparound services. Services are easily accessible and widely available.

	partners to expand services offered through the school.	engagement is spotty and event-specific.		
	The school does not have a system for monitoring and/or evaluating the services provided by the community partner.	The school has a limited system for monitoring and/or evaluating the services provided by the community partner.	The school has a system for monitoring and/or evaluating the services provided by the community partner.	School has a comprehensive system for monitoring and evaluating the services provided by the community partner.

OPERATIONS				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
<b>4.1 Scheduling Structures</b>	There is not enough time in the school schedule to appropriately meet students' academic needs. Time is underutilized in the school calendar and daily schedule. Does not include scheduled or defined blocks for instruction, intervention, or enrichment. Transition times do not maximize the use of student or staff time.	Students would benefit from increased instructional and/or intervention time. The school calendar and daily schedule could be improved to increase time on task. The schedule includes > 5 and ≤ 5.5 hours of instruction per day, and > 60 and ≤ 90 minutes of ELA time. Intervention is scheduled but happens infrequently due to scheduling changes and/or staffing issues.	Provides adequate instructional time for students to reach academic and behavioral goals. The schedule includes >5.5 hours and ≤6.0 hours of instruction per day. ELA instruction includes > 90 minutes and < 120 minutes and math instruction is at least 60 minutes for elementary schools. There is a designated time for intervention and enrichment that is protected within the schedule.	Includes > 6 hours of instruction per day, and ≥ 120 minutes of ELA time and > 60 minutes for math. Includes designated time and evidence of coordination for staff collaboration for vertical and school-wide data teams.
<b>4.2 Use of Time</b>	Staff and students use time ineffectively. Misused instructional time results from misbehavior, poor scheduling, and/or inefficient transitions. There are missed opportunities to maximize time on task.	Staff and student use of time is somewhat effective. Some students are off task and there are missed opportunities to maximize instructional time.	Staff and student use of time is effective. Most students require little to no redirection to transition. Instructional time is maximized.	Staff and students maximize their use of time. There is no downtime. Teachers purposely use every moment of class time to prioritize instructional time on tasks.
	Common planning time is unstructured and may lack expectations for teacher collaboration (e.g., actionable next steps, development of instructional materials, analysis of student work, lesson planning).	Most academic teams have common planning periods. Collaborative planning time is used at a basic level (e.g., organization of resources or topics not directly related to classroom instruction).	Common planning periods are protected and only interrupted by emergencies. The school has established protocols to ensure that common planning time is used effectively.	All educators have weekly common planning time for vertical and horizontal planning.

<b>4.3 Technology, Facilities &amp; Operational Planning</b>	The school fails to create a welcoming and stimulating learning environment. Communal spaces and classrooms may be unkempt, rundown, unsafe, or sterile. The facilities plan is inadequate in addressing facility maintenance and upgrading needs.	The school struggles to provide a welcoming environment conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. Large sections of the school are not clean, bright, welcoming, or reflective of student work. Sections of the school need significant attention.	The school generally provides a welcoming learning environment. Most of the facility is in good repair and conducive to teaching and learning. Most classrooms and common spaces are bright and clean. There is a plan to maintain and upgrade facilities.	The school provides a welcoming and stimulating learning environment. Common spaces and classrooms are bright, clean, welcoming, and conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. The plan outlines proactive maintenance and upgrading strategies for facilities, ensuring they are well-maintained and meet the needs of the school community.
	Objectives for acquiring and using technology to enhance instruction are unclear or poorly defined. The needs assessment and acquisition strategy are minimal or missing, and implementation is ineffective. Technology use is sporadic or poorly integrated into instruction, with little evidence of impact on student learning.	Objectives for technology acquisition and use in instruction are present but may lack clarity or thoroughness. The needs assessment and acquisition strategy may be incomplete, and implementation may be inconsistent. Technology use in instruction is present but may not be fully integrated or have a clear impact.	There are clear objectives for technology acquisition and use in instruction. It includes a solid needs assessment, acquisition strategy, and implementation plan. Technology use is effectively integrated into instruction, with evidence of positive impact on student learning and engagement.	The plan is comprehensive and highly strategic, with clear, detailed objectives for acquiring and using technology to enhance instruction. It includes thorough analysis of needs, a well-defined acquisition strategy, and a robust implementation plan. The use of technology is effectively integrated into instructional practices, with strong evidence of enhancing student learning and engagement.
	The school lacks critical operation systems (e.g., arrival, departure, lockdowns, lunch, fire drills, hallway transitions).	The school has some operational systems in place, but procedures are inconsistently implemented.	Rules and operational procedures are clear, consistent, and evident.	All stakeholders are aware of operational procedures and consistently implement them.
<b>4.4 Resource Allocation</b>	School and/or district leadership do not make sound budgetary decisions based on student need and projected impact. Budget decisions are largely governed by past practice and do not account for sustainability.	Budget decisions are sometimes focused on factors unrelated to student needs and school goals. A number of expenditures and initiatives lack a plan for sustainability beyond the current school year.	School and/or district leadership have emerging strategic budgeting practices. Leadership has begun to repurpose funds to align expenditures more closely with school goals and student needs. Sustainability may pose a concern.	School and district leadership engage in strategic budgeting. There is a clear sustainability plan for all major expenditures.
	Resource allocation is poorly planned or misaligned with priorities, resulting in ineffective use of resources.	Resource allocation may be inconsistent or not fully aligned with priorities, affecting the effectiveness of the plan.	Resource allocation is appropriate and generally well-prioritized, though there may be occasional inconsistencies.	Resources are allocated effectively, with clear priorities based on evidence and needs assessments. Budgeting and financial planning are well-aligned with strategic goals.

	<p>The budget is poorly implemented, with little to no flexibility for adjustments based on feedback or changing needs. Contingency plans are absent or inadequate. Monitoring is sporadic or absent.</p>	<p>The budget is implemented adequately, with limited flexibility to adjust based on feedback and changing needs. Contingency plans are minimal. Monitoring is irregular,</p>	<p>The budget is implemented effectively, with some flexibility to adjust based on feedback and changing needs. Contingency plans are in place but may be less detailed. Monitoring is consistent.</p>	<p>The budget is implemented with precision, allowing for flexibility and adjustments based on real-time feedback and changing needs. There is a clear plan for contingencies. Regular and systematic monitoring is in place.</p>
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