



School Quality Review Protocol 2020-21

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Part I: Introduction

What is the SchoolWorks Quality Review?

OEO has partnered with SchoolWorks to create a school performance framework that will be used to provide a comprehensive assessment of the quality of each school in its portfolio. The comprehensive assessment will be an evidence-based process that includes data and information gathered on academic programs and performance, school climate, finance, operations and governance, and stakeholder satisfaction, among other sources. As a component of this assessment process, OEO has partnered with SchoolWorks to develop a protocol for a school quality review process aligned to OEO initiatives and school performance framework, as well as a reporting template that will be used to document and communicate findings of the School Quality Review.

The SchoolWorks School Quality Review (SQR) is a process that OEO and schools can use to understand and explain how well schools are working to educate students. The SQR places a team of experienced educators from OEO and, in some cases, members of its Advisory Council, the University, or other educators and community members to collect and analyze data about school performance. The length of the SQR may range from two-to-four days. The SQR is based on a transparent, research-based set of standards – the SchoolWorks Quality Criteria (SQC) – that serve as the framework to understand the effectiveness of school practices. The SQC are used to promote understanding and dialogue between the school and the site visit team through both verbal and written feedback.

What are the SchoolWorks Quality Criteria (SQC)?

The SQC consists of a set of standards used to assess critical aspects of a school’s culture, organization, and academic program. SchoolWorks Quality Criteria and indicators are based on research of best educational practices, as well as on the expertise that SchoolWorks brings to the process after assessing more than 1,000 school programs since 1998. The SQC are organized into four domains: *Instruction; Students’ Opportunities to Learn; Educators’ Opportunities to Learn; and Leadership and Governance*. Each domain is further defined by a set of key questions and corresponding criteria and indicators that are used to provide more specific information on variables central to each domain. See Part IV for a complete list of Domains and Key Questions.

What is the purpose of an SQR?

The SQR serves as a formative review, providing specific findings in relation to the SQC. Findings are the site visit team’s conclusions about school strengths and areas for growth. Recommendations are provided to inform the school’s future improvement efforts and planning. The outcome of an SQR is a comprehensive report detailing the team’s findings in relation to the protocol criteria.

How does the SQR process work?

The SQR process places a team of reviewers from OEO into a school to collect and analyze data about school programs and practices. The SQR utilizes multiple sources of evidence to understand how well a school is working. It extends beyond standardized measures of student achievement to collect evidence in relation to the protocol’s criteria and indicators. Evidence collection begins with the review of the key documents that describe the school and its students and may include collection of data via online surveys administered to various stakeholder groups. Key documents reviewed by the site visit team prior to arrival on site include curricula and related teaching documents, professional development records, and student

assessment results. This provides the team with initial information about the school's programs and the students it serves. While on site, evidence collection continues through additional document reviews, classroom visits, and interviews with key school stakeholders. After collecting evidence, the team meets to confirm, refute, and modify its hypotheses about school performance, and then communicates its progress to the school's leadership. The team listens to the school's responses and makes every effort to follow up on evidence that the school indicates the team should collect.

The site visit team uses evidence collected through these events to develop findings in relation to the protocol's criteria and indicators. In some reviews, these findings identify strengths and areas for growth and may also include recommendations. At the end of the visit, the team provides a brief oral report to school leadership about its findings. This verbal feedback is followed by a written report, detailing the evidence that led the team to reach its findings. The length and depth of both verbal feedback and written report depend on the type of review being conducted.

The SQR places a high value on engaging the school in understanding its own performance. The process may be described as an open, frank, professional dialog between the school and the site visit team. The professionalism of the school and team is essential in the process. Both the school and the team have clear roles and responsibilities that are designed to promote good rapport and clear communication. All team members are governed by a code of conduct. Honesty, integrity, objectivity, and a focus on the best interests of students and staff are essential to the success and positive impact of the site visit process.

What are the general steps in the SQR process?

Pre-visit Planning and Analysis

The school prepares necessary documents. The project manager and team leader work with the school to organize the schedule for the site visit. Site visit team members review documents and record their initial questions about the school's performance according to protocol standards.

Evidence Gathering On Site

On site, the site visit team continues document reviews and conducts classroom visits and interviews with key school stakeholders.

Development of Findings

The site visit team's primary objective is to develop findings in relation to the SchoolWorks Quality Criteria. To come to consensus on a set of findings, the team works together to collate and discuss available evidence collected throughout the SQR process. In some cases, findings are organized as strengths and areas for growth, and may include recommendations.

Feedback to the School

While on site, the site visit team leader communicates with school leadership to keep the school informed of the team's progress and to seek the school's input on that progress. At the end of the SQR, the team provides an oral report of findings to the school.

Written Report

After the site visit, the school will receive a written report that formalizes the findings discussed on site.

Part II: Process and Results

How does the site visit team go about its work?

The site visit team is guided in its work by a code of conduct. Adherence to the code of conduct improves the quality of the site visit; schools do not provide reliable evidence under unnecessary stress. Adherence to the code of conduct also creates a frank, professional tone in which the site visit team and the school may discuss key strengths and areas for improvement.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR REVIEWERS*

1. Carry out work with integrity.

- a. Treat all those you meet with courtesy and sensitivity. Try to minimize stress.
- b. Allay anxiety through mutual respect and valuing opinions. Show an interest in what is said.
- c. Focus attention and questions on topics that will reveal how well students are learning.
- d. Assure confidentiality.

2. Act in the best interests of students and staff.

- a. Do not put students or staff in a position where they may have conflicting loyalties.
- b. Emphasize that students come first and are at the center of the review.
- c. Wherever possible, work to others' convenience.
- d. Be supportive and enabling. Evidence given under undue stress is unreliable.
- e. Under no circumstances, criticize the work of a teacher or anyone else involved with the school.
- f. Classroom visits are confidential. Classroom visits are not evaluations. Individual teachers will not be provided feedback and information will not be shared with any school personnel.
- g. Teacher interviews and focus groups are confidential. Any information reported to the site visit team will remain anonymous in both oral and written reports.
- h. Try to understand what teachers are doing and why. Be supportive.

3. Be objective; base ratings on evidence, not opinion.

- a. An individual's perception can be evidence, especially if supported by others' observations.
- b. Findings must be fully supported by evidence, defensible, and must inform the key questions.
- c. Findings must be reliable in that others would make the same finding from the same evidence.
- d. Be prepared to ask questions to establish whether a view is based on opinion or evidence. This applies, as well, to site visit team members' ratings.
- e. Discussion with staff and site visit team members is part of the process to create a fair and secure evidence base from which corporate findings are made.
- f. If a given piece of evidence is not affecting students' learning or experience, it is then irrelevant.

**Acknowledgement of Massachusetts Charter School Office Site Visit Protocol and the OFSTED code of conduct.*

How does the site visit team come to consensus ratings based on a collection of documents, interviews, and classroom visits?

The SQR process is built on four core components that drive the work of the site visit team throughout the site visit.

- **The process is criterion-driven.** The SQR process is built on a set of research-based criterion and indicators. Throughout the site visit, the site visit team collects evidence through document reviews, interviews, and classroom visits in relation to each of the criterion and indicators to come to decisions on ratings regarding how well school programs and practices are serving students. The team uses the criterion and indicators during team meetings to identify trends that emerge from the evidence and to come to ratings. A criterion-driven process ensures that the work of the team is grounded in research-based standards for effective practice. The protocol's criteria also serve as a basis for professional dialogue and reporting.

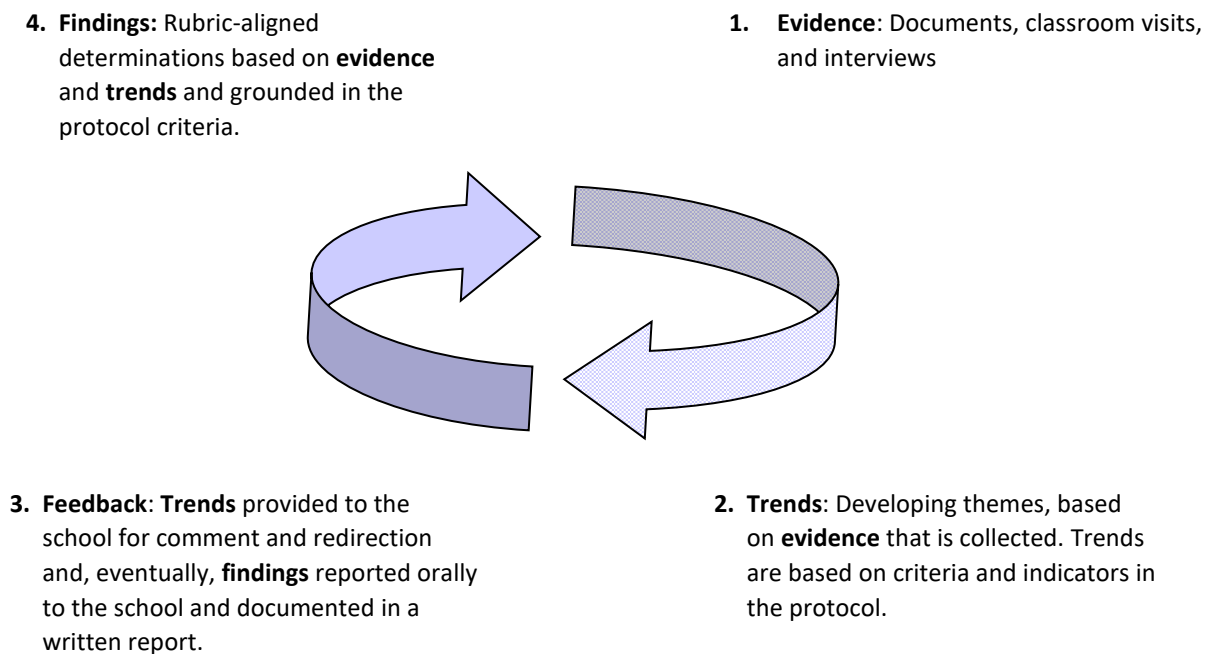
Figure 1: Criterion-driven



- **The process is an evidence-based system.** The ratings of the site visit team – which come from document reviews, classroom visits, and interviews – are based on evidence collected during the process. The site visit team builds a base of evidence for each of its ratings that would reasonably lead any set of individuals to come to similar conclusions about the school's programs and practices. Moving from evidence to ratings is a cyclical process that depends on an open exchange of information between the site visit team and the school. While the team is required to address the protocol standards and base all ratings on evidence, the process is not mechanical and requires some professional judgment.

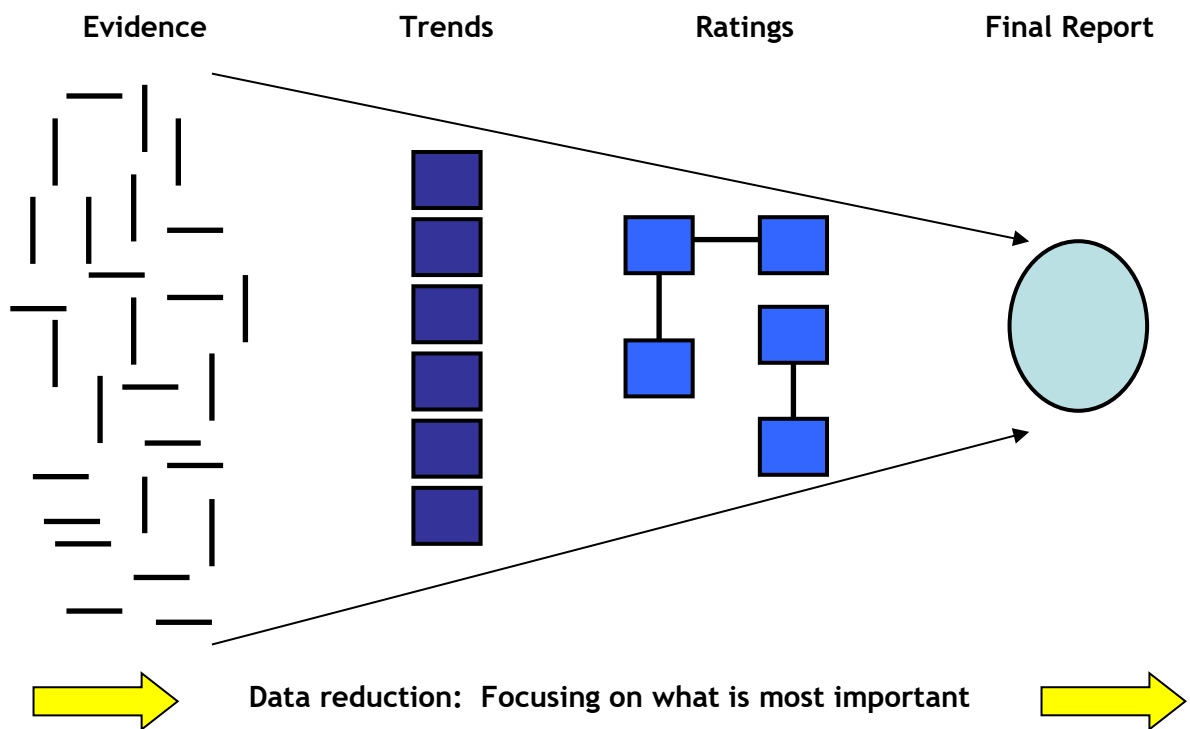
- **The process is iterative, repeatedly checking on, and testing, the findings and the evidence that supports them.** Site visit team members use a four-step process to move from pieces of evidence to ratings about the school. First, the team records evidence by reviewing documents, conducting interviews, and visiting classrooms. The team reviews evidence to identify initial trends within the evidence. For example, the site visit team would note a trend if teachers’ all describe the curriculum in similar ways and if this description matched the documents reviewed by them. Continuing from the example, if the team continues to collect evidence that supports the trend, it would rate the school Effective for teachers having a clear understanding of the school’s curriculum. When possible, the site visit team presents preliminary trends and ratings to school leadership during the visit so that the school can support and/or challenge the team’s analysis by presenting additional evidence. This ensures that the school has an opportunity to present additional evidence before ratings are finalized. This iterative process is represented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: An iterative process



- **The site visit team uses its professional judgment to come to consensus on findings.** To be useful, the team must produce a focused report. Focusing on key strengths and areas for improvement requires discerning only what is important and merits comment. This process is called “data reduction.” Within the protocol, team members use their professional judgment in a process called moderation to distill the key factors that deserve comment from the wealth of evidence available to them. This use of professional judgment is represented in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Moving from evidence to findings



DETAILED STEPS IN THE PROCESS

How does the site visit team and the school prepare for the site visit?

Below is an overview of the responsibilities of each party. A detailed explanation is available in the following section, Roles and Responsibilities.

1. SchoolWorks communicates with the school to determine site visit dates and introduces school leadership to the SQR protocol.
2. The site visit team leader works with the school to begin establishing a specific schedule for the site visit. The team leader remains available to answer any questions and to work with the school to ensure that documents needed for the SQR are available in a timely manner.
3. The site visit team leader creates a draft schedule of interviews and classroom visits, finalizes the schedule with the school's input, and sends a copy of the schedule to the school and members of the team.
4. The school uses the School Task Checklist (see Appendix A) to ensure that all preparation has been completed prior to the site visit.
5. The site visit team leader sends a copy of the protocol, the schedule, classroom visit tool, interview questions, and documents for pre-visit analysis to the other team members.

What does the process look like when the site visit team is on site?

Time on site moves from a fixed structure designed to ensure good coverage of the school to a more flexible schedule that allows the team to follow up on emerging trends and findings. Since it is not possible to predict what will emerge from the evidence collected, the team requires flexibility to move about the school and observe any aspect of the school without notice. However, as a matter of courtesy and in the spirit of developing and maintaining a good working relationship, the team leader works with the school to define as much of the schedule as possible without restricting the team's ability to pursue important evidence.

On-site review and feedback

1. The site visit team reviews documents and conducts interviews and classroom visits in accordance with the visit schedule. The team meets regularly during the visit to share evidence.
2. The site visit team leader keeps the school's leadership informed of the team's progress throughout the visit, providing updates on the team's identification of trends as they develop. This ensures that the school has every opportunity to present evidence to address the team's questions.
3. The site visit team will formulate consensus findings that respond to the key questions, criteria, and indicators in the SQR protocol. This is based on evidence provided to the team during interviews, classroom visits, and document reviews while on site.
4. At the end of the visit, a brief report of the site visit team's claims and evidence is presented verbally to school leadership.

Sample Daily Site Visit Schedule

Below is a sample visit schedule for the full visit, as well as a detail of a single day. Schedules will vary from school to school, depending on the size of the school and the number of site visit team members. The team leader will work to construct a daily schedule for the site visit, based on schedule documents and guidance provided by school leadership.

Sample 2 Day Site Visit Schedule		
Time	Day 1	Day 2
7:00–8:00 AM	OEO team arrives at school and morning meeting	OEO team arrives at school and morning meeting
8:00–9:00 AM	Interview with School Leadership	Interview with School Leadership
9:00–11:30 AM	Classroom Observations & Teacher focus groups	Classroom Observations & Teacher focus groups
11:30–12:00 PM	Document review	Student Focus Group
12:00–1:00 PM	Lunch; Mid-day meeting and site visit team debrief	
1:00–2:30 PM	Teacher focus group	Parent Focus Group
2:30–3:00 PM	Classroom Observations	Teacher focus group
3:00– 5:00 PM	Evidence sorting and team discussion	Team deliberations
5:30-6:00	Check-in with School Leadership	Report out to School Leadership
6:00 PM	Team departs	Team departs

Sample Daily Site Visit Schedule				
Time	Team Leader	Team Member #1	Team Member #2	Team Member #3
7:00–8:00 AM	Team arrives at school and morning meeting			
8:00–9:00 AM	Interview with school leadership		Classroom visits & teacher focus groups	
9:00–11:30 AM	Classroom visits			
11:30–12:00 PM	Document review	Teacher focus group	Focus group with students	
12:00–1:00 PM	Lunch; Mid-day meeting and site visit team debrief			
1:00–2:30 PM	Classroom visits and teacher focus groups			
2:30–3:00 PM	Teacher Focus Group	Parent Focus Group		Teacher Focus Group
3:00– 5:00 PM	Team debrief and moderation; evidence sorting			
5:30-6:00	Report out to school leadership			
6:00 PM	Site visit team departs			

Written Report

1. The site visit team leader or team member responsible for completing the written report gathers all notes and other key evidence that have been collected by the team during the SQR to use in drafting the report.
2. The writer develops a draft report that documents the evidence for the findings. This report provides a written record of the ratings reported to school leadership orally at the end of the site visit.
3. Before it is sent to the school, all team members provide comments on the draft written report according to pre-established timelines.
4. The school reviews the draft for factual errors.
5. The report is finalized and submitted to the district and the school.

Part III: Roles and Responsibilities

In order to develop an accurate portrait of a school, all participants have key roles in preparing for, and conducting, the SQR. This section explains the roles and responsibilities of the project manager and/or site visit team leader, team members, and the school. Participants should read this section carefully to learn how to prepare for the site visit.

Project Manager and/or Site Visit Team Leader

Roles and responsibilities for the project manager and/or team leader include:

1. *Modeling and enforcing the code of conduct*
 - Site visit team leaders should exhibit the highest professional standards and are responsible for ensuring that their team does so, as well.
2. *Coordination with the school*
 - Before the visit, the site visit team leader contacts the school to ensure that documents are made available in a timely manner.
 - The school is likely to have questions about the process. The team leader should serve as the school's contact person to address these questions.
 - The team leader ensures that the school has secured adequate meeting space for the team.
 - The team leader ensures that lunch will be provided (at the team's expense) each day.
3. *Coordination of materials and assignment of site visit team members*
 - Before the site visit, site visit team members are selected and provided with materials (e.g., SQR protocol, school documents) to review.
 - Once the site visit schedule has been established, the team leader assigns team members to conduct interviews and classroom visits.
4. *Facilitation and management of logistics for the site visit days*
 - Once on site, the site visit team leader is responsible for facilitating all team meetings.
 - The team leader ensures that all interviews and focus groups are attended and go smoothly, and conducts a daily review of the interview schedule with school leadership and the team.
5. *Communication with the school while on site*
 - The site visit team leader is responsible for maintaining good channels of communication with the school at all times.
 - The team leader provides verbal reports to the school leadership about the team's developing trends throughout the visit.
 - The team leader takes appropriate actions to follow up on any responses to the team's trends.
 - At the end of the visit, the team leader verbally presents the team's claims to school leadership.
6. *Reporting*
 - The site visit team leader writes and/or oversees the writing of the site visit report, ensuring that the report contains sufficient evidence and reflects the consensus of the team.

Site Visit Team Members

Success of the visit relies heavily on site visit team members':

1. *Adherence to the code of conduct*

- Classroom observations are not evaluations. Individual teachers will not be provided feedback and information will not be shared with any school personnel.
- Teacher interviews and focus groups are confidential. Any information reported to the team will remain anonymous.

2. *Preparation for the site visit*

- Site visit team members review the SQR protocol in its entirety. This is critical because the protocol guides all activities while on site.
- Team members review documents and formulate questions for the initial team meeting prior to arriving on site.

3. *Collection of evidence*

- Site visit team members complete the site visit schedule according to the SQR protocol and under the direction of the team leader.
- Team members secure their evidence in notes and provide all necessary data to the team leader at each team meeting:
 - Notes and classroom visit forms are completed and organized for end-of-day meetings.
 - All notes are in order and completed in a timely manner for all meetings.

4. *Collaborating with others under the site visit team leader's direction*

- Team members support and take direction from their team leader. They recognize that the team leader has to make executive decisions and trusts in his/her judgment.
- Team members actively participate in team meetings and support others' efforts to reach unified findings based on evidence.

5. *Reporting*

- Site visit team members provide feedback on the draft of the site visit report in accordance with pre-established timelines, ensuring that the report contains sufficient evidence and reflects the consensus of the team.

School and Other Supporting Organizations

To be an effective partner in the process, the school:

1. *Acts as an essential partner in the site visit process*

- The school makes the purpose and process of the site visit team's visit clear to all faculty and staff.
- The school welcomes the site visit team and recognizes its efforts on behalf of the school and its students.
- The school works with the team to ensure that the visit runs smoothly.
- The school engages faculty and other stakeholders to reflect on the school's performance.

2. *Designates a meeting room*

- The site visit team will need a meeting space during the day. The space should allow for confidential meetings and should be available to team members for the full visit.
- To the extent possible, interviews should not be scheduled in this space but planned for elsewhere in the building.

3. *Communicates with the site visit team*

- School leadership works collaboratively with the team leader prior to the site visit to ensure that documents are provided in a timely manner and that school staff are aware of the visit and its purposes (See Appendix A).
- School leadership works collaboratively with the team leader during the site visit to provide any additional documents requested and to ensure the completion of surveys, if applicable.
- School leadership maintains good communication with the team leader throughout the process, honestly expressing concerns and feedback from staff.

4. *Report feedback and review*

- School leadership responds honestly and frankly to the site visit team's developing analysis by stating the school's position and making available additional evidence to support its position, should it differ from other members of the team.
- School leadership completes a factual review of the draft site visit report and, in accordance with pre-established timelines, provides factual feedback to the team leader.

Part IV: Domains and Key Questions

The following key questions guide the site visit team's work in the school. All evidence is collected in response to these key questions and their respective standards. The complete list of corresponding criteria and indicators for each key question can be found in the next section, Part V.

Domain 1: Instruction

1. *Do classroom interactions and organization ensure a classroom climate conducive to learning?*
2. *Is classroom instruction intentional, engaging, and challenging for all students?*
3. *Do teachers regularly assess students' progress toward mastery of key skills and concepts, and utilize assessment data to provide feedback to students during the lesson?*

Domain 2: Students' Opportunities to Learn

4. *Does the school identify and support special education students, English language learners, and students who are struggling or at risk?*
5. *Does the school have a safe, supportive learning environment that reflects high expectations?*

Domain 3: Educators' Opportunities to Learn

6. *Does the school design professional development and collaborative systems to sustain a focus on instructional improvement?*
7. *Does the school's culture indicate high levels of collective responsibility, trust, and efficacy?*

Domain 4: Leadership and Governance

8. *Do school leaders guide and participate with instructional staff in the central processes of improving teaching and learning?*
9. *Do school leaders executive effectively orchestrate the school's operations?*
10. *Does the Board provide competent stewardship and oversight of the school?*

Part V: SQR Criteria and Indicators

This section contains the complete list of the SchoolWorks Criteria and Indicators (SQC), 4th Edition. These criteria and indicators are used to guide evidence collection, team deliberation, and development of findings during the site visit.

Domain 1: Instruction

The instructional domain centers on the specific interactions between teachers and students around content. Research suggests that high quality instructional interactions require: supportive classroom environments; involve purposeful teaching that is intentional, engaging, and challenging; and ensure student feedback in response to ongoing assessments.

Dimension 1.1: Classroom Climate

Note: All indicators marked by an asterisk () are also supported by special education research.*

Do classroom interactions and organization ensure a classroom climate conducive to learning?

Criterion 1.1.1: Behavioral expectations are clear and understood by students.

- Behavioral expectations, class rules, and procedures are clearly communicated to students (e.g., visuals, verbal/physical cues, written).
- Teachers provide consistent rewards for positive behavior and direct, concrete consequences for misbehavior.*
- Teachers anticipate and redirect misbehavior.*
- Students behave according to rules and expectations; disruptive behavior is minimal and does not interfere with other students' learning.*
- Classroom norms and routines support students sharing their learning and understandings, as well as making, then building from, mistakes in front of their peers.*

Criterion 1.1.2: The learning environment is highly structured, and learning time is maximized through effective planning and guidance.

- Teachers are prepared for their lessons and materials are readily available.
- Teachers maximize learning time and minimize transition time.
- Teachers share an agenda of the day's class activities and/or lesson with students.
- Teachers explain task and behavioral instructions clearly and provide choices for when tasks are complete.

Criterion 1.1.3: Classroom interactions are cooperative and conducive to learning.

- Teachers are aware of, and responsive to, students' learning and emotional needs.
- Interactions between teachers and students, as well as among students, are respectful, caring, and supportive.
- Students engaged in partner or group work are collaborative and focused on learning.
- Students are held accountable for contributions to partner or group work.

Dimension 1.2: Purposeful Teaching

Note: All indicators marked by an asterisk () are also supported by special education research.*

Is classroom instruction intentional, engaging, and challenging for all students?

Criterion 1.2.1: Teachers provide students with clear learning goals and focused, purposeful instruction.*

- Teachers clearly communicate learning objectives aligned to state and/or Common Core standards.*
- Teachers tie learning objectives to real-life application, larger concepts, and/or key questions.
- Learning objectives drive lesson activities.
- All students know the purpose of, and expectations for, the lesson.
- Teachers demonstrate high expectations and hold students accountable for achieving learning goals.
- Teachers communicate academic content, concepts, and procedures with depth, clarity, and accuracy.*
- Teachers make explicit how and when to use given content or procedures.*

Criterion 1.2.2: A variety of instructional strategies and materials support students' diverse needs.*

- All students can access grade level content through multi-sensory materials and modalities (e.g., visual, auditory, kinesthetic).*
- Students develop graphic organizers and other non-linguistic representation of academic content* (e.g., mental images, physical models, role plays, concept maps, pictographs, charts).
- Learning tasks provide students with choices and opportunities for self-directed learning.*
- Teachers utilize varied groupings (whole-class, groups, partners, 1:1) to address students' learning needs.

Criterion 1.2.3: All students are cognitively engaged in learning.*

- Students engage with teachers and peers in extended, content-focused discussions.
- Students engage with teachers and peers, or work independently, to complete the lesson activity.
- Students persevere and demonstrate stamina while engaged in the work of the lesson.
- The majority of students - rather than just the teacher and/or a few students - are engaged in the work of the lesson.

Criterion 1.2.4: Instruction requires all students to use and develop higher-order thinking skills.*

- Students are engaged in rigorous, challenging tasks that require skills such as analysis, interpretation, application, and synthesis – not just summary or recall.
- Students apply new knowledge and skills to investigate open-ended problems and situations
- Students identify essential information from a larger body and share that information verbally or in writing.
- Teacher questions require students to look beyond what is explicitly stated in source material for answers.
- Students ask meaningful questions related to the lesson's objective and/or content.
- The majority of students - rather than just the teacher and/or a few students - are engaged in higher-order thinking.
- Students explain their thinking and build on their own and others' thoughts.
- Students evaluate and reflect on their own thinking, progress, performance, and learning approach.*

Dimension 1.3: In-class Assessment & Feedback

Note: All indicators marked by an asterisk () are also supported by special education research.*

Do teachers regularly assess students' progress toward mastery of key skills and concepts, and utilize assessment data to provide feedback to students during the lesson?

Criterion 1.3.1: In-class assessment strategies reveal students' thinking about learning goals.

- Teachers use informal assessment to gauge the majority of students' prior knowledge and understandings.
- Teachers use formative assessments to gauge the majority of students' progress toward clear lesson, unit, and standards-based learning goals, not directions or procedures.
- Students explain, write, or illustrate their thinking and understandings using evidence (i.e., from text, experiments, drawings, diagrams, research, data sets).
- Students receive assessment accommodations that allow them to reveal their understandings.*

Criterion 1.3.2: Timely, frequent, specific feedback is provided throughout the learning process to inform improvement efforts.

- Teachers give students clear, descriptive, criterion-based feedback to at least several students.
- Feedback tells students where they are in relation to the lesson goal(s), clarifies misunderstandings, and/or provides specific guidance regarding improvement.
- The use of models and assessment tools (e.g., rubrics, worked examples, exemplars) focuses feedback and assessment on essential skills and knowledge.*
- Students demonstrate awareness of their progress toward learning goals (e.g., what they understand, where confused, when not engaged).
- Students revise their work and correct errors in response to teacher or peer feedback.*

Domain 2: Students' Opportunities to Learn

Students' opportunities to learn are influenced by the *school-wide learning culture*, or the norms, values, and relationships students experience at school each day, as well as the *school-wide practices and interventions* that support students' academic and social-emotional learning. Research suggests that students learn best when their schools have a culture of high expectations for behavioral and academic performance *in concert with* a culture of caring and support. This context is further bolstered when schools monitor students' academic and behavioral progress, identify students' in need of more targeted support, and ensure interventions and guidance for students at risk of disengaging or failing. Together, the school's culture and supports for learning contribute to students' attitudes, skills, and abilities to succeed in and beyond the classroom.

Dimension 2.1: Students' Learning Supports

Does the school identify and support special education students, English language learners, and students who are struggling or at risk?

Criterion 2.1.1: The school has a process for identifying struggling and at-risk students and systematically monitors student progress and program effectiveness.

- Educators collaborate to collect and review risk indicator data to identify students in need of targeted academic supports and plan interventions.
- The school monitors students' progress toward academic goals and uses this feedback to inform the level of students' academic support or intervention.
- Educators collaborate to collect and review risk indicator data to identify students in need of targeted behavioral supports and plan interventions.
- The school monitors students' progress toward behavioral goals and uses this feedback to inform the level of students' behavioral support or intervention.
- The process for identifying and monitoring progress of struggling and at-risk students is transparent and understood by all stakeholders.

Criterion 2.1.2: The school implements appropriate supports for struggling and at-risk students.

- The school provides basic in-class preventions and supports to ensure academic growth and positive behavior for all students.
- The school implements specific, targeted academic and behavioral supports or interventions for identified at-risk students.
- The school provides struggling students with research-based programming designed to remediate gaps in skill or content knowledge.
- The school offers students tutoring or other supplemental services provided by the school or external agencies.
- The school offers individual or small group support in test-taking, study habits, or in specific content areas using a curriculum that builds on classroom curriculum and expectations.
- Qualified support staff offer one-on-one individualized support to students over a sustained period of time.
- Students have opportunities for credit recovery and new credits through after-school, weekend, or summer programs.

Criterion 2.1.3: The school provides appropriate supports for special education and English language learner (ELL) students.

- Educators collaborate to collect and review risk indicator data to identify special education and ELL students, and to plan appropriate interventions.
- The school implements specific, targeted academic and behavioral supports or interventions for identified special education and ELL students.
- Qualified support staff deliver the supports for ELL students or students with special needs.
- The school monitors special education and ELL students' progress toward academic and behavioral goals and uses this feedback to inform the level of students' support or intervention.

Dimension 2.2: Students' Learning Culture

Does the school have a safe, supportive learning environment that reflects high expectations?

Criterion 2.2.1: The school holds high expectations for academic learning.

- The school recognizes and celebrates students' academic performance.
- Teachers set high expectations for learning and clearly convey these to students.
- Teachers promote students' responsibility for raising their achievement and encourage their participation in learning.
- Students report that their teachers expect them to do their best at all times.
- Students convey that they believe it is important to do well in class.

Criterion 2.2.2: The school provides a safe environment to support students' learning.

- School leaders ensure the school's physical environment is clean, orderly, and safe.
- School leaders disperse responsibility for discipline; all staff regularly supervise students in school's public spaces.
- Students and staff indicate they believe school rules are fairly and consistently enforced for all students.
- The school has few reported incidences of physical violence, aggression, bullying, teasing, or harassment.
- Students report that they feel safe from bullying, teasing, and harassment.
- Students report they have friends and positive relationships with peers at school.

Criterion 2.2.3: The school provides opportunities for students to form positive relationships with peers and adults in the school.

- Programs and supports develop all students' social and emotional awareness skills.
- The school provides opportunities for students to seek help from staff for academic or social issues.
- The school provides opportunities for students to seek help from one another for academic or social issues.
- The school provides opportunities for students to engage in positive social group activities (e.g., extracurricular clubs, sports teams, or community service groups).
- Staff or community volunteers lead and organize community service activities, extracurricular groups, or other youth activities.
- Students report that adults and peers at the school try to get to know them and care about their learning.

Criterion 2.2.4: The school engages families in support of students' learning.

- The school includes parents/guardians in cultivating a culture of high expectations for students' learning and their consistent support of students' efforts.
- The school invites family participation in school activities (e.g., volunteering in classrooms or on committees; attendance at performances, sports events, organizational meetings) and regularly solicits their input.
- The school offers workshops and other opportunities for parents/guardians to learn about home practices that support student learning.
- Educators communicate with parents/guardians about instructional programs and students' progress.

Domain 3: Educators' Opportunities to Learn

Teachers' opportunities to learn are influenced by the *school-wide professional culture*, or the norms, values, and relationships teachers experience at school each day, and the *school-wide practices* that support teachers' ongoing professional growth and collaboration. Research indicates that a culture of mutual responsibility, trust, and collective efficacy provides an essential foundation for teachers' and leaders' focused collaboration around instructional challenges. This collaboration is further strengthened by well-designed, sustained, and job-embedded professional development, with beginning teachers receiving additional guidance from trained mentors. Together, this school-wide culture and the school's supports for professional learning and collaboration contribute to teachers' collective capacity to deliver high quality instruction, not just in individual classrooms, but across the school.

Dimension 3.1: Educators' Learning Supports

Does the school design professional development and collaborative structures to sustain a focus on instructional improvement?

Criterion 3.1.1: Professional development (PD) is designed to address school priorities, school improvement goals, and/or identified areas of need.

- PD aligns to state standards, organizational goals, the school improvement plan, and school curriculum.
- PD is informed by ongoing analysis of student performance, instructional data, and educators' learning needs.
- PD requires teachers to demonstrate their learned competency in a tangible and assessable way.
- PD supports teachers in the effective use of assessments.
- PD helps teachers translate student data into instructional changes and plans.
- PD focuses on specific subject content.
- PD supports teachers in the effective use of instructional materials, resources, and technology.

Criterion 3.1.2: Professional development is active, intensive and sustained.

- PD engages teachers in active learning (e.g., leading instruction, discussing with colleagues, observing other teachers, developing assessments).
- PD is embedded in teachers' daily work through coaching, collaborative planning, and reflection.
- Trained coaches and/or colleagues with instructional expertise provide coaching and support around instructional planning and lesson design, pedagogy, assessment, and student engagement.
- PD provides follow-up sessions and ongoing support for teachers' continued learning.
- PD combines workshops, conferences, and trainings (at least 14 hours) with the ongoing work of educators' learning teams.

Criterion 3.1.3: Professional development is evaluated.

- The quality of PD delivery is regularly monitored, evaluated, and improved.
- The effects of PD are assessed using data on teacher instruction and student achievement.

Criterion 3.1.4: Educators collaborate regularly to learn about effective instruction and students' progress.

- Educators meet frequently, during regularly scheduled, uninterrupted times (e.g., staff, department, grade level meeting times) to collaborate, establish improvement goals, and make data-informed instructional decisions.
- Educators' collaborative meetings have a clear and persistent focus on improving student learning and achievement.
- Educators describe sharing knowledge and expertise among colleagues as essential collaborative activity for job success.
- Teachers are willing to talk about their own instructional practice, to actively pursue and accept feedback from colleagues, and to try new teaching strategies.

Criterion 3.1.5: Trained mentors provide beginning teachers with sustained, job-embedded induction.

- Mentors are carefully selected and trained by induction program leaders.
- Mentors use data and assessments to provide feedback to beginning teacher about practice.
- Mentoring interactions focus on conceptions of high quality teaching, content-specific curriculum and pedagogy, lesson planning, lesson observations, student learning, reflective processes, and problem solving.

Dimension 3.2: Educators' Learning Culture

Does the school's culture indicate high levels of collective responsibility, trust, and efficacy?

Criterion 3.2.1: Educators' mindsets and beliefs reflect shared commitments to students' learning.

- Educators convey shared vision and values about teaching and learning and reference these to guide their instructional decision making.
- Educators convey a shared commitment to the learning of all students in the school.
- Educators convey a belief that students' learning is their collective responsibility, regardless of students' personal or home situations.
- Educators convey that it is important not to give up on any students, even if it appears that they do not want to learn.
- Educators convey commitment to, and hold each other accountable for, collaboratively established improvement goals and tasks.

Criterion 3.2.2: The school reflects a safe, trustworthy and growth-oriented professional climate.

- Educators describe non-evaluative, "blame-free" norms for sharing data and solving challenging instructional problems.
- Educators' concerns and decisions focus on students' learning and well-being (rather than on staff members' individual or competing preferences).
- Educators convey that they are willing to share and discuss their own instructional practice, seek and accept feedback, and collectively experiment with new teaching strategies.
- Educators describe colleagues and administrators as open, honest, competent, well-intentioned, caring, and reliable.

Criterion 3.2.3: School leaders create conditions that support educators' learning culture.

- School leaders model and convey well-defined beliefs about teaching and learning, and convey value for innovation, learning from mistakes, and risk-taking.
- School leaders ensure that staff and team meeting discussions are structured and facilitated to support the staff's reflective dialogue around data and instruction (e.g., attend to explicit group norms, use protocols).
- School leaders provide guidance to teacher teams (e.g., help to establish meeting routines; model and promote use of discussion protocols; ensure systematic monitoring of student progress; create focus on linking results to instruction) and ensures that teachers utilize tools and time well.
- School leaders participate in formal and informal professional learning, including their own leadership development about how to improve curriculum and instruction in a leadership context (i.e., elementary or secondary; high- or low-poverty; large or small schools).

Domain 4: Leadership & Governance

School governance and leadership support the essential work of teaching and learning in schools. *School leadership* influences every aspect of a school's culture, organizational practices, and academic programs. In the SchoolWorks Quality Criteria, school leadership functions are represented by two dimensions. The first – instructional leadership – emphasizes overseeing and guiding the school's collective focus on instruction and student learning. The second – organizational leadership – involves leading strategic conversations and planning and ensuring effective school operations to advance the school's mission and vision.

Governance is leadership that establishes and conveys the school's vision, values, and mission; ensures the organization's viability; and ensures that the organization meets its legal and ethical responsibilities. Governance is typically provided by a Board of Directors, school committee, or other oversight group. The *Chief Executive* is the one person the Board hires and oversees to administer the direction they set for the school. This person may be an executive director, superintendent, or other formally designated head of the organization.

Dimension 4.1: Instructional Leadership

Do school leaders guide and participate with instructional staff in the central processes of improving teaching and learning?

Criterion 4.1.1: School leaders establish a college-preparatory, career-ready academic vision, and set clear goals to meet that vision.

- School leaders establish an academic vision with a relentless commitment to closing the achievement gap and preparing all students for success in college and other post-secondary endeavors.
- School leaders convey clear, high expectations for all stakeholders.
- School leaders set and communicate clear, measurable academic achievement goals that are aligned across the school's improvement efforts (e.g., school program, staff development, and curriculum implementation).
- School leaders ensure that the school-wide focus remains on established academic goals and school priorities.
- School leaders regularly evaluate the academic program using data to monitor progress toward goals

Criterion 4.1.2: School leaders ensure that the school has a coherent, comprehensive, and aligned curriculum.

- School leaders ensure that the curriculum includes essential content and skills for all students to learn at each grade level, and is mapped across the year with adequate instructional time allocated to teach it.
- School leaders ensure that curriculum, instruction, and assessments are aligned with state standards, aligned with each other, and coordinated both within and across grade levels.
- School leaders monitor instructional plans for alignment with curriculum program (e.g., periodic review of curriculum maps, unit/lesson plans, formative assessments, classroom observations).
- School leaders ensure plans are informed by students' prior knowledge, current skills, and learning needs.
- School leaders ensure that instructional materials are selected and/or developed in accordance with a school-wide instructional framework and aligned with established curriculum standards.
- School leaders ensure the curriculum is periodically reviewed and revisions are made accordingly.
- School leaders provide meaningful feedback on the quality of lesson and/or unit plans.

Criterion 4.1.3: School leaders ensure that teachers deliver high quality instruction.

- School leaders regularly observe the quality of instruction.
- School leaders provide regular, meaningful, and timely feedback that helps teachers improve their instructional practice.
- School leaders hold teachers accountable for applying feedback to their practice.
- Educators indicate that school leaders model high quality instruction.
- Educators convey that school leaders have sufficient knowledge of content/subjects and how they are taught effectively.

Criterion 4.1.4: School leaders provide conditions that support a school-wide data culture.

- Teachers have easy access to varied, current, and accurate student and instructional data.
- School leaders ensure that teachers employ a regular cycle of interim assessments to gather data on student performance.
- Teachers are provided time to collect, enter, query, analyze, and represent student data and use tools that help them act on results.
- School leaders ensure that all teachers receive PD in data use (e.g., how to access, read, and interpret a range of data reports; frame questions for inquiry; analyze data, assessment literacy, use data tools and resources).
- Teachers use results from interim or summative assessments to make adjustments to the organization of students in the classroom, pace of instruction, or content being taught.
- Teachers use results from interim or summative assessments to identify students in need of remediation or acceleration, and assign students to appropriate supports.

Dimension 4.2: Organizational Leadership

Do the school leaders effectively orchestrate the school's operations?

Criterion 4.2.1: School leaders lead intentional, strategic efforts to ensure the effectiveness of the school's program and the sustainability of the organization.

- Clear systems, structures, and procedures guide daily routines and school programs.
- Systems, structures, and procedures are aligned to a clear organizational vision and goals, are continually monitored, and are adjusted to ensure effectiveness
- School leaders target resources (e.g., funding, materials, time, staff) toward the school's instructional framework and goals; treat resources flexibly; avoid diffuse, scattered allocation of resources for improvement.
- School leaders diagnose problems before implementing solutions.
- School leaders distribute leadership responsibilities to appropriate individuals or groups.
- School leaders ensure ongoing leadership development for emerging and current school leaders, and has developed a plan for leadership succession.

Criterion 4.2.2: School leaders ensure effective communication and inclusive, transparent decision-making across the organization.

- Communications among all stakeholder groups are constructive, supportive and respectful.
- Communications between leadership and staff are fluid, frequent, and open.
- The principal involves faculty and staff in planning and implementation of school policies.
- The principal provides opportunities for faculty and staff to make or provide input on important decisions.

Criterion 4.2.3: School leaders create and implement systems to recruit and retain effective teachers and staff who can drive dramatic student gains.

- School leaders leverage a pipeline for teacher recruitment that includes partnerships with higher education institutions and nonprofit organizations (as well as other sources) to identify candidates.
- School leaders recruit and hire teachers with commitment to, and competence, in the school's philosophy, design, and instructional framework (e.g., trained and experienced with curriculum, certified/licensed to teach, qualified to teach a subject area).
- School leaders use multiple measures to assess each candidate's alignment with the skills required for the position, as well as core beliefs held by the school community.
- School leaders acknowledge and celebrate the accomplishments of teachers and other staff members.
- The school implements strategies to promote teacher retention and development.
- The school has strategies and career pathways to keep effective teachers engaged in, and committed to, their work.

Criterion 4.2.4: School leaders evaluate all staff and dismiss those who do not meet professional standards and expectations.

- School leaders ensure the evaluation of all staff members.
- School leaders conduct constructive, reflective, growth-oriented educator supervision/evaluation conferences, based on multiple data sources, and connect conferences to district and school priorities, professional development, and student learning.
- School leaders use supervision and evaluation processes to identify and address persistently low-performing staff members.
- School leaders dismiss those staff members who do not meet professional standards and expectations.

Criterion 4.2.5: School leaders ensure that the school has established sound financial and operational systems and processes.

- School leaders ensure that the organizational structure supports essential school functions, and that roles and responsibilities of all individuals at the school are clear.
- School leaders have established effective means of communicating with school staff.
- School leaders ensure that the school meets all compliance requirements and deadlines set by the authorizer and the state, including the submission of annual reports, school improvement plans, financial statements, school audit, calendar, and student attendance.
- School leaders effectively manage the school budget and cash flow, and there is a plan for long-term financial sustainability.
- The school effectively manages operations, including food services, transportation, school facilities, etc.

Dimension 4.3: Governance

Does the Board provide competent stewardship and oversight of the school?

Criterion 4.3.1: The Board provides strong oversight over the effectiveness of the academic program.

- The Board describes priorities that are aligned with the school's mission and focus on preparing all students for college acceptance and completion or post-secondary success.
- The Board conveys appropriate knowledge of academic performance of the full range of students in the school.
- The Board conveys appropriate knowledge of the behavioral performance of students in the school.
- The Board describes school progress against accountability goals and strategic priorities based on a regular, data-based benchmarking process.
- The Board's membership includes appropriate instructional expertise to provide oversight of the academic program.
- The Board has systems and structures that ensure questioning, scrutiny, and deliberation regarding academic performance, and monitors leadership efforts to address performance gaps.

Criterion 4.3.2: The Board provides strong financial oversight.

- The Board maintains and monitors complete and accurate financial records and, as well, ensures annual independent audit/review.
- The Board reviews and approves annual budget and monitors actual performance against budget.
- The Board ensures that a significant portion of budget is allocated to priority programs that advance its mission and goals; also, sufficient resources are allocated for effective administration.
- The Board establishes clear, written policies for paying/reimbursing expenses to those conducting school business.
- The Board's membership includes appropriate financial expertise to provide oversight of the school's finances.
- The Board has systems and structures that ensure questioning, scrutiny, and deliberation regarding financial performance, and monitors leadership efforts to ensure financial health.

Criterion 4.3.3: The Board ensures legal compliance and public disclosure.

- The Board ensures compliance with all local, state, and federal laws and reporting requirements.
- The Board makes information about governance, finances, programs, activities, impact publicly available.
- The Board upholds formal code of ethics with all Board, staff, and volunteers.
- The Board adheres to conflict of interest, "whistleblower," document retention policies and procedures, and assesses the need for liability insurance.

Criterion 4.3.4: The Board maintains effective governance practices to ensure organizational viability, including the systematic selection and oversight of the chief executive.

- The Board systematically recruits, supports, and assesses the chief executive; provides performance incentives and rewards (e.g., ensures leader professional development, meaningful feedback, and criterion-based evaluation).
- The Board engages in strategic planning with the chief executive when conditions support the likelihood of productive results (e.g., not during organizational crisis, when lacking support from key leaders or capacity to implement).
- The Board maintains clear and regular communications within the Board, with the chief executive, and with stakeholders.
- The Board ensures questioning, scrutiny, and deliberation of school policies, budgets, and practices in relation to mission and vision.
- The Board establishes and active, productive partnership with the chief executive and with political and business leaders.
- The Board engages in periodic self-assessment and reflects on its role when frequent chief executive turnovers occur.
- The Board's membership reflects the necessary set of professional skills and expertise to ensure organizational viability.

Appendix A: School Task Checklist_____

The School Task Checklist can be used by the school to prepare for the SQR. It includes key tasks that the school leader should complete prior to the site visit, including the list of materials the site visit team is requesting prior to the visit and upon arrival on site. The following task list is an example and may be modified and sent separately to a school in advance of the visit.

ITEMS TO BE SENT TO THE SITE VISIT TEAM LEADER BEFORE THE SQR		
Scheduling	1. Roster of ALL staff, including grade levels and subject areas taught	
	2. Master schedule for all staff, including periods/times teaching and room numbers	
	3. A list of teacher preparation times or “free” periods (if not included in the roster or master schedule)	
	4. School bell schedule	
General	1. School handbooks (staff, student, family)	
	2. The school improvement plan / strategic plan	
ITEMS TO BE PREPARED BEFORE THE SQR		
	1. Faculty and staff are aware of the visit and its purpose	
	2. Private meeting space for site visit team secured & copies of the school map provided	
	3. Delivery menus available for team to select lunch (Site visit team will pay for its own lunch.)	
ITEMS AVAILABLE IN THE TEAM MEETING ROOM THE FIRST DAY OF THE SQR <i>(may be available electronically or in hard copy)</i>		
Instruction	1. Sample curricular documents that link standards to school/classroom instructional practices (e.g., scope and sequence, pacing guides, textbooks) from varied grade levels and subject areas	
	2. Sample lesson plans from different grade levels and subject areas	
	3. Samples of student work (e.g., HW, quizzes, projects) from a variety of grade levels/subject areas	
	4. Any other documents that the school believes would help the site visit team better understand its programs and initiatives related to classroom instruction .	
Students' Opportunities to Learn	5. Description of the school's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) or Response to Intervention (RtI) system;	
	6. RtI meeting minutes or agendas and sample student intervention plans	
	7. Any other documents that the school believes would help the site visit team better understand its programs and initiatives related to students' opportunities to learn .	
Educators' Opportunities to Learn	8. Professional development (PD) calendar and sample PD documents	
	9. Agendas and minutes from collaborative planning or grade level team meetings	
	10. Any other documents that the school believes would help the site visit team better understand its programs and initiatives related to educators' opportunities to learn .	
Leadership & Governance	11. Sample completed teacher evaluations and informal observation/feedback forms (WITHOUT names)	
	12. Agendas and minutes from leadership team or other staff meetings	
	13. Board meeting minutes, agenda, and bylaws	
	14. Any other documents that the school believes would help the site visit team better understand its programs and initiatives related to leadership and governance	

Frequently-asked questions from school leaders

1. *What do we tell staff about the visit?*

Staff should know the purpose of the visit and their role within the visit. A first step in communicating these things might be distributing the Introduction and Process and Results sections (Parts I & II) of the SQR protocol.

2. *Space is very tight in our building. We do not have a conference room that can house the team.*

The site visit team is made up of educators who understand space constraints. They respect the need to protect instructional space and will adapt to what you can offer. Please focus on trying to provide a space with privacy.

3. *How much flexibility do we have in adapting the example schedule?*

The site visit team recognizes that each school is unique and that the process needs to be adapted. The team has specific tasks that must be completed during the visit. However, the team leader will work collaboratively with school leadership to create a schedule that minimizes disruptions to the typical school day.

Appendix B: Classroom Visit Tool and Guidance

What is the purpose of the classroom visit tool?

The purpose of the classroom visit tool is threefold:

1. To enable observers to easily identify practices and summarize their evidence base and, therefore, establish findings that characterize classroom practices across the school;
2. To supply the report writer with quantifiable ratings across classes observed that are supported by documented pieces of evidence; and,
3. To gather qualitative evidence about classroom practices that provides additional evidence to inform the site visit team's findings.

The information collected from classroom visits provides the site visit team an additional source of information that can be used to better understand school practices and to support the team's findings.

Frequently-asked questions about classroom visits

1. *How does the site visit team select the classrooms that will be visited?*

Classroom visits will be selected on the basis of the school's master schedule and the size of the site visit team. In larger schools, representative classes will be selected to reflect a range of teacher experience, a variety of subject areas, the range of grades served at the school, and special services or program classes as they reflect the school's mission. The site visit schedule is developed by the site visit team leader with input from school leadership.

2. *What is the length of a classroom visit?*

It is expected that classrooms will be visited for no less than 20 minutes to allow the team to derive an understanding of the lesson and the classroom climate. Most visits will be planned and scheduled, but unplanned visits may occur. Unplanned visits may be shorter in duration.

3. *What do teachers need to do to prepare for the classroom visit?*

Teachers need not do anything to prepare for a classroom visit. Classes should reflect a typical experience for students and teachers. The site visit team is composed of education professionals who understand that behavior in the classroom may be unpredictable. The SQR seeks to establish trends across the school, not to assess isolated incidents within a single classroom.

4. *Should teachers expect to interact with the classroom visitor?*

The intent of the classroom visit is to cause as minimal disruption to daily classroom practices as possible. Teaching staff does not need to address the classroom visitor or provide an explanation of the lesson. The classroom visitor may walk around the classroom to review student work and/or classroom postings, if appropriate.

5. *Do teachers receive feedback from the classroom visitor?*

The site visit team seeks to identify trends across the school, not to provide information on the effectiveness of specific classroom practices or individual teachers. Team members will NOT provide feedback to individual teachers nor will they provide feedback on individual teachers to school leadership. Classroom visits are NOT teacher evaluations. They will not be shared with individual teachers or any other school personnel. They are intended to provide information to the site visit team about the implementation of the academic program, the availability of resources, and any additional evidence that demonstrates aspects of school practices and operations.

6. *Should the classroom visitor expect to see all of the indicators on the classroom visit tool in a single classroom?*

The classroom visit tool is aligned with the indicators in the SQC that reflect a range of effective practices. It is not expected that the classroom visitor would see all of these indicators. The tool serves as a resource for the site visit team to identify and explain practices that are characteristic of each individual school.

School: _____ Date: _____ Subject: _____ Grade Level: _____

Number of Students: _____ Number of Adults: _____ Start Time: _____ End Time: _____ Observer's Initials: _____

Directions: Note whether the indicator in **bold type** has been **observed** or **not observed** by circling the correct option. For example:

Supportive Classroom Climate		
1. Behavioral expectations are clear and understood by students. (1.1.1)	Observed	Not Observed
Evidence:		
2. Learning environment is highly structured and learning time is maximized through effective planning and guidance. (1.1.2)	Observed	Not Observed
Evidence:		
3. Classroom interactions are cooperative and conducive to learning . (1.1.3)	Observed	Not Observed
Evidence:		
Purposeful Teaching		
4. Teachers provide students with clear learning goals and focused, purposeful instruction . (1.2.1)	Observed	Not Observed
Evidence:		
Learning goal(s) or objective(s):		

5. A variety of <u>instructional strategies</u> and materials support students' diverse needs. (1.2.2)		Observed	Not Observed
	<i>Evidence:</i>		
6. All students are <u>cognitively engaged in learning</u>. (1.2.3)		Observed	Not Observed
	<i>Evidence:</i>		
7. Instruction requires all students to use and <u>develop higher order thinking skills</u>. (1.2.4)		Observed	Not Observed
	<i>Evidence</i>		
Assessment and Adjustment			
8. <u>In-class assessment strategies</u> reveal students' thinking about learning goals. (1.3.1)		Observed	Not Observed
	<i>Evidence</i>		
9. Timely, frequent, specific <u>feedback is provided</u> throughout the learning process to inform improvement efforts. (1.3.2)		Observed	Not Observed
	<i>Evidence</i>		

Additional Notes:

Appendix C: Interview Guidance and Worksheets

During the SQR, a series of interviews and/or focus groups will be conducted to gather information about the school. Interview data, similar to classroom visits, are intended to provide information about the implementation of the school’s program and operations. The site visit team leader, with guidance from school leadership, will work to establish a schedule that is appropriate for the school. Depending on the purpose of the SQR and the school’s structure, the number and length of interviews conducted varies. The following are examples only.

SCHOOL-WIDE INTERVIEWS		
Interviews/ focus groups	Description	Approximate Time Needed
Governance / oversight focus group	This interview is conducted with a representative group of the school’s governing body, or oversight body, if applicable. This might include a Charter School Board or district leadership.	1 hour
School Leadership	School leadership includes the principal and key assistants (e.g., assistant principals, curriculum director and/or lead teachers). In addition to an interview, school leadership may be asked to provide further guidance and insight throughout the visit. Feedback on the team’s preliminary findings will be presented to school leadership at the end of the site visit.	1-hour focus group each day 30-45-minute feedback session
Charter / Education Management Organization	For schools operated by a CMO or EMO, a focus group will be conducted with key members of the management organization on topics pertinent to the role the organization plays in the management of the school. These individuals are also invited to participate in feedback sessions.	1-hour focus group
Teacher focus group	Groups of teachers, typically by grade level , make up focus groups. In some cases, the team may request a focus group meeting with teaching assistants, aides or other personnel to discuss their roles in the delivery of the academic program at the school. The team makes an effort to speak to as many of the school’s teaching staff as possible.	45 minutes (When possible, scheduled during common prep periods.)
Specialist interviews	Interviews with specialists are conducted. School leaders are asked to identify personnel who play a significant role in school functioning (e.g., the school’s special education director, ELL coordinator, curriculum coordinators, guidance counselors and other relevant staff).	45 minutes
Student focus group	A selection of four-to-eight students representing a variety of grade levels and varying instructional needs. Students are selected by the school’s leadership and/or staff. Students are asked to bring a piece of recent work to share with the focus group leader.	30 minutes
Parent focus group	A representative group of four-to-eight parents, whose children have a range of academic needs, have attended the school for various lengths of time and who have a range of participation experiences with the school.	30-45 minutes (If possible, scheduled around arrival or dismissal)

What is the purpose of the interview worksheet?

Interview worksheets are provided to:

1. Enable the interviewer to easily identify questions consistent with the criteria and indicators in the SQR protocol, in order to gather appropriate evidence;
2. Ensure uniformity across interviews conducted; and,
3. Provide multiple sources of evidence to support the site visit team's findings.

The interview worksheet provides a template for the site visit team to use during interviews and focus groups. This ensures that questions are being asked in accordance with the SQR protocol and that all team members are asking uniform questions. While on site, the team may develop additional, school-specific interview questions that are based on the team leader's judgment of what must be learned to come to findings on the protocol's key questions.

An interview worksheet exists for each type of focus group (e.g., school leadership, teachers, parents) who the site visit team will interview while on site. Interview questions might look slightly different; interviews conducted with school leadership might include slightly different content than what the team would ask teachers or parents. In addition, question delivery might vary slightly.

How do I use the interview worksheet?

The interview worksheets contain possible interview questions. The column on the left may be used to check the most relevant questions. The right column may be used to insert any additional questions that the site visit team, during team meetings, decides are important to ask in order to gather the required evidence. Interview notes are recorded by the site visit team for use during team deliberations and to provide the report writer with a record of interviews to ensure a sound and accurate evidence base.

Principal/Chief Executive Interview Guide

Domain 1: Instruction		School-specific questions
1.	<p>Is there a school-wide approach to behavior management that we will observe in the classrooms?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Maximize learning time 	
2.	<p>What is the school's approach to instruction? Are there common practices we will observe across classrooms?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Specific strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Lesson structure and objectives <input type="checkbox"/> Differentiation <input type="checkbox"/> Components of the school's curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> Student collaboration/peer work <input type="checkbox"/> Ensuring students' cognitive engagement/higher order thinking 	
3.	<p>How do teachers assess students' mastery of skills and content during lessons?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Formative assessments/checks for understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Feedback to students 	
Domain 2: Students' Opportunities to Learn		School-specific questions
4.	<p>How does the school identify and support students who are struggling or at risk?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Process for identification of students needing academic and behavioral supports (Response to Intervention, child study/student support teams) <input type="checkbox"/> Available academic/behavioral supports offered by school (types, frequency, staffing, training) <input type="checkbox"/> Approach to monitoring progress <input type="checkbox"/> Services for special education students/English language learners 	
5.	<p>In what other ways does the school support student learning?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Safe and caring environment (physical and emotional safety) <input type="checkbox"/> Family engagement <input type="checkbox"/> High expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Programs and supports to develop social and emotional awareness skills <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities to form positive relationships with peers and adults <input type="checkbox"/> Celebration of students' success and growth 	

Principal/Chief Executive Interview Guide

Domain 3: Educators' Opportunities to Learn		School-specific questions
6.	<p>Describe the school's approach to professional development (PD).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Focus of PD and how it was identified <input type="checkbox"/> Structure, frequency, and content of PD (active, intensive, sustained, follow-up) <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation and evidence of effectiveness <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for teachers to collaborate (mentors, teams, structures, follow-up) <input type="checkbox"/> Role of school leaders in facilitating/supporting teacher collaboration 	
7.	<p>Describe the adult culture in the building.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Growth-oriented focus; shared commitments and beliefs <input type="checkbox"/> Relationship among staff/between staff and administrators 	
Domain 4: Governance & Leadership		School-specific questions
8.	<p>In what ways do you monitor and work to continuously improve the academic program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Academic vision, goals, and progress-monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Review of curriculum and curriculum revisions <input type="checkbox"/> Feedback to teachers on planning documents and instruction (frequency, content, consistency) <input type="checkbox"/> Analysis of data and determining next steps 	
9.	<p>What assessments does the school administer, and what is the purpose of each assessment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Type and frequency <input type="checkbox"/> How school leaders use the data (strategic, impact on programs, transparency) <input type="checkbox"/> How teachers are expected to access and use the data (systems, structures, time allocated) 	
10.	<p>How do you ensure effective operations at the school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Systems, structures, and routines <input type="checkbox"/> Targeting resources (school budgeting process and spending priorities, staffing, and deployment of human resources) <input type="checkbox"/> Communication and decision-making processes and structures <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership pipeline <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment, hiring, and retention of teachers <input type="checkbox"/> Supervision and evaluation processes 	
13.	<p>Describe how the board oversees the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Information they receive about the academic program; expertise to understand its meaning <input type="checkbox"/> Information they receive about the school's finances, and financial expertise <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment, hiring, and evaluation of chief executive <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic plan 	

Teacher Focus Group Guide / Specialist Focus Group Guide

Domain 1: Instruction		School-specific questions
1.	Is there a school-wide approach to behavior management that we will observe in the classrooms? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Maximize learning time 	
2.	What is the school’s approach to instruction? Are there common practices we will observe across classrooms? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Specific strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Lesson structure and objectives <input type="checkbox"/> Differentiation <input type="checkbox"/> Components of the school’s curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> Student collaboration/peer work <input type="checkbox"/> Ensuring students’ cognitive engagement/higher order thinking 	
3.	How do you assess students’ mastery of skills and content during lessons? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Formative assessments/checks for understanding <input type="checkbox"/> Feedback to students 	
Domain 2: Students’ Opportunities to Learn		School-specific questions
4.	How does the school identify and support students who are struggling or at risk? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Process for identification of students needing academic and behavioral supports (Response to Intervention, child study/student support teams) <input type="checkbox"/> Available academic/behavioral supports offered by school (types, frequency, staffing, training) <input type="checkbox"/> Approach to monitoring progress <input type="checkbox"/> Services for special education students/English language learners 	
5.	In what other ways does the school support student learning? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Safe and caring environment (physical and emotional safety) <input type="checkbox"/> Family engagement <input type="checkbox"/> High expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Programs and supports to develop social and emotional awareness skills <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities to form positive relationships with peers and adults <input type="checkbox"/> Celebrate student successes and growth 	

Teacher Focus Group Guide / Specialist Focus Group Guide

Domain 3: Educators' Opportunities to Learn		School-specific questions
6.	Describe the school's approach to professional development (PD). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Focus of PD and how it was identified <input type="checkbox"/> Structure, frequency, and content of PD (active, intensive, sustained, follow-up) <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation and evidence of effectiveness <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for teachers to collaborate (mentors, teams, structures, follow-up) <input type="checkbox"/> Role of school leaders in facilitating/supporting teacher collaboration 	
7.	Describe the adult culture in the building. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Growth-oriented focus; shared commitments and beliefs <input type="checkbox"/> Relationship among staff/between staff and administrators 	
Domain 4: Governance & Leadership		School-specific questions
8.	In what ways do school leaders monitor and work to continuously improve the academic program? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Academic vision, goals, and progress-monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Review of curriculum and curriculum revisions <input type="checkbox"/> Feedback to teachers on planning documents and instruction (frequency, content, consistency) <input type="checkbox"/> Analysis of data and determining next steps 	
9.	Can you describe ways in which the school ensures effective operations? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Clarity, consistency and efficiency of systems, structures, and routines <input type="checkbox"/> Targeting resources (teacher participation in school budgeting process and setting spending priorities) <input type="checkbox"/> Staffing and deployment of human resources (sufficient staff to support students, use of paraprofessionals) <input type="checkbox"/> Communication and decision-making processes and structures <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership development opportunities and pathways for teachers <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment, hiring, and retention of teachers <input type="checkbox"/> Supervision and evaluation processes 	
10.	Describe how the board oversees the school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Information they receive about the academic program <input type="checkbox"/> Information they receive about the school's finances <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment, hiring, and evaluation of chief executive <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic plan 	

Charter / Education Management Organization Interview Guide

Domain 1: Instruction		School-specific questions
1.	<p>Is there a school-wide approach to behavior management that we will observe in the classrooms?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Maximize learning time <input type="checkbox"/> Non-negotiables set by CMO/EMO 	
2.	<p>What is the school's approach to instruction? Are there common practices we will observe across classrooms?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Specific strategies, lesson structure and objectives <input type="checkbox"/> Differentiation <input type="checkbox"/> Components of the school's curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> Ensuring students' cognitive engagement/higher order thinking <input type="checkbox"/> Non-negotiables set by CMO/EMO 	
Domain 2: Students' Opportunities to Learn		School-specific questions
3.	<p>How does the school identify and support students who are struggling or at risk?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Process for identification of students needing academic supports (Response to Intervention, child study/student support teams) <input type="checkbox"/> Process for identification of students for academic and behavioral supports <input type="checkbox"/> Available academic/behavioral supports offered by school (types, frequency, staffing, training) <input type="checkbox"/> Approach to monitoring progress <input type="checkbox"/> Services for special education students/English language learners 	
4.	<p>In what other ways does the school support student learning?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Specific initiatives of CMO/EMO <input type="checkbox"/> Celebrations of students' (academic) accomplishments <input type="checkbox"/> Safe and caring environment (physical and emotional safety) <input type="checkbox"/> Communication with students' families and family engagement <input type="checkbox"/> High expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Programs and supports to develop social and emotional awareness skills <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities to form positive relationships with peers and adults 	

Charter / Education Management Organization Interview Guide

Domain 3: Educators' Opportunities to Learn		School-specific questions
5.	<p>Describe the school's approach to professional development (PD).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Focus of PD and how it was identified <input type="checkbox"/> Structure, frequency, and content of PD (active, intensive, sustained, follow-up) <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation and evidence of effectiveness <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for teachers to collaborate (mentors, teams, structures, follow-up) <input type="checkbox"/> Role of school leaders in facilitating/supporting teacher collaboration 	
6.	<p>Describe the adult culture in the building.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Mindsets (growth-oriented, shared commitment) <input type="checkbox"/> Relationship among staff/between staff and administrators 	
Domain 4: Governance & Leadership		School-specific questions
7.	<p>Describe how the board and/or CMO/EMO oversees the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Information they receive about the academic program, and expertise to understand information <input type="checkbox"/> Information they receive about the school's finances, and financial expertise <input type="checkbox"/> Communication with school board and its members <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment, hiring, and evaluation of chief executive <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic plan 	
8.	<p>In what ways does the CMO/EMO monitor and work to continuously improve the academic program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Academic vision, goals, and progress-monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Review of curriculum and curriculum revisions <input type="checkbox"/> Role in providing feedback to teachers on planning documents and instruction (frequency, content, consistency) <input type="checkbox"/> Analysis of data and determining next steps (school improvement plans) <input type="checkbox"/> Supervision and evaluation processes <input type="checkbox"/> Process for recruiting and hiring teachers and support provided by CMO/EMO 	
9.	<p>What assessments does the school administer, and what is the purpose of each assessment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Frequency <input type="checkbox"/> How does CMO/EMO use the data <input type="checkbox"/> Supports put in place by the CMO/EMO to facilitate use of data (protocols, templates) <input type="checkbox"/> How school leaders use the data <input type="checkbox"/> How teachers are expected to access and use the data 	

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10.	<p>Can you describe ways in which school resources are targeted toward improving student learning and achievement?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> School budgeting process (CMO/EMO participation)<input type="checkbox"/> Spending priorities<input type="checkbox"/> Staffing and deployment of human resources (sufficient staff to support students, use of paraprofessionals)<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment, hiring, and retention of staff<input type="checkbox"/> Supervision and evaluation processes<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for staff leadership development	
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Governance Focus Group Guide

Domain 2: Students’ Opportunities to Learn		School-specific questions
1.	Describe the measures the school board has put in place to ensure the safety of students and school staff. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Investment in security personnel or equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Training for staff and students 	
Domain 4: Governance & Leadership		School-specific questions
2.	Describe how the board oversees the school. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Information they receive about the academic program, and expertise to understand its meaning <input type="checkbox"/> Information they receive about the school’s finances, and financial expertise <input type="checkbox"/> Communication with school leader and/or CMO/EMO <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment, hiring, and evaluation of chief executive <input type="checkbox"/> Oversight of contract with CMO/EMO <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic plan 	
3.	How do you ensure effective operations at the school? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> School budgeting process <input type="checkbox"/> Spending priorities <input type="checkbox"/> Staffing and deployment of human resources 	
4.	What measures have you put in place to ensure the sustainability of the school? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> School leadership pipeline <input type="checkbox"/> Financial viability <input type="checkbox"/> Facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Self-assessment of governing practices and outcome 	

Parent Focus Group Guide

Domain 1: Instruction		School-specific questions
1.	<p>What are the school’s expectations for students when they are in class? (behavior and academics)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Consistency across teachers, grade levels <input type="checkbox"/> Communication of expectations to students and their families 	
2.	<p>How do teachers know where students are struggling and what they are doing well?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assessments <input type="checkbox"/> Feedback to students 	
Domain 2: Students’ Opportunities to Learn		School-specific questions
3.	<p>How does the school support students who are struggling or at risk?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> School’s process for identification of students needing academic or behavioral supports (Response to Intervention, child study/student support teams) <input type="checkbox"/> Available academic/behavioral supports offered by school (types, frequency, staffing, training) <input type="checkbox"/> School’s approach to monitoring progress <input type="checkbox"/> Services for special education students/English language learners 	
4.	<p>In what other ways does the school support student learning?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Celebration of students’ (academic) accomplishments <input type="checkbox"/> Family engagement (workshops, opportunities to share home practices to support student learning, parent volunteerism, PTOs) <input type="checkbox"/> Safe and caring environment (physical and emotional safety across classrooms, hallways, parking lots, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold and communicate high expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Programs and supports to develop social and emotional awareness skills <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities to form positive relationships with peers and adults <input type="checkbox"/> Extracurricular activities (clubs, sports) 	

Student Focus Group Guide

Domain 1: Instruction	School-specific questions
<p>1. How is the school preparing you for college? Provide an example.</p> <p>Do you ever/Have you ever:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete an extended (3-to-5-page) research paper <input type="checkbox"/> Read non-fiction materials <input type="checkbox"/> Take notes while the teacher gives you a presentation or a lot of information <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct science experiments and analysis of data <input type="checkbox"/> Work on challenging math concepts (fundamentals of algebra, geometry) <input type="checkbox"/> Take a second language <input type="checkbox"/> Practice time management skills <input type="checkbox"/> Create to-do lists, set goals, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Use computers to complete your assignments <input type="checkbox"/> Work on assignments that require considerable out of class preparation <input type="checkbox"/> Learn about college admissions process, tuition/financial aid <input type="checkbox"/> Learn career/technical skills (vocational opportunities) 	
<p>2. What are the expectations while you are in class?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> High expectations (behavior and academic) <input type="checkbox"/> Consistency across the school <input type="checkbox"/> Communication of expectations <input type="checkbox"/> Rewards for good behavior 	
<p>3. What kinds of activities do you usually do in class? Describe a typical lesson in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reading/Writing/Math/Science/Social studies <input type="checkbox"/> Challenging <input type="checkbox"/> Engaging <input type="checkbox"/> Work collaboratively <input type="checkbox"/> Specific strategies used by teachers 	
<p>4. How do teachers know how you are doing in class? How do <u>you</u> know how you are doing at this school?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Report cards <input type="checkbox"/> Progress reports 	

Student Focus Group Guide

	<input type="checkbox"/> Assessments (standardized and teacher created) <input type="checkbox"/> Rubrics <input type="checkbox"/> Feedback from teachers or peers <input type="checkbox"/> Chances to correct or revise work	
Domain 3: Students' Opportunities to Learn		School-specific questions
5.	What types of support does the school offer kids who need extra help? <input type="checkbox"/> Identifying students in need/accessing extra help <input type="checkbox"/> Out of school academic services (tutoring) <input type="checkbox"/> In-school academic services <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for credit recovery during summer or weekend programs	
6.	Does the school offer any programs aimed at helping kids develop social skills? <input type="checkbox"/> Violence/anger management programs <input type="checkbox"/> Community circles <input type="checkbox"/> Mentoring programs <input type="checkbox"/> Boys'/girls' groups <input type="checkbox"/> Clubs and extracurricular activities <input type="checkbox"/> Sports <input type="checkbox"/> Student governance/student council	
7.	How does the school celebrate your accomplishments? <input type="checkbox"/> Awards ceremonies <input type="checkbox"/> Announcements <input type="checkbox"/> Rewards/trips <input type="checkbox"/> National (Junior) Honor Society	
8.	Is this school a safe place? <input type="checkbox"/> How does the school work to make sure that kids here are safe? <input type="checkbox"/> Security personnel or equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Training/workshops <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying	
9.	How does the school involve your families? <input type="checkbox"/> Workshops for parents	

Student Focus Group Guide

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities to volunteer<input type="checkbox"/> Attendance at ceremonies, community meetings<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Teacher Organizations	
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