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Personnel from the Institute for Human Development (IHD), at Northern Arizona University, provide training, education, and service for people with disabilities and conduct research focusing on improving educational and disability systems. For over ten years, this team has worked closely with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Special Education to infuse research into professional development and the Statewide System of Support. This translation of research into practice occurs through the reciprocal exchange of information, between community members, partner organizations, state agencies, and the IHD. IHD is part of a national network of University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD).
## Contents

### Overview

| Overview of Contents and Intended Use | 1 |
| Professional Development Approach | 2 |
| Getting Started | 4 |

### Essential Function 1: District leaders maintain a collaborative culture and climate at the district-level and with building leaders.

| Leadership | 7 |
| District Leadership Team Recommendations | 7 |
| Communication | 9 |

### Essential Function 2: District leaders demonstrate commitment to school improvement through participation in coaching, training, and data-driven action to improve instructional practice.

| Commitment | 12 |
| District-Determined Professional Development | 12 |
| System for Training, Embedding Practice, and Coaching | 16 |

### Essential Function 3: District leaders review district-level and building-level instruction and learning outcomes data and provide support based on data.

| Performance/Outcomes | 23 |

### Essential Function 4: District leaders align expectations and requirements across the district in order to improve efficiency, consistency, and effectiveness of instruction.

| Alignment | 25 |

### Tools

| Implementation Checklist | 28 |
| Implementation Practice Profile | 30 |
| References | 33 |
Become an Assessment Capable District

Organize a culture for improvement

- Maintain a collaborative culture
- Coordinate with statewide system of support

Identify priorities and set goals

- Where do we want to go?
- Train, team, & coach
- How do we get there?

Review performance regularly to make data-driven adjustments

Increased Student Success

Sustainable Model for Improvement

- Implement effective teaching & learning practices
- Build teacher efficacy with teaming & coaching
- Use data to reflect and adjust

Commit to the framework

What is the consistent districtwide message?

Which practices will be implemented?

How will progress be shared?

What is the impact on students?

Sustainable Model for Improvement

- Implement effective teaching & learning practices
- Build teacher efficacy with teaming & coaching
- Use data to reflect and adjust

Increased Student Success

## Common Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CST</td>
<td>Coaching Support Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>Collaborative Teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTE</td>
<td>Collective Teacher Efficacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWIS</td>
<td>Collaborative Work Implementation Scale/Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>DACL</td>
<td>Developing Assessment Capable Learners</td>
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<tr>
<td>DBDM</td>
<td>Data-Based Decision Making</td>
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<tr>
<td>DCI</td>
<td>District Continuous Improvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>DLT</td>
<td>District Leadership Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESSA</td>
<td>Every Student Succeeds Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETLP</td>
<td>Effective Teaching and Learning Practices</td>
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<td>HQPD</td>
<td>High Quality Professional Development</td>
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<td>MMD</td>
<td>Missouri Model Districts</td>
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<td>PD</td>
<td>Professional Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLM</td>
<td>Professional Learning Module</td>
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<td>RPDC</td>
<td>Regional Professional Development Center</td>
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<td>SAPP</td>
<td>Self-Assessment Practice Profile</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBIC</td>
<td>School-Based Implementation Coaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>VLP</td>
<td>Virtual Learning Platform</td>
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</table>
Companion Materials

The Blueprint for District and Building Leadership and the Administrator's Guide to Coaching are two companion products that provide valuable additional information for implementing the DCI Framework and Practices. Together with this Step-by-Step Guide, the three documents create a foundational set for District Continuous Improvement.

**Blueprint for District and Building Leadership**

The Blueprint is the road map for leading districts through the DCI Framework and Practices addressing all stages of the process, from initial implementation through sustaining and scaling-up. Annual revisions to this document incorporate changes based on lessons learned focusing on continued quality improvement.

**Administrator's Guide to Coaching**

The purpose of the Administrator's Guide to Coaching is to provide direction and recommendations for establishing an effective approach to professional learning through coaching. This guide focuses on key aspects of successful coaching and information school leaders need to create the conditions necessary for coaching implementation within a district/building.
Step-by-Step Guide

The purpose of the Step-by-Step Guide is to provide direction and recommendations for how to successfully reach district-developed implementation goals.

Intended Audience

District-level personnel are the intended audience for the Step-by-Step. It may also be helpful for building leaders and others involved in the Statewide System of Support, such as Coaching Support Teams (CSTs) and Regional Professional Development Center (RPDC) members. The Step-by-Step Guide supports districts in efforts to align current professional development (PD) models with this district-driven implementation work.

District leaders and CSTs should familiarize themselves with the entirety of this guide, as well as the Implementation Checklist, Implementation Practice Profile, and the Blueprint, in order to (a) gain a shared understanding of the integrated pieces; (b) conduct self-assessment of current practices and resulting outcomes; and (c) formulate an action plan. These resources are helpful for guiding ongoing conversations about district implementation.

Overview of Contents & Organization

This guide begins with a description of the District Continuous Improvement (DCI) Framework professional development approach so districts can consider how their current professional development model may align with components from this approach. All components of the professional development approach are designed to enhance and supplement the district’s current professional development model and should be aligned with required plans and current systems for professional growth.

Following the professional development approach are practical recommendations for how to successfully work toward implementation goals. The recommendations are aligned with two important district level documents: the Implementation Checklist: District-Level and the Implementation Practice Profile for Districts.

Go to our website to download the Implementation Checklist and Implementation Practice Profile.

moedu-sail.org/mmd-getting-started
The Implementation Checklist: District-Level defines four essential functions which are critical for successful implementation of the work. Action steps are outlined for each essential function, supporting district leaders in their efforts to address processes and infrastructure essential for implementation. The Implementation Practice Profile for Districts describes implementation criteria using a rubric structure with clearly defined practice-level characteristics. Through the use of the Checklist and the Practice Profile, district leaders are able to assess current levels of implementation and track growth relative to the four essential functions.

Professional Development Approach

This approach to professional development relies on coordination of the following elements.

1. DCI Practices: Evidence-based materials assembled as Professional Learning Modules
2. Training: In-person or online delivery of DCI Practices
3. Coaching: Application of DCI Practices with targeted coaching support

DCI Practices

The DCI Practices drive the collaboration between districts, DESE, and Regional Professional Development Centers. The research based Practices evolved and improved over ten years through both the Missouri Integrated Model (MIM) and the Collaborative Work (CW). The DCI Practices consist of

- three foundational educational practices essential for collaborative and data-informed instruction and decision making;
- selected effective teaching/learning practices, identified from a pool of evidence-based practices shown to improve student achievement; and
- three capacity building practices that create an environment that sustains and advances effective teaching and learning.
Training can be provided in-person or online.

**In-Person Training**

When a participating district decides on its DCI Practices, Coaching Support Teams and Regional Professional Development Centers coordinate with district and building administrators to schedule trainings. Typically, a CST consultant or team of consultants work with a building or district to deliver trainings throughout the year to faculty and staff. Training builds knowledge, provides skill rehearsal, and often provides opportunities for group dialogue and application. Training is delivered with the help of materials from the Professional Learning Modules.

**Online Training**

In addition to materials that are designed to be delivered in person, there is an online portal called the Virtual Learning Platform (VLP) that provides guided training to all PD participants. The materials in the VLP are organized to provide maximum flexibility of access for all individuals or teams of users, from totally self-directed to highly directed and structured. The VLP is available to teachers and school administrators through DESE’s Web Application Portal and includes space for user collaboration, Self-Assessment Practice Profiles, pre/post assessment, handouts, worksheets, bookmarking of courses in progress, and other materials required for training. The system can be accessed at any time and may be used as a reference for users once the course(s) are complete. CSTs can provide support to users when accessing the VLP.
Getting Started

Getting started with district-led implementation work is exciting. Below are a few helpful steps that have been identified to support districts as they begin the journey.

Preparation

To prepare for successful district-level implementation, there are a number of practical steps a district can take. An important first step will be to schedule a meeting with the Implementation Specialist, who will introduce the resources included in the Statewide System of Support and help establish a data-driven environment. Once that environment has been established, the district will begin collaborating with the assigned Coaching Support Team Facilitator, who will provide targeted support throughout the implementation process. The steps below suggest a process of getting started.

- Meet with the implementation specialist to ensure all teachers have access to
  - Web-based tools
  - DESE Web Apps (apps.dese.mo.gov)
  - Self-Assessment Practice Profile (apps.dese.mo.gov)
- Review DCI acronym list (www.moedu-sail.org/mmd-tools-resources or page v. of this guide)
• Review the bundle of implementation support materials
  o Access "getting started" resources, such as the Blueprint, the Step-by-Step Guide, the Implementation Checklist for Districts, the Implementation Practice Profile, and forms and invoices (www.moedu-sail.org/mmd-getting-started)
  o Find more resources for professional development (www.moedu-sail.org/mmd-professional-development)
• Review the list of questions asked in the Collaborative Work Implementation Survey (CWIS) (located in the Data Informed Process section of the Blueprint)
  o Consider developing common district-specific definitions for important terms in the CWIS (e.g. define the term “team” for your particular district)
• Review the Self-Assessment Practice Profile questionnaires for each DCI Practice (apps.dese.mo.gov)
  o Consider developing common district-specific definitions for important terms used in each questionnaire
• Gather documents that will support implementation planning
  o List of current district initiatives
  o Professional development schedule
  o Student achievement scores
• Begin developing a working knowledge of the DCI Practices and the DCI Framework
  o Become familiar with the DCI Practices
    ▪ Collaborative Teams, Data-Based Decision Making, Common Formative Assessment, Developing Assessment Capable Learners with Feedback, Metacognition, School-Based Implementation Coaching, Collective Teacher Efficacy, and Leadership
  o Review the Practice Profiles for each of the DCI Practices
Essential Function 1: District leaders maintain a collaborative culture and climate at the district-level and with building leaders.

Strategically establishing a collaborative culture and climate secures ownership and a shared vision across the district. This process will set a strong foundation and maintain readiness for change. Collectively, educators can build the infrastructure needed to achieve exceptional student outcomes.

Leadership

Research has demonstrated that achieving lasting results hinges on effective implementation teams (Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, & Wallace, 2013). For this reason, it is important to pay special attention to the development of district leadership. The District Leadership Team (DLT) is key to effective district-led implementation. This carefully selected team is charged with introducing the key components of the district-led implementation plan and sustaining the work throughout the district. The DLT initiates change, which is challenging work that occurs in small increments over an extended period of time. The DLT is comprised of district-level administrators, district-level coaches, curriculum and assessment leaders, professional development coordinators, teachers, building administrators, and other instructional leaders. Consider also inviting school support staff members and social workers. Including members who reflect a variety of expertise supports informed collaborative implementation decisions. Areas of expertise to consider include leadership, instruction, curriculum, assessment, technology, special education, early childhood, elementary, middle, and high school.

Before creating a new DLT, review teams that currently exist. Consider restructuring or repurposing an already existing team to meet the criteria outlined above.

District Leadership Team Recommendations

By following the recommendations below, the District Leadership Team will function effectively.

- Identify a district point of contact with knowledge of the district-led implementation plan and one who possesses
  - the willingness to engage consistently with CST Facilitator and implementation goals
  - a strong understanding of district's current instructional practices
Review the Professional Learning Modules that address leadership

Select a team with a range of expertise for more informed collaborative decision making

Ensure that the team is familiar with the DCI Framework and Practices

Hold regular meetings during which members collaborate and shape district participation and disseminate meeting minutes

Meet regularly with CST Facilitator to develop and monitor implementation plan
  o Decide on an agenda protocol, for example who develops the agenda, how is input acquired, how far in advance is the agenda distributed
  o Collect meeting agendas in a common file or web-based location
  o Disseminate meeting minutes

Develop a consistent district-wide message, communicated as a shared vision

Reflect on progress at regular intervals
  o Consider administering a brief mid and/or end-of-year district-wide assessment or reflection to gain informal information about the progress of implementation

Process for Selecting District Leadership Team

By following the process below, an effective District Leadership Team will be created.

Review current DLT membership to assure all key roles are presented or if a DLT is not yet established, determine who to include on the DLT

Develop a selection protocol prior to inviting people to serve on the team

Outline the responsibilities of those who will serve on the team

Select people with a range of expertise in the following areas: leadership, professional development, instruction, curriculum, assessment, technology, special education, early childhood, elementary, middle, and high school

Select a primary point of contact who serves as the primary liaison for the team; and

Identify a building-level point of contact for each building
Communication

Consistent communication with all buildings in the district provides the foundation for successful integration of the DCI Framework and Practices. Intentional communication also develops ownership of and culture around a consistent message. One way to ensure regular, consistent communication is through communication protocols. A common protocol might include recording minutes at the monthly DLT meetings, sharing the minutes at the monthly building administrators meeting, recording minutes at the monthly building administrator meeting, and asking building administrators to disseminate pertinent minutes to faculty and staff.

Communication Recommendations

The following recommendations will improve communication.

- Develop and disseminate a clear, consistent district-wide message regarding scope and expectations of implementation work
  - At least once a year, share information across the district about being a participating district, the nature of the work accomplished and underway, and the benefits for educators and students
  - Use consistent language
- Identify building-level contacts
  - Often this is the building principal, but consider identifying an additional non-administrator whose responsibilities include ensuring building-level communication which may free up building principal’s time
  - Ensure building-level contacts share information with building faculty and staff
- Develop protocols for communicating implementation-related information to foster a consistent message
  - Consider housing implementation-related documents in an easy-to-access file or web-based location
- Increase use of technology for effective communication/collaboration between DLT, CST, DESE, and RPDC
- Establish feedback loops to gather information about successes and areas for growth

Tips for Creating a Consistent District-Wide Message

1. Rollout district-wide goals at the beginning of the year with a video message
2. Host a Blueprint Q & A session with instructional staff
3. Highlight the benefits of being a participating district
4. Hold quarterly “coffee meetings,” where staff is asked to share progress and stakeholders can ask questions
5. Host a book study on one of the supporting resources, such as the Step-by-Step or the Administrator’s Guide to Coaching
Essential Function 2: District leaders demonstrate commitment to school improvement through participation in coaching, training, and data-driven action to improve instructional practice.

This work is a district-led effort. Educators throughout the district will feel more comfortable moving forward and engage at higher levels in work their district leaders truly believe in. Actively modeling engagement with the district-wide message and key components of implementation builds district support. District leaders can promote a commitment to implementation work by becoming familiar with each Professional Learning Module, as well as the corresponding Practice Profiles. The DCI Practices are Collaborative Teams, Data-Based Decision Making, Common Formative Assessment, Developing Assessment Capable Learners with Feedback, Metacognition, School-Based Implementation Coaching, Leadership, and Collective Teacher Efficacy. Taking the time upfront to develop a working knowledge of the Practices will pay dividends when it comes to discussing the content with confidence and credibility.

Are you an Assessment Capable District? Do you ask? Do you know?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where are we now?</th>
<th>Data (e.g., Self-Assessment Practice Profile and Collaborative Work Implementation Survey) results can help to determine level of implementation and educator proficiency using the effective teaching and learning practices.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where do we want to go?</td>
<td>In buildings and across the districts, educators should collaboratively determine goals that address gaps and build on strengths, as indicated through data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do we get there (next steps)?</td>
<td>Using a district-wide strategy for training and coaching throughout the year, focus on identified needs. Using the recommended materials and CST support is essential for improvement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Commitment

A benefit of being a participating district is receiving targeted support to advance your district-specific goals. One of the first steps of a participating district is to begin collaborating with the Implementation Specialist and the assigned CST Team (specifically the CST Facilitator) to outline district goals and identify the path needed for achieving those goals. The Implementation Specialist will support districts with access to the resources included in the system of support and help establish a data-driven environment. The CST Facilitator will coach the District Leadership Team through the process of developing implementation priorities. Selecting and prioritizing the key components from the content will drive the implementation process and build capacity within the district.

Creating strong building structures and routines will advance, support, and sustain implementation goals. These processes will strengthen the internal capacity and expertise of educators, ultimately leading to positive student outcomes. Without these structures and routines, it will be difficult for educators to maintain fidelity to the work and obtaining positive results may remain out of reach. These structures and routines should enhance current plans: it is best to reflect on those already in place and develop strategies to enrich and align.

District-Determined Professional Development Approach

As part of the commitment to district-level implementation, the District Leadership Team uses data to determine a professional development approach, which should incorporate both training and coaching on the DCI Practices. Data tools help provide direction when deciding on a professional development approach. These tools include the Collaborative Work Implementation Survey, Practice Profiles, the Self-Assessment Practice Profile, and Walkthrough Tools. Each is aligned with the DCI Practices (Professional Learning Modules). Additionally, other data elements should be used, such as student achievement, artifacts, process documents, and protocols. All components are designed to enhance and supplement the district’s current professional development approach and should be aligned with required plans and professional growth systems.
Tools

The Practice Profiles, CWIS, Self-Assessment Practice Profile reports, and Walkthrough Tools are essential to data-informed implementation and support districts with professional development planning. The CWIS reports provide a picture of perceived district status regarding implementation of key practices. The CWIS is designed to be administered building-wide and results can then be reviewed at a district-level. Practice Profiles are aligned with each Professional Learning Module. They outline expectations for the skills and knowledge that should be learned from the module. The SAPP is a web-based tool aligned with each Practice Profile. It is designed for use by teams (e.g., grade-level, content-specific) or individual self-assessment, can be aggregated into building-level reports, and then reviewed at a district-level. A Walkthrough Tool is an instrument designed to be used during classroom observation or coaching. It breaks down each essential element from a Practice Profile into classroom “look-fors.” All tools can inform professional development, but the SAPP and CWIS results play a crucial role in setting implementation goals.

Practice Profiles

A Practice Profile has been collaboratively developed for each Professional Learning Module. The Practice Profile outlines expectations for the skills and knowledge that should be learned from the module and how it should look when applied in context. It describes implementation criteria using a rubric structure with clearly defined practice-level characteristics. Through the use of the Practice Profile, educators are able to assess their own current levels of knowledge, skills, and abilities relative to the DCI Practices. They are then able to evaluate and track growth regarding their own instructional progress as they apply, practice and reflect on their new skills and knowledge throughout the year. The Practice Profiles are also helpful for guiding coaching conversations.

Collaborative Work Implementation Survey

CWIS administration is a required part of a district’s commitment. The results from the CWIS are crucial in planning for effective professional development. They help identify district-wide strengths and weaknesses pertaining to the DCI Practices. Using CWIS data, District Leadership Teams can work with CST Facilitators to identify district-wide goals. Be sure to administer the CWIS twice the first year - early on for baseline and again in the spring. Subsequently you will take it yearly in the spring; and share and collectively analyze CWIS results, create visual representations of district and/or building data. See page 15 for a complete list of CWIS items.
Self-Assessment Practice Profile

In planning for effective professional development, ask all instructional staff to login to the SAPP web-based tool and complete one or more of the self-assessments. Educators should self-assess using the SAPP tool at least twice per year. This tool contains a questionnaire aligned with each Professional Learning Module’s Practice Profile. Each questionnaire elicits current levels of knowledge, skills, and abilities for DCI Practices. District Leadership Teams, administrators, or building leaders can build SAPP reports of selected teams (grade level, content level) to examine the collective progress of implementation among grade-level or content-based teams, providing an overview of implementation across the district.

There are different approaches to assessing current levels of knowledge, however each requires administration of the SAPP to educators in all buildings in the district. Be sure to choose an approach described below that works for your district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two Approaches to SAPP Administration</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One approach is to administer all available SAPPs to educators before prioritizing practices from the content. The results would provide a collective view of current strengths and weaknesses and help District Leadership Teams decide the practices on which to focus. This creates baseline data for district status on all key components (<em>recommended approach but not required</em>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Districts may choose some combination of the approaches, depending on perceived need and consultation with CST Facilitator.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

When sharing reports, the district should teams should

- collectively analyze the SAPP reports as they are designed to help all levels in a district to determine where they are and where they need to go; and
- consider creating visual representations of district and/or building data.
### Collaborative Work Implementation Survey (CWIS) for DCI

#### Collaborative, Data-Driven Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaboration</th>
<th>Teams Use Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am a member of a grade level, grade span, or content team.</td>
<td>Using data, instructional staff collaborate to determine which effective practice(s) will maximize the positive learning outcomes for all students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My team reviews data at meetings.</td>
<td>Collaborative teams systematically analyze student data during team meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the team demonstrate positive, solution-oriented interactions.</td>
<td>Collaborative teams use a data analysis system that includes examining and reflecting on instruction to identify how student errors may be linked to teacher practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My team uses effective teaming practices such as providing agendas, establishing roles, seeking consensus and documenting minutes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Support & Guidance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Educator Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My building leader(s) effectively manages initiatives and expectations placing a focus on improving educational practices.</td>
<td>I participate in professional development where I learn to improve my instructional practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My building leader(s) supports the opportunity for teacher-to-teacher observation and feedback.</td>
<td>I receive coaching to facilitate my implementation of evidence-based instructional practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My building leader(s) shows they are committed to implementing a core set of effective instructional practices in building classrooms.</td>
<td>I participate in professional development where I learn how to monitor student progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My building leader(s) actively problem-solves with collaborative teams.</td>
<td>I receive feedback about my classroom instruction from other teachers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Focus on Student Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instruction Design</th>
<th>Student Learning &amp; Feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The instruction of teachers in my building intentionally addresses the Missouri Learning Standards for my grade/subject.</td>
<td>The students in my classroom, including students with disabilities, write/state learning targets using &quot;I can&quot; or &quot;I know&quot; statements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers in my building use common formative assessments aligned to the Missouri Learning Standards.</td>
<td>The students in my classroom, including students with disabilities, assess their progress by using evidence of student work (rubrics or portfolios).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use the results from common formative assessment to plan for re-teaching and/or future instruction.</td>
<td>The students in my classroom, including students with disabilities, identify what they should do next in their learning based on self-assessment of their progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The students in my classroom, including students with disabilities, receive feedback on their progress toward their learning targets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student-to-student feedback, focused on improving learning, occurs during instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The students in my classroom state the success criteria for achieving their learning target.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All the students in my classroom participate in common formative assessments, including students with disabilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Each student reviews his/her results of common formative assessments with a teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Identify Priorities

Using the SAPP and CWIS data, as well as other data elements, identify district-wide priorities. The District Leadership and Building Leadership teams should

- collectively analyze the SAPP and CWIS results, as well as other data elements (the district’s CST Facilitator can support this process); and
- select DCI Practice(s) (Collaborative Teams, Data-Based Decision Making, Common Formative Assessment, Developing Assessment Capable Learners with Feedback, Metacognition, School-Based Implementation Coaching, Collective Teacher Efficacy, and Leadership).

Establish Goals and Benchmarks

Once priorities are identified, set district- and building-wide goals, benchmark performance levels, and identify action steps. The District Leadership and Building Leadership teams should do the following.

- Establish shared goals and benchmark performance levels aligned with other district plans
  - Decide on common data
  - Decide on common measures that will be used to determine progress
  - Makes sure goals have a clear outcome, but have latitude for differentiation across the district as needed
- Communicate shared goals using the established communication protocol
- Incorporate results of SAPP and CWIS into the approach for measuring implementation and outcome progress
- Align everything with the district’s current professional development approach and professional growth system

System for Training, Embedding Practice, and Coaching

Once goals are determined, plans for training, embedding practice, and coaching are established or adjusted, leading to a cohesive system of support. This system is also known as the “infrastructure” which advances and sustains the deep learning required to achieve exceptional student outcomes.
Training

Training is driven by the district’s choice of DCI Practice(s) and goals. For example, if the district selects Common Formative Assessment and Developing Assessment Capable Learners, training and coaching are conducted on those Practices. Training is delivered by a member of the district’s Coaching Support Team or conducted via the Virtual Learning Platform using professional development materials collaboratively developed by Missouri educators. The district should do the following.

- Identify the person responsible for coordinating the training in each district and/or building
- Contact CST Facilitator to discuss DCI Practices, goals, and training needs
- Coordinate training schedule with Coaching Support Team or plan for individual, team, or building training conducted internally, using the Virtual Learning Platform
- Develop a coaching schedule to support instructional staff in their efforts to implement content from the training in the classroom

Embedding Practice

Collaborative teaming is a structure recommended as a way to embed Practices. Collaborative Teams are teacher-led and should support effective instruction and student learning. Team configurations vary by district and building. Many buildings already have teams in place, such as grade-level, grade-span, or content teams. For this work, it is important to consider how teams can effectively advance the learning and coaching of Practices that are introduced through training.

Collaborative Team Recommendations

The district should accomplish the following.

- Protect Collaborative Team work as critical time for advancing instructional practice
- Ensure that all staff understand how to use the Practice Profile to improve their instructional practice and frequently refer to the Practice Profiles when discussing ways of adjusting instruction to improve student learning

Consider scheduling and protecting time for teams, as well as individuals, to complete these tasks

- Develop shared goals/vision
- Review content from the Professional Learning Module training
- Study the Practice Profile
- Take the SAPP
- Reflect on the elements of the Professional Learning Module training
- Work through one section of the Professional Learning Module in greater detail
- Prioritize individual instructional goals, based on information from the Practice Profile
- Develop a team plan for reporting progress on goals
- Identify a common measure for reporting progress on goals
- Design a mechanism for demonstrating how the content from the Professional Learning Module has guided instructional decisions
- Apply elements of the Professional Learning Module into classroom instruction
• Establish consistent Collaborative Team practices
  o providing agendas
  o establishing roles
  o seeking consensus
  o documenting and disseminating minutes

• Schedule time for building teams to analyze data
  o Make data analysis a priority with accountability and feedback aspects included
    ▪ Plan for time to review and report on data at each meeting
  o Schedule sessions at regular intervals throughout the year to allow for sufficient time to analyze data
  o Decide on the type of data to analyze
    ▪ SAPP results
    ▪ Student work and student self-assessment of work
    ▪ Common formative assessments
    ▪ Artifacts
  o Use data to track student growth
    ▪ Create visual representations of individual student, classroom, and building data
  o Use data to guide instructional priorities and decisions

• Develop plan for monitoring and reporting team and individual progress
  o Include a detailed outline

• Develop plan for evaluating team and individual progress
  o Develop tools for measuring and reporting fidelity to Professional Learning Module content and priorities

Coaching
With effective coaching, over time teachers can effectively improve their instruction. In fact, research shows coaching to be essential for change in practice. Through coaching, educators (teachers, administrators, and other education staff) receive job-embedded guidance, observation, and feedback pertaining to effective educational practices. Coaching is an integration of reflective practice, descriptive feedback, brainstorming, and outcomes analysis.

Three Approaches to Coaching
• CST to whole building as follow-up to initial training to provide specific contextual examples and guided practice
• CST to team: Coaching is provided to grade-level, content-specific, or other teams
• Team-to-team or peer-to-peer: Within district/buildings, educators support each other by observing, providing feedback, and modeling for improved instructional practice (School-Based Implementation Coaching)
The initial training of a DCI Practice may be provided in a face-to-face setting or by using the Virtual Learning Platform. In either case, the training should be followed by coaching to ensure deep implementation of the effective educational practice. When designing the professional development schedule, consider the balance of time committed to training and to coaching, remembering how essential coaching is to improving practice.

There are a variety of ways to approach coaching in a district depending on the readiness levels of the district and individual buildings. The Coaching Support Team can help to determine the best coaching approach (who, when, where, how) and provide coaching on the components. Additionally, based on capacity, needs, and interest, the district educators can use the School-Based Implementation Coaching Professional Learning Module to expand and enhance opportunities for educator-peer coaching across the district.

**Getting Started with Coaching**

Embedding coaching into the scope of professional development can be a dramatic shift in the way professional development has traditionally occurred in districts. Therefore, it is recommended that the District Leadership Team incorporate coaching (both the coaching provided by the CST and also the School-Based Implementation Coaching Professional Learning Module) into the professional development schedule. Remember, the focus is that knowledge and skills learned through training (in-person from the CST and/or through the use of the Virtual Learning Platform) be applied with fidelity in classrooms resulting in student learning.

DLT and CST discuss the following five questions and identify next steps.

1. Where are we now, regarding coaching?
   - Is coaching occurring across the district?
   - What does it look like?
   - Are there gaps?
   - Is it working?

2. Where are we going?
   - What is our vision for improving instruction and based on that vision, who would benefit from coaching?
   - Which content areas, grade levels, and/or teams show the most need, readiness, and/or commitment to receiving coaching?
   - Who are the best matches for providing coaching?
   - What approach to coaching is most sustainable?
3. How do we get there?
   - What are the action steps?
   - Who will be involved in coaching and in what settings will coaching occur?
   - Which coaching approach matches the coaching need?
   - Who needs to build the skills to become a coach and how will they acquire the skills?
   - How will we assure coaching is occurring with fidelity?
   - Action steps should align to data-identified needs and the vision for improved instruction

4. How will we know if coaching works?
   - Collaboratively, the DLT and CST implement the action steps and monitor impact on improved instruction
   - When will SAPP, CWIS, and other observation data (e.g., walkthroughs) occur and results be reviewed to determine the effectiveness of coaching or need to adjust the way coaching occurs?

5. What resources and support are available?
   - Supports include *Coaching Companions, Walkthrough Tools, Practice Profiles*, and other coaching resources
   - Support is available through the CST
   - Which resources match our needs and will help us to build an effective approach to and system of coaching district-wide?
School-Based Implementation Coaching

As mentioned above, team-to-team and peer-to-peer are models of coaching important to sustaining coaching support across the district. The School-Based Implementation Coaching Professional Learning Module is designed to help educators learn essential coaching skills to be effective coaches in their buildings or across the district. In the context of this work, it is recommended that educators be familiar with and proficient in the foundations of the DCI Practices (Collaborative Teams, Data-Based Decision Making, and Common Formative Assessment) and at least one teaching/learning practice before coaching a team or peer. However, educators can participate in the training and learn School-Based Implementation Coaching at any time. Putting the DCI Practice into place requires deliberate reflection, planning, and follow-through. When deciding to start School-Based Implementation Coaching, revisit the five questions posed above. Responses to these questions will help formulate the action steps for integrating school-based implementation coaching into the building-wide and district-wide culture of coaching.

Tips for Using the Virtual Learning Platform (VLP)

- Self-assess using the SAPP tool on the VLP at least twice per year
- Incorporate use of the VLP into teachers’ individual growth plans
- Provide flexible times and places for VLP-based professional development
- Ask new teachers to review district’s focus practices on VLP
- Encourage Collaborative Teams to use VLP for deeper implementation of specific elements from the Practice Profile
Essential Function 3: District leaders review district-level and building-level instruction and learning outcomes data and provide support based on data.

Participating districts have the unique opportunity to collect and analyze data in ways that truly inform instruction and learning. The Collaborative Work Implementation Survey and the Self-Assessment Practice Profile are aligned with the Professional Learning Modules. These tools provide feedback about perceived district, building, and individual implementation levels related to effective educational practices. This data drives professional development as well as the intentional structures and processes created at district- and building-levels. Used in combination with support from Coaching Support Teams, districts can reach higher implementation levels resulting in improved educational outcomes.

Performance/Outcomes

Performance and outcomes related to the implementation should be frequently monitored, analyzed, and shared because this data produces valuable feedback about the effectiveness of implementation. Problems and solutions can be identified and barriers to effective implementation reduced. This process allows for professional development and implementation action plans to be revisited, revised, and adjusted based on data. Throughout the implementation process, districts should make data-driven adjustments to meet the changing dynamics of student and staff needs.

Support the Use of Data

In order to support the use of data, the district should do the following.

- Administer CWIS twice the first year (baseline) and once in the Spring the following years
- Administer SAPP at least twice per year; however, three times each year is ideal
- Analyze and share SAPP and CWIS data
- Use data to create and adjust district- and building-level structures, processes, and action plans

Ideas for Reporting on Progress

- Hold a mid-year and end-of-year sharing event, providing a room for teachers to display an artifact of their progress on focus components and a mechanism for peers to comment
- Distribute a newsletter, sharing individual and team progress and stories
- Share progress on specific district-wide goals items at regularly held staff meetings
• Ensure across the district that buildings establish goals and benchmarks based on data

• Devote the necessary time and resources to monitor progress toward goals

Organize Data and Review Shifts in Practice and Outcomes

To best organize and review data, the district should accomplish the following.

• Develop protocol for monitoring fidelity and progress toward full implementation
  • Identify a schedule for reviewing implementation data such that the information is used for improving professional development
  • Identify a schedule for reviewing overall progress on action plans (mentioned throughout this guide) such that challenges can be identified swiftly and actions steps can be adjusted accordingly
  • In addition to the SAPP and CWIS, review the walkthrough templates and collaboratively develop protocols for observing implementation in classrooms and providing educators with feedback

• Designate a file location or web-based location for all implementation documents and artifacts for easy universal access for district staff and CST Members
  • Prioritize consistent sharing of performance at district, building, and individual levels
  • Include performance-sharing mechanisms across all levels of implementation
  • Consider distributing district-developed form reflecting building-level progress and sharing the results at least twice per year district-wide
  • Encourage building leaders to share progress at regular building-level meetings
  • Allow time for educators to share and celebrate their progress on improving systems and practices in their buildings and across the district

• Report on progress toward goals during site visits from DESE and Coaching Support Team

• Integrate implementation data elements across required district reports and/or school improvement plan reporting
Essential Function 4: District leaders align expectations and requirements across the district in order to improve efficiency, consistency, and effectiveness of instruction.

Districts must simultaneously coordinate the implementation and evaluation of multiple practices, systems, and policies. Being purposeful about aligning, monitoring alignment, and sustaining alignment will improve efficiency and effectiveness of all school initiatives and programs. This type of intentional alignment has the potential to save time and money, but requires preparation.

Alignment
For effective alignment, the district should accomplish the following.

- Develop an inventory of related systems, initiatives, and practices currently implemented across the district
- Assess current initiatives to determine consistencies and incongruence with this work
  - The District Leadership Team may want to spend a meeting outlining initiatives and determining how they already align
  - Establish common terminology
- Define the valued outcomes to be achieved
- Eliminate unnecessary duplication
- Address alignment of these implementation goals with the district’s CSIP
- Develop a process for DLT for monitoring the effectiveness of alignment and consideration of new practices, as needs arise
# Implementation Checklist: District-Level

## Focus: Essential Function: District leaders maintain a collaborative culture and climate at the district-level and with building leaders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Action Steps</th>
<th>Current Status (Check 1 level per item)</th>
<th>Planned Focus Areas (Check to identify items for coaching/support, as needed, in each year)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In place</td>
<td>In progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Form district leadership team (DLT). (see Blueprint for recommended composition)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Designate district-level contact person.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Designate building-level contact person (for each building in district) who will disseminate information to faculty and staff in the building.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Steps</th>
<th>Current Status (Check 1 level per item)</th>
<th>Planned Focus Areas (Check to identify items for coaching/support, as needed, in each year)</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In place</td>
<td>In progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop protocol for maintaining ongoing communication with Coaching Support Team Facilitator and CST Members, prioritizing the use of virtual technology to increase communication.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a district-wide plan for consistent and timely sharing of information with building leaders.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Essential Function: District leaders demonstrate commitment to school improvement through participation in coaching, training, and data-driven action to improve instructional practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. DLT identify a process for monitoring progress of the implementation progress, including annual goals and outcomes, as well as expectations for educator participation in the virtual learning platform in each of the practice areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Administer Self-Assessment Practice Profile at least twice each year for practices aligning to PD plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Administer implementation survey (e.g. Collaborative Work Implementation Survey) at least annually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Use technology to increase the quality and timeliness of coaching for improved instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Participate in regional, cadre, and state events to gather insights and wisdom from other districts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Essential Function: District leaders review district-level and building-level instruction and learning outcomes data and provide support based on data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance/Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Support the use of data (e.g. SAPP, CWIS) to inform professional development and building-level support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Develop and implement protocol for conducting walkthroughs, observing implementation, and monitoring fidelity and progress toward full implementation of identified practices across the district.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Annually, summarize district-wide fidelity and progress toward full implementation of identified practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Establish district- and building-level goal(s) and benchmark(s) performance levels on the SAPP and CWIS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Revisit and revise PD plans based on data.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Essential Function: District leaders align expectations and requirements across the district in order to improve efficiency, consistency, and effectiveness of instruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Develop timelines and expectations aligning implementation goals and other district initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Align implementation goals with CSIP: Comprehensive School Improvement Plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Implementation Practice Profile: District-Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Function</th>
<th>Exemplary Implementation</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Close to Proficient</th>
<th>Far from Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. District leaders maintain a collaborative culture and climate at the district-level and with building leaders.</td>
<td>District Leadership Team (DLT) and district contacts address all criteria indicated as proficient. Participation of DLT in monthly meetings is consistent. The meetings are well-documented examples of proficient implementation. Communication protocols are consistently followed and shared district wide. As new DLT members are brought on board, they receive professional development about district-level implementation and district-level roles. DLT collaborates with building leaders to define building-level expectations, develop action plans, collect data, and monitor progress toward improving instruction leading to student learning.</td>
<td>• District-level contact person is identified and acts as the primary contact for reciprocal communication with the Coaching Support Team (CST) Facilitator. • DLT is in place, comprised of members with expertise in the following areas: Instruction, curriculum, assessment, technology, special education, pre-K, elementary, middle, and high school. • DLT meets monthly to collaborate and shape participation. • DLT has developed an ongoing partnership with CST. • Technology (i.e. virtual meetings, document sharing) is used for timely and consistent sharing of information and support from the CST. Communication protocols result in consistent understanding of participation in all buildings. • Building-level contacts identified. • A consistent district-wide plan for communicating with building-level contacts is established. • Building-level contacts use a protocol to regularly disseminate information to all staff.</td>
<td>• District-level contact person is identified, but communication and partnership with CST is inconsistent. • DLT is in place, but not all areas of expertise are represented. • DLT meets quarterly or less. • Use of technology is sporadic, if at all. • Communication protocols are not established. • Building-level contacts identified for some buildings, but not all. • Information about implementation is inconsistently shared with building-level educators. • Action plans are developed, but have gaps in key components.</td>
<td>• District-level contact person is identified, but communication and partnership with CST does not occur. • DLT is not in place. • Technology is not used for sharing information, meeting, or collaboration. • Building-level contacts are not identified. • Information is not shared with building-level educators. • Action plans are not developed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Implementation Practice Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District leaders demonstrate commitment to school improvement through participation in coaching, training, and data-driven action to improve instructional practice.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An action plan with implementation timeline, aligned with existing Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) and district professional development plan, is developed and used. This action plan:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Is informed by implementation and outcome data (e.g., SAPP, CWIS).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Provides for training and coaching on effective teaching and learning practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Creates structures and processes for collaborative problem-solving using data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Creates structures and processes for school-based coaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Incorporates virtual coaching and technology to enhance quality and timeliness of coaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Includes annual benchmarks and outcomes aligning areas of foci across district priorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Builds in opportunities for progress monitoring and revisiting action plan annually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This plan contains:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Prioritized goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Annual measurable goals and outcomes matched to data sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Identified data elements (e.g., CWIS, SAPP), which are reviewed at least annually for data-driven discussions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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An action plan with implementation timeline is developed; however, there are gaps in recommended items, data, and review processes as listed in the proficient column. Of the 10 recommendations listed, at least 6 are addressed fully.

An action plan does not exist OR fewer than 6 items are addressed fully.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Function</th>
<th>Exemplary Implementation</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Close to Proficient</th>
<th>Far from Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3 District leaders review district-level and building-level instruction and learning outcomes data and provide support based on data. | A system for supporting and monitoring fidelity and implementation of progress is established, used, and revisited annually. This system includes a data review cycle consisting of items listed as proficient. Based on implementation of the data review cycle, district leaders receive professional development (or refresher professional development) to maintain proficient implementation of the data elements and the review cycle. | A system for supporting and monitoring fidelity and implementation of progress is established, used, and revisited annually. This system includes a data review cycle which promotes the following actions:  
- Determine district-wide and building-level status and needs for professional development using CWIS, SAPP, and other data.  
- Determine focus areas of need and set benchmarks for improvement.  
- Provide for training and coaching (including use of the virtual learning platform) to address needs for improved instruction and build on strengths.  
- Provide opportunity for educator reflection on the acquisition and application of new instructional knowledge and skills.  
- Monitor implementation through observations and walkthroughs.  
- Provide educators with descriptive feedback and support for improvement.  
- Review school-wide data and identify ways of continuing to improve instruction and outcomes.  
- Share data and collaborate with building leaders.  
- Use data at all levels to guide professional development. | The district engages in a data review cycle; however, there are missing steps or minimal levels of implementation. Of the 9 recommended steps listed, at least five are addressed fully. | The district does not conduct a data review cycle OR fewer than 5 items are addressed fully. |
| 4 District leaders align expectations and requirements across the district in order to improve efficiency, consistency, and effectiveness of instruction. | The DLT uses an established protocol for review of all district work, initiatives, and programs to assure current and ongoing alignment with the district CSIP. The protocol consists of all items indicated as proficient. Review of the protocol, informed by data, occurs at least twice annually. Detailed notes of the review are taken and used to inform modifications to the CSIP. | The DLT uses an established a protocol for review of all district work, initiatives, and programs to assure current and ongoing alignment with the district CSIP. The protocol consists of:  
- A schedule of taking inventory of all district initiatives in a manner that identifies redundancies and inconsistencies.  
- A process for assuring alignment as new initiatives or programs are added to district/building expectations. Persons designated with responsibility for following the protocol and communicating to district/building leaders how alignment can/should occur. | The DLT has established a protocol addressing all recommended items; however not all recommendations are implemented. | The DLT has an established protocol; but it does not contain all recommended items OR a protocol has not been established. |
References


