▷ ▷ ▷ ▷ ▷ ▷ **Site Visit Protocol** ◁ ◁ ◁ ◁ ◁ ◁

February 2024

The overarching goal of District Continuous Improvement Multi-Tiered System of Support (DCI-MTSS) is
"to improve literacy outcomes for all students, especially students with disabilities, by providing high-quality professional development focused on district- and building-level implementation of evidence-based academic and behavioral practices and systems, with an emphasis on evidence-based literacy practices, within a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS)."

Contents

Overview

The DCI-MTSS Site Visit Protocol was developed to assist districts in planning for an onsite visit from an outside team. Site visits are a helpful tool for gathering information and insights for the purpose of reviewing and improving the implementation and effectiveness of DCI-MTSS within a district. This protocol is designed to support districts in the following ways.

- Self-evaluating and monitoring fidelity of local DCI-MTSS implementation
- Developing and monitoring DCI-MTSS implementation action plans
- Planning and prioritizing DCI-MTSS professional learning
- Guiding continuous improvement efforts

Districts may use this protocol to focus on selected essential functions from the DCI-MTSS Practice Profile (i.e., culture and climate; assessment; tiered instruction; data-based decision making; effective teaching and learning practices; and/or integration and sustainability). Worksheets for the visiting team to use as they observe buildings; review documentation; meet with teams to engage in thoughtful discussion; and identify strengths and recommendations to current implementation are located in Appendices B and C. The protocol worksheets align with the essential functions and the supporting infrastructure that has been shown to support successful DCI-MTSS implementation.

Planning and Conducting an Educational Site Visit

Conducting an educational site visit involves a series of steps to ensure the visit is organized, effective, and serves its intended purpose. DCI-MTSS districts have the opportunity to customize their site visit through the coordination and organization of the details of the site visit. While the visit should be designed by the DLT, DCI-MTSS facilitators and Coaching Support Team (CST) members may assist the district in setting up and coordinating logistics. It is important to tailor the site visit process to the specific context, goals, and objectives of the district hosting the site visit. Communication and collaboration between the Site Visit Team and the host institution are key to a successful day.

The District's Role in the Site Visit

Before the Visit - District Tasks

Determine the Purpose of the Visit

Prior to scheduling and preparing for a site visit, the DLT should clearly define their purpose and objectives for conducting a site visit. Districts who have completed the DCI-MTSS Implementation Inventory can use this tool to identify essential functions to prioritize. By identifying their purpose(s), the DLT can then customize which buildings the Site Visit Team will visit, the best schedule for the visit, any documents they would like the Site Visit Team to review, and topics for discussion. **All districts are required to include Essential Function 1 from the DCI-MTSS Practice Profile and at least one additional essential function**. Districts may include more than two essential functions; however, it is recommended that no more than three essential functions be the focus of a single site visit.

Questions for the DLT to consider
- What would we like to achieve or receive feedback on through a site visit?
- Which DCI-MTSS essential functions should the Site Visit Team focus on and provide feedback/recommendations?
- Are there particular areas the DLT would like the Site Visit Team to consider?
- Are there specific questions the DLT would like the Site Visit Team to consider?

Plan and Prepare

The DLT selects out-of-district team members to participate on the Site Visit Team. It is recommended that a **team of four to six individuals** with expertise and knowledge of DCI-MTSS be recruited. Site Visit Team members may include administrators, educators, DESE staff, and other relevant individuals. Selected site visit members should have knowledge of DCI-MTSS implementation.

- **It is required that districts select one or more Site Visit Team members from another DCI-MTSS District**.
- It is optional for districts to select one DCI-MTSS facilitator and/or CST member who does not provide support to this specific district.
- Select a Site Visit Coordinator to communicate and coordinate with the Site Visit Team prior to and during the on-site visit. The Site Visit Coordinator will be responsible for communicating the purpose of the site visit to the Site Visit team, providing them with materials needed for the site visit, and handling logistics. The Site Visit Coordinator will also communicate logistics with building and leaderships teams to ensure the site visit goes smoothly for all involved. The Site Visit Coordinator will chair meetings/sessions by providing structure to discussions, managing time, and promoting a constructive atmosphere during the visit. The district may choose to have one of their DCI-MTSS facilitators or CST members act as the Site Visit Coordinator.

The next step is to design a site visit schedule or agenda, including a detailed itinerary of all activities and meetings that will occur on the day of the site visit. Activities may include building visits, meetings with building leadership teams, and document/data reviews that portray evidence of the DCI-MTSS essential functions. Be sure to allow time for the Site Visit Team to discuss their observations and summarize their recommendations, along with a final meeting with district leadership team members. Depending on the logistics of scheduling, the final DLT meeting may include a small core group of DLT members or the entire DLT.

Make sure you collect and organize the relevant data/documents and background information the Site Visit Team will need to understand how the essential functions are being implemented in your district. Districts may want to organize electronic copies of some or all documents and share links for Site Visit Team members to review prior to the visit.

Coordinate the Site Visit (accomplished by Site Visit Coordinator)
- Invite the proposed Site Visit Team, include the purpose, the expected date, and duration of the visit. There are example e-mail invitation letters in Appendix A for the district to modify and share with potential Site Visit Team members.
- Notify building teams about the purpose, date, and duration of the Site Visit Team's scheduled arrival.
- Coordinate logistics including travel expectations (will the district cover any trave/mileage for Site Visit Teams members?); transportation (will mileage be provided?); lunch (will the district provide lunch?); building and meeting locations; and access to necessary facilities.

During the Site Visit - District Roles
Site Visit Coordinator Manages On-Site Activities
- During the site visit, assist the Site Visit Team in following the established schedule and agenda. This may include transportation, observations, selected DLT/BLT members participation in meetings, access to documentation, provision of space, etc.
- Ensure all Site Visit Team members have copies of needed essential function worksheets (Appendices B and C) to document their observations and the information/feedback they receive from stakeholders.
- Plan for time at the end of the day for Site Visit Team members to meet briefly to summarize district strengths and recommendations using the worksheet in Appendix D.
- Plan time after the Site Visit Team meeting for the Site Visit Team to meet with the DLT.

District Leaders Participate in an Exit Meeting

- Hold a meeting between the DLT and Site Visit Team members at the end of the site visit to share observations and recommendations. Depending on the logistics of scheduling, the final DLT meeting may include a small core group of DLT members or the entire DLT.
- Engage in discussion to seek clarification, answer questions, and gather additional input.

After the Site Visit - District Final Steps

Summarize, Share Findings, and Adjust Action Plan as Needed

After the site visit, the District Leadership Team meets to discuss observations and recommendations from the Site Visit Team.

- Review/summarize the Site Visit Teams observations and recommendations.
- Work collaboratively to identify any next steps, adjusting the district's action plan as necessary.
- Share the summary of the site visit with relevant stakeholders.

Identify Follow-Up and Support Needs

- Work with your Facilitator and CST for ongoing support and technical assistance to address any identified areas from your (revised) action plan.
- Monitor progress and conduct any follow-up visits as appropriate.
- Thank Site Visit Team members for their participation and propose any follow-up conversations that might be useful. Use this as an opportunity for developing an on-going support network.

The Site Visit Team's Role in the Site Visit

Before the Visit - Site Visit Team Tasks

Prepare

Site Visit Team members will receive information from the district regarding the district's purpose for the site visit, the specific essential functions on which the district would like team members to focus, and any other priorities the district has for the site visit. Site Visit Team members should familiarize themselves with the following details and documents.

- The site visit schedule
- Any documents the district chooses to send prior to the visit
- The DCI-MTSS Practice Profile Essential Functions Worksheets (Appendix B)
- The DCI-MTSS Suggested Evidence Worksheets (Appendix C)
- The Site Visit Team Summary Worksheet (Appendix D)

During the Visit - Site Visit Team Roles

Maintain Professionalism

To ensure a positive and productive experience for both the Site Visit Team and the hosting school, it is essential to uphold a high standard of professionalism and courtesy. The following etiquette recommendations can contribute to a successful and respectful visit.

- **Punctuality**
  - Arrive on time for all scheduled activities
  - Be mindful of the time allocated for each segment of the visit
- **Introduction and Engagement**
  - Introduce yourself and your role on the Site Visit Team to school staff
  - Actively engage with school personnel, showing interest and asking thoughtful questions
  - Be courteous and professional in all interactions with school staff, students, and fellow team members
  - Address any conflicts or concerns through proper channels
- **Respectful Observation**
  - Observe classrooms and school activities discreetly and without disruption
  - Seek permission before entering classrooms or private areas
- **Documenting Observations**
  - Take notes in a discreet and respectful manner
  - Avoid using electronic devices in a way that may distract from the purpose of the visit

- **Feedback**
  - o Provide constructive and professional feedback when appropriate
  - o Focus on strengths observed and offer recommendations in a positive manner
- **Confidentiality**
  - o Respect the confidentiality of sensitive information you may come across during the visit
  - o Do not discuss or share details about individual students
- **Follow Protocols**
  - o Adhere to any specific protocols or guidelines set by the hosting school
  - o Seek clarification if there are uncertainties about procedures

Participate in On-Site Activities

During the site visit, the Site Visit Team will follow the established schedule and agenda. This may include the following.
- Interviews and discussions with key stakeholders, such as school/district leadership, teachers, parents, and students
- Classroom and facility observations to observe teaching methods, student engagement, and the learning environment
- Review of documents, processes, and/or data related to curriculum, assessment, student performance, and other relevant areas
- Data collection and analysis to determine the district's progress and outcomes

The following support documents, for use as needed, are available in the appendices of this protocol.
- Use the "Suggested Evidence Reference Sheets for Site Visit Teams by Essential Function" documents in Appendix C for ideas for evidence that may indicate implementation of each essential function's criteria.
- Use the appropriate essential function worksheets (Appendix B), based on the district's choice of focus, to document observations and the information/feedback received from stakeholders related to those essential functions.

Meet to Discuss Strengths and Recommendations to Share with DLT

Towards the end of the day, the Site Visit Team will meet to discuss observations and summarize their findings focusing on strengths and a few key recommendations for the DLT. If the Site Visit Team Coordinator is not able to attend, the group should select a member to facilitate discussions.
- Identify and record strengths the team observed in relation to the district's selected essential functions and priorities.

- Identify and document key recommendations for the district to consider. The goal is not to include a long list of recommendations, but rather for the group to come to consensus on a few (3 to 5) key recommendations they view as having the potential for the greatest impact.
- Document the strengths and key recommendations of the group on the Site Visit Team Summary worksheet (Appendix D) to share with the DLT.
- Consider any potential follow-up the Site Visit Team might offer the district if desired. This is an opportunity to develop a longer-term support network for both the district and the Site Visit Team participants, as at least a few of them are active participants in DCI-MTSS.
- Determine who will serve as spokesperson to share strengths and recommendations with the DLT.

Meet with the DLT or Core DLT Team

At the conclusion of the day, the Site Visit Team will meet with the DLT to discuss and exchange insights gathered during their visit. This meeting serves as an opportunity for the Site Visit Team to articulate the strengths they have observed and their key recommendation. The purpose of this meeting is not only to provide feedback to the DLT but also to facilitate a collaborative dialogue aimed at advancing the goals and objectives of the district. By sharing both strengths and recommendations, the Site Visit Team contributes to the continuous improvement process, fostering a culture of learning and development. The Site Visit Team can also offer any follow-up support as requested.

After the Visit - Site Visit Team Follow-up
Ongoing Support and Networking

Members of the Site Visit Team might take this opportunity to provide follow-up support with the district. Occasional check-in e-mails, following-up on how recommendations are being implemented, asking if the district has any further questions, and just general DCI-MTSS networking makes the site visit an effective and unique experience for all participants.

Appendix A. Site Visit Team Member E-Mail Invitation Templates
A1. E-mail Template Inviting Participation (with date of Site Visit not yet determined)

Subject: Invitation to Participate in our DCI-MTSS Site Visit

Dear [Potential Site Visit Team Member's Name],

On behalf of [School Name], I would like to request your participation in our DCI-MTSS Site Visit.

The Site Visit in a 1-day opportunity for our district to receive thoughtful input from a small, experienced group of educators. As a critical component of our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement, the insights and observations from the Site Visit Team participants will provide us with valuable feedback that will help guide our efforts to enhance student learning and achievement.

Our Site Visit Coordinator will work with all the Site Visit Team members to determine a date that works for everyone.

I look forward to hearing from you and hope you will be able to participate. If you are interested, we will be back in touch promptly with more details about the visit, including some preparatory resources to share with you.

Please feel free to reach out with further questions.

Warm regards,

[Your Name] [Your Title] [School Name] [Contact Information

A2. E-mail Template Inviting Participation (with date of Site Visit already determined)

Subject: Invitation to Participate in our DCI-MTSS Site Visit

Dear [Potential Site Visit Team Member's Name],

On behalf of [School Name], I would like to request your participation in our DCI-MTSS Site Visit.

The Site Visit in a 1-day opportunity for our district to receive thoughtful input from a small, experienced group of educators. As a critical component of our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement, the insights and observations from the Site Visit Team participants will provide us with valuable feedback that will help guide our efforts to enhance student learning and achievement.

The date of our proposed Site Visit is [insert date] and our Site Visit Coordinator will be in touch promptly with more information if you accept this invitation.

Please feel free to reach out with further questions.

I look forward to hearing from you and hope you will be able to participate.

Warm regards,

[Your Name] [Your Title] [School Name] [Contact Information

A3. E-mail Template Thanking for Agreeing to Participate and More Details

Note: If original invitation was the e-mail in A1 or A2, this e-mail can be edited and made briefer as some of the content is similar. If the original invitation occurred by a phone call, then this template includes more verbiage.

Subject: Thank you for your willingness to participate in our DCI-MTSS Site Visit

Dear [Site Visit Team Member's Name],

On behalf of [School Name], I would like to extend our sincerest appreciation for your willingness to serve as a member of our Site Visit Team. Your expertise and dedication to educational excellence are invaluable assets to our school community, and we are truly grateful for your participation in this important process.

As you may know, our upcoming site visit is a critical component of our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement. Your insights and observations will provide us with valuable feedback that will help guide our efforts to enhance student learning and achievement.

Enclosed you will find detailed information regarding the dates, times, and schedule for the site visit, as well as any relevant documentation or materials to assist you in your understanding of our DCI-MTSS system. Please review these materials prior to your visit to ensure that you are fully prepared to engage in meaningful discussions and observations.

If you have any questions or require further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our Site Visit Coordinator, [Contact Person's Name] at [Contact Person's Email Address] or [Contact Person's Phone Number]. We are here to support you in any way we can and want to ensure that your experience as a Site Visit Team member is both rewarding and productive.

Once again, thank you for your commitment to [School Name] and for your invaluable contribution to our school improvement efforts. We look forward to welcoming you to our school and to the opportunity to learn from your expertise.

Warm regards,

[Your Name] [Your Title] [School Name] [Contact Information

A4. Site Visit Details

Date and time

Specific starting location

Name and contact details of Site Visit Coordinator

Names of Site Visit Team Members

Essential Functions the District is focused on and any specific questions/areas the district would like feedback. Make sure you include copies of the Site Visit Protocol and appropriate documents from Appendices B, C, and D based on choice of essential functions.

Detailed Schedule (times, locations, meetings, lunch, etc.)

Appendix B. Site Visit Protocol Worksheets

Essential Function 1. Collaborative Culture and Climate

Team Members and Current Job Role of those Completing this Planning Document

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Date Completed: _____

Essential Function 1. Collaborative Culture and Climate

Essential Function 1: District leaders maintain a collaborative culture and climate to build capacity for an outcome-driven approach to school improvement.
A. The District Leadership Team (DLT) works collaboratively to implement continuous improvement. B. The DLT uses a protocol to review all district work, initiatives, and programs to assure current and ongoing alignment with the district Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP). C. The DLT annually develops and uses an action plan that is aligned with the existing CSIP and the district professional development plan.
Evidence may include DLT member list with titles, DLT meeting schedule/notes, DCI-MTSS handbook, protocol used to review all district work, CSIP plans, building contact list, initiative inventory, communication protocol, district DCI-MTSS action plan, and building DCI-MTSS action plans.
Evidence
A. The District Leadership Team (DLT) works collaboratively to implement continuous improvement. • Including members on the team who are in a position to make decisions on behalf of the system • Including members on the team with expertise in policy, instruction, literacy, behavior, curriculum, assessment, technology, special education, preschool, elementary, middle, and high school • Meeting monthly to collaborate and monitor implementation • Identifying a district-level contact person who acts as the primary contact for reciprocal communication with the Coaching Support Team (CST) facilitator • Collaborating with building leaders to define building-level expectations, develop action plans, collect data, and monitor progress toward improving literacy, instruction, and behavior • Identifying building-level contacts who act as the primary contact for reciprocal communication between their building and the DLT

- Establishing a communication protocol that allows for the sharing of data between teams and with stakeholders
- Regularly disseminating information regarding DCI-MTSS implementation, data, and accomplishments to all staff and stakeholders through established communication protocols
- Involving a range of stakeholders including families, mental health specialists, and local community members to refine and improve programs

B. The DLT uses a protocol to review all district work, initiatives, and programs to assure current and ongoing alignment with the district Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP).
- An inventory of all district initiatives to identify redundancies and inconsistencies
- A process for selecting, reviewing, identifying, and de-implementing ineffective initiatives or programs
- Persons designated with responsibility for following the protocol and communicating to district/building leaders regarding alignment

C. The DLT annually develops and uses an action plan that is aligned with the existing CSIP and the district professional development plan.
- Is aligned to district goals
- Identifies and is informed by data elements
- Contains annual measurable goals and outcomes matched to data sources
- Includes action steps with an implementation timeline
- Includes a schedule for the annual collection and evaluation of data sources at the district, building, and classroom levels
- Includes a professional development plan for training and coaching in the district's priority area(s)
- Creates structures and processes for collaborative problem-solving using data
- Creates structures and processes for internal school-based coaching
- Includes a process for onboarding new staff annually

District Specific Questions	District Evidence Be Specific/Provide Examples	Site Visit Team Recommendations

DCI-MTSS Site Visit Protocol Worksheet
Essential Function 2. Assessment

Team Members and Current Job Role of those Completing this Planning Document

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Date Completed: _____

Essential Function 2. Assessment

Essential Function 2: District leaders maintain an assessment system designed to support educational teams in making informed, instructional, and programmatic decisions to support students.
A. The District Leadership Team (DLT) has developed an assessment system that includes tools and processes to measure essential components of academics (literacy and instruction) and behavior. B. The DLT has developed a process to ensure learners and families are informed about assessments.
Evidence may include district assessment plan (that includes universal screening tool, diagnostic/functional assessment, progress monitoring, outcomes); assessment fidelity; communication protocols; building assessment plans; schedules for progress monitoring and assessments; and common formative assessment.

Evidence
A. The District Leadership Team (DLT) has developed an assessment system that includes tools and processes to measure essential components of academics (literacy and instruction) and behavior.
 • District tools for the following
  o Universal screening
  o Diagnostic and functional assessment
  o Progress monitoring
  o Outcome measures
  o A data collection calendar for the school year
  o The individuals who will administer the assessments
  o The individuals who will enter the data/scores (if applicable)

- o   The individuals/team(s) who will use the results
- o   The individual(s) who will serve as data coordinator(s)
- o   A process to modify the assessment system based on data
- o   A process to select and deselect assessment tools/processes
- o   A process to ensure fidelity of implementation
B.   The DLT has developed a process to ensure learners and families are informed about assessments.
- •   Notifying learners and their families of assessment purposes, frequency, and dates
- •   Offering support to learners and their families on how to interpret assessments

District Specific Questions	District Evidence Be Specific/Provide Examples	Site Visit Team Recommendations

DCI-MTSS Site Visit Protocol Worksheet
Essential Function 3. Data-based Decision Making

Team Members and Current Job Role of those Completing this Planning Document

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Date Completed: _____

Essential Function 3. Data-based Decision Making

Essential Function 3: District leaders engage in cycles of data-based decision making for their system to meet the needs of all students.
A. The DLT maintains an ongoing cycle of data-based decision making.   B. The DLT supports building and collaborative teams in on-going data-based decision making.
Evidence may include interview explanations of DBDM teams at the district, building, and CT levels; data summaries; protocols for how the building monitors fidelity of implementation; professional development plans; DLT, BLT and CT DBDM meeting schedule/notes; observations of DBDM team meeting; and communication examples.
Evidence   A. The DLT maintains an ongoing cycle of data-based decision making.   • Analysis of data related to outcomes and progress   • Analysis of data related to fidelity of implementation   • Analysis of needs and progress of all students, with explicit consideration for special populations   • Determination regarding the effectiveness of the district-wide system and needs   • Determination of district-wide and building-level status and needs for professional development using CWIS, SAS, SAPP, Literacy Progress Monitoring Tool, Office Referrals, MAP, and other relevant data   • Determination of priority areas of need and benchmarks for improvement   • Identification of strategies and interventions to address needs within the system   • Identification of training and coaching needs to address improved instruction, interventions, and to build on strengths   • Sharing of data and collaboration with building leaders, teachers, and stakeholders

B. The DLT supports building and collaborative teams in on-going data-based decision making.
- Clearly identified DBDM teams meet regularly to conduct data-based decision making at the building and collaborative team levels
- DBDM teams have a clear and consistent understanding of their roles and responsibilities to analyze data and use those data to impact change
- DBDM teams have been trained in a data-based decision making process that is used consistently to guide decisions
- There is a process for information from collaborative teams and building teams to be communicated to the DLT

District Specific Questions	District Evidence Be Specific/Provide Examples	Site Visit Team Recommendations

Essential Function 4. Tiered Systems of Support

Team Members and Current Job Role of those Completing this Planning Document

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Date Completed: _____

Essential Function 4. Tiered Systems of Support

Essential Function 4: District leaders maintain a tiered system of supports that provides efficient, effective, and equitable allocation of resources to support all students.
A. The DLT has developed and documented a tiered system of support for academics (literacy and instruction) and behavior. B. The DLT has developed a process for buildings to engage families as meaningful stakeholders in the implementation of the tiered system of support.
Evidence may include interview descriptions of the district/building plan for tiered support, including students with disabilities and English language learners; observations of tiered intervention groups; building schedules that identify times for tiered intervention; instructional resources for tiered instruction; building/district communication plans for involving families in tiered intervention; decision rules for moving students between tiers; and strategies used to ensure fidelity of implementation of tiered instruction, tiered reading plans, and tiered plan to support behavior.

Evidence A. The DLT has developed and documented a tiered system of support for academics (literacy and instruction) and behavior.
    • A process to identify and support tiered interventions matched to student need
    • An equitable allocation of resources (fiscal, personnel, time, facilities, etc.) to support a tiered framework of instructional practices
    • Alignment of instructional resources used across Tiers 1, 2, and 3
    • A process for how learners will be identified as needing intervention (i.e., what data will be collected, by what date, by whom, entrance/exit criteria)
    • A description of the continuum of interventions and practices at all education levels

- Protocols for individualization (e.g., changing the intervention in response to ongoing progress monitoring to address the learner's needs)
- Protocols for communicating and collaborating with necessary stakeholders (staff, learners, families, community partners)
- A process to ensure fidelity of implementation

B. The DLT has developed a process for buildings to engage families as meaningful stakeholders in the implementation of the tiered system of support.
- Families have opportunities to learn how the district has defined Tiers 1, 2, and 3 and specific strategies for families to support learner success
- Communication for families regarding the description, purpose, anticipated duration, and at-home support needed in a language and format that is conducive to the needs of families

District Specific Questions	District Evidence Be Specific/Provide Examples	Site Visit Team Recommendations

DCI-MTSS Site Visit Protocol Worksheet
Essential Function 5. Effective Teaching and Learning Practices

Team Members and Current Job Role of those Completing this Planning Document

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Date Completed: _____

Essential Function 5. Effective Teaching and Learning Practices

Essential Function 5: District leaders select and align effective teaching and learning practices to increase the probability that instruction, interventions, and supports meet the needs of all students.
A. The DLT collaborates with buildings to select and align effective teaching and learning practices at Tiers 1, 2, and 3 from a menu of district approved and supported practices, interventions, and supports. B. The DLT collaborates with buildings to implement with high fidelity effective teaching and learning practices and interventions and supports at Tiers 1, 2, and 3 that have been approved and are supported by the DLT.
Evidence may include menu of evidence-based curricula/interventions used for Tiers 1, 2, and 3; interviews describing evidence-based curricula/interventions used for Tiers 1, 2, and 3; data alignment between curricula/interventions used and district needs; observation of evidence-based curricula/interventions being used in classrooms; meeting notes/protocols for selecting curricula/interventions; protocols for ensuring fidelity of implementation; and interviews with internal coaches describing their role in DCI-MTSS implementation.
Evidence A. The DLT collaborates with buildings to select and align effective teaching and learning practices at Tiers 1, 2, and 3 from a menu of district approved and supported practices, interventions, and supports. • Are evidence-based and grounded in research • Address essential academic (literacy and instruction) and behavior components • Match the needs identified by district data • Fit within the capacity of the district to be successfully implemented (e.g., staff, financial, professional learning, buy-in) • Are aligned with community, regional, and/or state priorities, as well as family and community values and culture

B. The DLT collaborates with buildings to implement with high fidelity effective teaching and learning practices and interventions and supports at Tiers 1, 2, and 3 that have been approved and are supported by the DLT.
- Educators have received specific training to use the practices, interventions, and supports for which they are responsible to provide
- Educators are provided internal coaching as they implement new practices, interventions, and supports
- Internal coaching includes descriptive feedback and support for improvement
- An ongoing process is in place to monitor fidelity of implementation of specified practices, interventions, and supports

District Specific Questions	District Evidence Be Specific/Provide Examples	Site Visit Team Recommendations

Essential Function 6. Integration and Sustainability

Team Members and Current Job Role of those Completing this Planning Document

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Date Completed: _____

Essential Function 6. Integration and Sustainability

Essential Function 6: District leaders provide staff with ongoing support to ensure the integration and sustainability of their continuous improvement efforts.
A. The DLT works collaboratively towards the integration and sustainability of their continuous improvement efforts by meeting 9/9 of the following criteria.
Evidence may include written policies and guidance related to DCI-MTSS; meeting minutes discussing alignment of policies and practices; onboarding practices for new staff and DLT team members; long-range professional development plans; changes made to district/ building action plan focused on sustaining practices as staff leave; and coaching plans.

<div align="center">Evidence</div>

A. The DLT works collaboratively towards the integration and sustainability of their continuous improvement efforts.
- Ensuring practices and policies are aligned
- Developing policies to guide implementation
- Regularly reviewing learner data to determine successes
- Reviewing data related to implementation fidelity
- Making changes to the district action plan as guided by data
- Developing a long-range professional development plan for staff and administrators based on data and aligned to effective teaching and learning practices
- Working to enhance staff motivation and capacity to be actively involved in decision making
- Ensuring new DLT members receive professional development on district-level implementation and district-level roles

District Questions	District Evidence Be Specific/Provide Examples	Site Visit Team Recommendations

Appendix C: Suggested Evidence Reference Sheets for Site Visit Teams by Essential Function

Essential Function 1. Collaborative Culture and Climate

Essential Function 1: District leaders maintain a collaborative culture and climate to build capacity for an outcome-driven approach to school improvement.	
Documents/Activities: Interview responses, DLT member list with titles, DLT meeting schedule/notes, protocol used to review all district work, CSIP plans, building contact list, initiative inventory, communication protocol, district DCI-MTSS action plan, and building DCI-MTSS action plans.	

A. The District Leadership Team (DLT) works collaboratively to implement continuous improvement.

Essential Function Criteria	Sample Questions
Includes members on the team who are in a position to make decisions on behalf of the system	• What process was used to select DLT members? • Who on your DLT is able to make district- and building-level finance and policy decisions?
Includes members on the team with expertise in policy, instruction, literacy, behavior, curriculum, assessment, technology, special education, preschool, elementary, middle, and high school	• What expertise do each of your DLT members have? • How do you ensure you have the right team members at meetings? • How consistently do team members attend meetings?
Meets monthly to collaborate and monitor implementation	• How often does your DLT meet? • How do you ensure the DLT meets at least monthly to collaborate and monitor implementation? • Can you provide some examples of how your team collaborates to monitor implementation?
Has a district-level contact person who acts as the primary contact for reciprocal communication with the Coaching Support Team (CST) facilitator	• Who is your primary DLT contact person? • Who is your back-up contact person in case your primary contact person is unavailable? • Does the DLT contact person regularly communicate with the Coaching Support Team Facilitator?

	• Is there a schedule for doing this? • Is there reciprocal communication between the district contact and the CST facilitator?
Collaborates with building leaders to define building-level expectations; develop action plans; collect data; and monitor progress toward improving literacy, instruction, and behavior.	• Do all building leaders have a clear understanding of DCI-MTSS expectations and implementation? • Does the DLT meet with building leaders from all schools in your district to define building expectations? Develop action plans? Collect data? Monitor progress toward improving literacy, instruction, and behavior? • Discuss how/if each of these tasks are dealt with in your DLT. • Do you have a scheduled time to collaborate with building leaders to review progress monitoring data to see if building goals are being achieved? • How often do you meet? • Explain the process used to collaborate with building leaders to review data for developing action plans for their schools.
Has building-level contacts who act as the primary contact for reciprocal communication between their building and the DLT	• Who is the building-level contact for each school? • How did you choose building-level contacts? • Is there an alternative contact in case the primary building-level contact is unavailable?
Establishes a communication protocol that allows for the sharing of data between teams and with stakeholders	• Is information, including data, disseminated regularly to all staff and stakeholders? • Have communication protocols been developed to produce consistent understanding of participation in all buildings in the district? • How well is your communication protocol working? • What online platform is used to assure data is shared and there is two-way communication? • Have there been any problems with communication regarding the sharing of data and other information? If so, how have these issues been addressed?

Regularly disseminates information regarding DCI-MTSS implementation, data, and accomplishments to all staff and stakeholders through established communication protocols involving a range of stakeholders including families, mental health specialists, and local community members to refine and improve programs	• Who receives information regarding DCI-MTSS implementation, data, and accomplishments? • What methods/protocols are used to disseminate DCI-MTSS information to all stakeholders including building leaders, all staff, families, mental health specialists, and community members? • Who is designated to disseminate information to each of these stakeholder groups? • How well do you believe your team communicates with all stakeholders? • Who is responsible to check that the communication protocol is functioning well?

B. The DLT uses a protocol to review all district work, initiatives, and programs to assure current and ongoing alignment with the district Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP).

Essential Function Criteria	Sample Questions
Has developed an inventory of all district initiatives to identify redundancies and inconsistencies	• Does the DLT take an inventory of all initiatives to identify redundancies and inconsistencies? • When was the last time the DLT did a review of all district initiatives? • What redundancies/inconsistencies were noted? • Do all initiatives and programs align with the district CSIP?
Has a process for selecting, reviewing, identifying, and de-implementing ineffective initiatives or programs	• Talk about the process used to deal with ineffective initiatives. • Do you have a specific protocol for reviewing programs or initiatives? • Are there any current programs/initiatives that you feel are not positively impacting student outcomes? • What, if any, ineffective programs have been deimplemented? Why? • Are a range of stakeholders involved to refine and improve programs?
Have persons designated with responsibility for following the protocol and communicating to district/building leaders regarding alignment	• Who is responsible for following a protocol to ensure program alignment? • Who is responsible for communicating information regarding program alignment to district and building leaders?

C. The DLT annually develops and uses an action plan that is aligned with the existing CSIP and the district professional development plan. The action plan contains the following.	
Essential Function Criteria	**Sample Questions**
Alignment with district goals	• What is your process for ensuring the annual DLT plan is aligned with district goals and the CSIP? • How do the goals of the district align with the needs of each building?
Identifies and is informed by data elements	• What type of data is used to create your annual DLT plan? • Explain the data-based decision making process used to develop your district action plan.
Annual measurable goals and outcomes matched to data sources	• How do you ensure the goals are measurable and outcomes are matched to data sources? • Who is responsible for oversight of this?
Action steps with an implementation timeline	• How are action steps and implementation timelines determined and agreed upon? • What are the action steps? • How are action steps prioritized? • How do you assure action steps are completed within the implementation timeline?
A schedule for the annual collection and evaluation of data sources at the district, building, and classroom levels	• When does the annual collection and evaluation of data take place? • Is data collected and evaluated from all levels - district, building, and classroom?
A professional development plan for training and coaching in the district's priority area(s)	• How well do you feel the professional development plan is tied to the DLT action plan? • Does the professional development plan include a timeline/calendar for training and coaching?

Structures and processes for collaborative problem-solving using data	• Share the structures and processes used for data-based collaborative problem solving. • Does collaborative data-based decision making take place at all levels? The DLT, BLT, and educator teams?
Structures and processes for internal school-based coaching	• What do your SBIC coaching structures and processes look like? Do they include coach to team, team to team, peer to peer, etc.? • Explain any other features of your internal school-based coaching process. • How effective do you feel your district's school-based coaching is? Why?
A process for onboarding new staff annually	• Describe your onboarding process for new staff. • When is this done?

DCI-MTSS Suggested Evidence Reference Sheet for Site Visit Teams
Essential Function 2. Assessment

Essential Function 2: District leaders maintain an assessment system designed to support educational teams in making informed, instructional, and programmatic decisions to support students.
Documents/Activities: Interview responses, assessment plan, DCI-MTSS handbook, protocols used, communication protocols, district DCI-MTSS action plan, and building DCI-MTSS action plans.
A. The District Leadership Team (DLT) has developed an assessment system that includes tools and processes to measure essential components of academics (literacy and instruction) and behavior. The Assessment System contains the following.

Essential Function Criteria	Sample Questions
District tools for the following • Universal screening • Diagnostic and functional assessment • Progress monitoring • Outcome measures	• How is staff trained in the function and purpose of each of these? • How does the district determine the specific tool for each of these? • How does the DLT communicate and provide the necessary resources for these assessments to the buildings?
A data collection calendar for the school year	• When is the data collection calendar created? • How is it determined which data points are included? • How and when is it disseminated?
The individuals who will administer the assessments	• How are the individuals determined? • Do the individuals receive any training? If so, what does that entail? • What are their responsibilities beyond the administration?
The individuals who will enter the data/scores (if applicable)	• Are these the same individuals who administer the assessments? • Do the individuals receive any training? If so, what does that entail?
The individuals/team(s) who will use the results	• How do these individuals interact and communicate with those administering and entering data/scores? • What support and training do they receive in using the results? • What system of monitoring is in place?

The individual(s) who will serve as data coordinator(s)	• What are the key duties of the data coordinator? • How is this individual chosen? • What is this person's role on the DLT?
A process to modify the assessment system based on data	• What is the process? • What are the stipulations/trends that the data would need to show to necessitate a modification of the assessment system? • How are schools and school staff involved with this process?
A process to select and deselect assessment tools/processes	• What is the process? • Who is involved?

B. The DLT has developed a process to ensure learners and families are informed about assessments. The process accomplishes the following.

Essential Function Criteria	Sample Questions
Notifies learners and their families of assessment purposes, frequency, and dates	• When does the notification occur? • How does it occur? • Is it available in multiple formats (i.e., digital, hard copy, multiple languages, etc.)
Offers support to learners and their families on how to interpret assessments	• What does this support look like? • Who is delegated this task? • How often is this provided?

Essential Function 3. Data-Based Decision Making

Essential Function 3: District Leaders engage in cycles of data-based decision making for their system to meet the needs of all students.
Documents/Activities: Collaborative team meetings (e.g., DLT, BLT, content teams, grade level teams); interviews; action plans; DCI-MTSS handbook, protocols used; communication protocols; district DCI-MTSS action plan; building DCI-MTSS action plans; minutes from team meetings; district and building PD plans; and data shared.
A. The DLT maintains an ongoing cycle of data-based decision making. The cycle includes the following.

Essential Function Criteria	Sample Questions
Analyzes data related to outcomes and progress	- How does the DLT analyze outcome and progress data? - What protocols does the team use when analyzing data? - What specific data points are being collected to measure outcomes and progress? - Can you provide key insights or trends that you have identified through data analysis?
Analyzes data related to fidelity of implementation	- What procedures do you have for the collection of data? - How do you ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data you are analyzing? - Are there any challenges or limitations to analyzing the data and how are they addressed?
Analysis of needs and progress of all students, with explicit consideration for special populations	- How is data disaggregated to ensure that the unique needs and progress of students is adequately represented and addressed? - What measures are in place to monitor the effectiveness of interventions and supports for students in special education? ELL? At-risk? - Are there challenges or barriers encountered in analyzing the needs and progress of special populations and how does the DLT address them?

Determination regarding the effectiveness of the district-wide system and needs	• How is the effectiveness of the district-wide system currently assessed and measured? • Can you provide examples of recent successes or achievements attributed to the district-wide system? • How do you gather feedback from stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, and administrators, regarding the effectiveness of the district-wide system? • What strategies are in place to continuously monitor and adjust the district-wide system to meet evolving needs and challenges?
Determination of district-wide and building-level status and needs for professional development using CWIS, SAS, SAPP, Literacy Progress Monitoring Tool, Office Referrals, MAP, and other relevant data	• What did your data (CWIS, SAS, SAPP, Literacy, Office Referrals, MAP) tell you about professional development needs? • What strategies are in place to monitor and adjust the professional development plan for staff?
Determination of priority areas of need and benchmarks for improvement	• What are your district's priority areas of focus? • How does your district determine priority areas of need? • What are your building's priority areas of focus? How do they align to the district priority areas? • How do you know your district/building is making progress toward benchmarks?
Identification of strategies and interventions to address needs within the system	• What are your district/building's identified strategies/interventions? • What data was used to determine the need for those strategies/interventions?

Identification of training and coaching needs to address improved instruction, interventions, and to build on strengths	• What data or feedback mechanisms are used to assess the effectiveness of current instructional strategies and interventions? • Can you provide examples of specific areas where teachers and staff have demonstrated strengths in instruction or intervention delivery? • What resources or professional development opportunities are currently available to support teachers and staff in improving their instructional practices and interventions?
Sharing of data and collaboration with building leaders, teachers, and stakeholders	• How is data shared with buildings, teachers, and stakeholders? • How is data shared from buildings, teachers, and stakeholders with the DLT?

B.   The DLT supports building and collaborative teams in on-going data-based decision making.

Essential Function Criteria	Sample Questions
Clearly identified teams meet regularly to conduct data-based decision making at the building and collaborative team levels	• When do BLT and Content Teams meet to discuss data? How often do they meet? • Can you describe how data has been used to make changes to the building action plan? • Can you describe a time data was used to make instructional changes?
DBDM teams have a clear and consistent understanding of their roles and responsibilities to analyze data and use that data to impact change	• How are the roles and responsibilities of DBDM team members defined and communicated within the team? • Can you outline the specific tasks and duties assigned to each member of the DBDM team regarding data analysis and decision making processes? • How is accountability established within the DBDM team to ensure that all members fulfill their roles effectively?

DBDM teams have been trained in a data-based decision making process that is used consistently to guide decisions	• How do your teams identify strategies and interventions to address needs? • What types of PD does staff receive that addresses coaching needs for improved instruction, interventions, and building on strengths? • Describe the PD your staff/teams receive regarding the use of assessments and progress monitoring tools? • What training or professional development opportunities are provided to DBDM team members to enhance their skills in data analysis and interpretation? • Are there protocols or guidelines in place to ensure that data analysis processes are standardized and consistent across the team? • What measures are in place to monitor the effectiveness of data-driven decisions and their impact on student outcomes?
There is a process for information from collaborative teams and building teams to be communicated to the DLT	• How do DBDM team members communicate their findings and recommendations to relevant stakeholders in a clear and accessible manner?

DCI-MTSS Suggested Evidence Reference Sheet for Site Visit Teams

Essential Function 4. Tiered System of Support

EF 4: Tiered System of Support - District leaders maintain a tiered system of support that provides efficient, effective, and equitable allocation of resources to support all students.	
Documents/Activities: DCI-MTSS handbook; building schedules that show time for tiered intervention; instructional resources for academic and behavior tiered instruction; decision rules for moving students between tiers; interviews; and tiered intervention groups.	
A. The DLT has developed and documented a tiered system of support for academics (literacy and instruction) and behavior.	

Essential Function Criteria	Sample Questions
A process to identify and support tiered interventions matched to student need	• Have all staff received training on the various behavior and academic interventions? • What interventions are you currently implementing to address behavior and academic needs of your students? • How did you determine these interventions? • How are you ensuring the interventions are aligned to the function of the behavior or academic deficits?
An equitable allocation of resources (fiscal, personnel, time, facilities, etc.) to support a tiered framework of instructional practices	• How is the allocation of resources determined? • Have you calculated your serviceable base rate to ensure resources are being allocated equitability? • Have you considered doing an audit of all your current resources to ensure they are meeting your immediate needs?
Alignment of instructional resources used across Tiers 1, 2, and 3	• Describe the tiered resources available to students and staff across the tiers.

A process for how learners will be identified as needing intervention (i.e., what data will be collected, by what date, by whom, entrance/exit criteria)	• What academic data is reviewed to determine interventions? • What behavior data is reviewed to determine interventions? • How often is data reviewed? • Who reviews academic and behavior data at the building- and district-level to determine interventions?
A description of the continuum of interventions and practices at all education levels	• Have you developed a student support triangle with descriptions of the interventions and practices?
Protocols for individualization (e.g., changing the intervention in response to ongoing progress monitoring to address the learner's needs)	• What are your data decision rules for reviewing student data once they have entered an intervention? • What is your data decision rule for students who are having a questionable or poor response? • How are you ensuring implementation fidelity prior to modifying the intervention? • What is your process for modifying an intervention (selection of modification, revisiting the function to ensure alignment, monitoring progress)?
Protocols for communicating and collaborating with necessary stakeholders (staff, learners, families, community partners)	• How do you inform stakeholders about the protocols for participating in this process? • What are your protocols for staff professional development? • What are your protocols to ensure two-way staff communication? • How do you ensure there is two-way communication with families? • How do you include community partners in this collaboration process?

B. The DLT has developed a process for buildings to engage families as meaningful stakeholders in the implementation of the tiered system of support.

Essential Function Criteria	Sample Questions
Families have opportunities to learn how the district has defined Tiers 1, 2, and 3, and specific strategies for families to support learner success	• How have you communicated the multi-tiered structure with families? • What supports are in place for families to help the student?

Communication for families regarding the description, purpose, anticipated duration, and at-home support needed in a language and format that is conducive to the needs of families	• What is your process for ensuring this information is communicated in multilingual languages to ensure it meets the needs of your families?

Essential Function 5. Effective Teaching and Learning Practices

EF 5: District leaders select and align effective teaching and learning practices to increase the probability that instruction, interventions, and supports meet the needs of all students.
Documents/Activities: Classroom teaching, learning walks, coaching cycles, professional development, collaborative teams, assessment data, district goals, professional development plan, building schedules, intervention schedules, coaching schedules, DCI-MTSS handbook, CSIP, BSIP
A. The DLT collaborates with buildings to select and align effective teaching and learning practices at Tiers 1, 2, and 3 from a menu of district approved and supported practices, interventions, and supports.

Essential Function Criteria	Sample Questions
Are evidence-based and grounded in research	• What Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 instructional practices, interventions, and supports are in place? • How were tiered instructional practices, interventions, and supports evaluated and determined? • What evidence-based research supports the teaching and learning practices offered for each tier?
Address essential academic (literacy and instruction) and behavior components	• What teaching and learning practices address Tier 1 academic needs? • What teaching and learning practices address Tier 1 behavior needs? • What teaching and learning practices address Tier 1 literacy needs? • How is the effectiveness of interventions and supports monitored, evaluated, and modified at Tier 1? • What teaching and learning practices address Tier 2 and Tier 3 academic needs? • What teaching and learning practices address Tier 2 and Tier 3 behavior needs? • What teaching and learning practices address Tier 2 and Tier 3 literacy needs?

	• How is the effectiveness of interventions and supports monitored, evaluated, and modified at Tiers 2 and 3?
Match the needs identified by district data	• What do the district data indicate about student needs in academics? • What do the district data indicate about student needs in behavior? • What do the district data indicate about student needs in literacy?
Fit within the capacity of the district to be successfully implemented (e.g., staff, financial, professional learning, buy-in)	• Does the district have the resources in place to successfully implement selected teaching and learning practices, interventions, and supports? • How are professional learning needs identified and addressed? • How are the tiered teaching and learning practices and supports shared with all stakeholders? • What evidence demonstrates that the tiered teaching and learning practices, interventions, and supports are implemented effectively?
Are aligned with community, regional, and/or state priorities, as well as family and community values and culture	• How are teaching and learning practices (Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3) aligned with state priorities? • What are the community and regional values and goals for all students? • How are teaching and learning practices (at all tiers) aligned with the district, community, and regional goals?

B. The DLT collaborates with buildings to implement with high fidelity effective teaching and practices and interventions and supports at Tiers 1, 2, and 3 that have been approved and are supported by the DLT.

Essential Function Criteria	Sample Questions
Educators have received specific training to use the practices, interventions, and supports for which they are responsible to provide	• What specific training and professional development has been identified and provided for all educators? • How is implementation planned, monitored, and supported to ensure fidelity?
Educators are provided internal coaching as they implement new practices, interventions, and supports.	• What does district-wide internal coaching support look like? • How are teachers at various tiers and levels coached to fidelity in new practices, intervention, and supports?

Internal coaching includes descriptive feedback and support for improvement	• How often are teachers coached and provided with non-evaluative feedback and support for improvement? • How is the internal coaching process monitored/evaluated for effectiveness?
An ongoing process is in place to monitor the fidelity of implementation of specified practices, interventions, and supports	• How is the implementation of specified practices, interventions, and supports monitored (and how often)? • What evidence will be gathered to ensure effectiveness and fidelity of specified practices, interventions, and support?

Essential Function 6. Integration and Sustainability

Essential Function 6: District leaders provide staff with ongoing support to ensure the integration and sustainability of their continuous improvement efforts.
Documents/Activities: Longitudinal data, stakeholder feedback, resource allocation, DCI-MTSS handbook, professional development plans, fidelity data, protocols, interviews, BLT minutes
A. The DLT works collaboratively towards the integration and sustainability of their continuous improvement efforts, by accomplishing the following.

Essential Function Criteria	Sample Questions
Ensuring practices and policies are aligned	• How do you ensure that current practices are in line with established policies and procedures? • How do you ensure that new initiatives or practices introduced align with the overarching goals and objectives outlined in existing policies? • How do you monitor the implementation of policies to ensure consistency and fidelity across different departments or units?
Developing policies to guide implementation	• Can you describe any new policies that have been developed to guide implementation of DCI-MTSS? • How were stakeholders involved in the development? • How are new policies communicated to stakeholders?
Regularly reviewing learner data to determine successes	• What specific types of learner data are regularly collected and reviewed? • How frequently are learner data reviewed to assess progress and identify successes? • When was your action plan last updated? • How do you ensure that learner data are used to inform instructional decisions and interventions?

Reviewing data related to implementation fidelity	• What specific types of fidelity data are regularly collected and reviewed? • How frequently are fidelity data reviewed to assess progress and identify successes? • When was your action plan last updated?
Making changes to the district action plan as guided by data	• What does your current action plan outline for assessment, tiered instruction, DBDM, and/or culture and climate? • Describe a time data was used to update your district action plan.
Developing a long-range professional development plan for staff and administrators based on data and aligned to effective teaching and learning practices	• What is district/building's professional development plan for DCI-MTSS? • When was your PD plan last updated? • How do you monitor fidelity of implementation for PD? • How do your building's ETLPs align with district priorities?
Working to enhance staff motivation and capacity to be actively involved in decision making	• How does the district foster a positive and supportive work environment that encourages staff engagement and participation in decision making? • How does the district/building actively seek input and feedback from staff members on decisions that affect their work and the organization as a whole? • How transparent is the district/building decision making process? • How do we recognize and celebrate the contributions of staff members who are actively involved in decision making processes? • Is the district open to diverse perspectives and ideas and is respectful dialogue and debate encouraged among staff members?
Ensuring new DLT members receive professional development on district-level implementation and district-level roles	• What is your process for onboarding new DLT members? • What does that onboarding look like? • What written resources have been developed for new DLT members to use for reference? • What might your district do to onboard new staff members that currently does not happen?

Appendix D. Site Visit Team Summary Worksheet

Site Visit Team Summary Worksheet

District Name _____   **Date of Site Visit** _____

Site Visit Team Members

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Essential Functions Reviewed

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Promising Practices

Describe Strengths and Promising Practices Below	Describe Evidence

Recommendations to Strengthen Practice
Site Visit Team Recommendations

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