



Charter School Support Initiative Playbook



Published August 2020

Table of Contents

CSSI: The Overview

- ❖ [Brief Overview and Introduction](#)
- ❖ [CSSI Stakeholder Roles](#)
- ❖ [Who is the CSSI Team?](#)
- ❖ [CSSI Visit Cycle](#)
- ❖ [CSSI Visit Norms and Commitments](#)
- ❖ [CSSI Cost and Payment](#)

CSSI: The Details

- ❖ [CDE Standards for Continuous Improvement](#)
- ❖ [Before the CSSI Visit: Preparation](#)
- ❖ [During the Visit: Data Collection](#)
 - Stakeholder Interviews
 - Classroom Visits
 - Document Review
- ❖ [During the Visit: Prioritization Protocol](#)
- ❖ [After the Visit: Reporting](#)
- ❖ [After the Visit: Sharing Out](#)
- ❖ [After the Visit: Feedback and Improvement](#)
- ❖ [CSSI Stakeholder Detailed Responsibilities](#)
- ❖ [CSSI Program Calendar Cycle](#)

CSSI: The Toolbox

CSSI: The Overview

Purpose:

The Colorado School Support Initiative (CSSI) mirrors the Colorado Title I School Support evaluation process and CDE's School Quality rubric. CCSP Colorado Department of Education – Project Narrative 2018 Charter Schools Program Grants to SEs (CFDA Number: 84.282A) subgrantees are required to participate in a CSSI site visit during the final year of their grant to encourage their adoption of the research-based best practices identified in the rubric for continuous school improvement. For charter schools, CDE has added additional standards covering board governance, school leadership, and financial practices". Additionally, the office of SOC is committed to ensuring charter school subgrantees are given every possible advantage through the provision of expert training, seminars, professional development, cohorts, evaluation and recommendations for a successful future. The CSSI visit is the culmination of this effort.

This playbook is intended to provide step by step guidance for the implementation of successful CSSI visits. Stakeholders, including school leaders, governing board members, CSSI team members and Colorado Department of Education staff will find this an invaluable tool in the preparation and process of each CSSI visit.

Background:

All Colorado charter schools that are awarded the Colorado Charter School Program (CCSP) Grant will participate in a Charter School Support Initiative (CSSI) school review during the last year of the grant cycle. CSSI visits typically occur during the charter school's second year of operations. The CSSI team provides a 3-day diagnostic school review that results in an objective and criterion-based body of evidence that school leaders and governing boards can use to drive systemic continuous improvement within the school's unique model and mission.

The CSSI team is composed of a diverse group of highly qualified and talented Colorado-based educational professionals with experience teaching and leading in high-performing schools, serving on governing boards, conducting school quality and diagnostic reviews, and consulting in various aspects of school management. A CSSI team of 4-7 members spend 3 days on campus.

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Standards for Continuous Improvement is the primary assessment instrument that drives the visit. These standards cover curriculum, instruction, use of data, school culture, leadership, governance and finance. Data used to assess these standards is collected and triangulated through stakeholder interviews, classroom observations, and a review of essential school documents such

as curriculum maps and budgets. On the last day, the CSSI team formulates findings on the visit criteria and works through a root-cause analysis protocol to prioritize targeted key levers for continuous improvement.

An overview of findings is presented to school leadership at the end of day 3. The visit is officially concluded when the CSSI team lead provides the school with two formal reports approximately three to four weeks after the visit: CSSI Detailed Report and CSSI Executive Summary Report. The CSSI Detailed Report is the full 10 Standards for Continuous Improvement rubric scored with supporting evidence. The CSSI Executive Summary Report provides the school with a landscape of how they performed in the CSSI Detailed Report as well as detailed recommendations for school improvement. These two reports can be coupled with student outcome and environmental data to build a precise and effective school improvement plan.

CSSI Stakeholders and Roles

This section captures a *brief overview* of the role of each key stakeholder in the CSSI process; *detailed responsibilities for each stakeholder are provided at the end of the playbook.*

Brief Overview of Roles	
School	The school budgets for, plans, creates a classroom observation and interview schedule and hosts the CSSI visit. The school will be provided all the information needed to do so by the CSSI team lead. During the site visit, the school is expected to conduct normal operations while the team is on-site, as much as this is possible. After the site visit, the school will receive a body of evidence upon which to develop and improve their program. Ultimately, the charter governing board and school leadership will determine if and how to use the body of evidence provided by the CSSI team.
Colorado Department of Education	CDE manages and monitors the CCSP grant and CSSI programs. While the CSSI team is independent of CDE (i.e. not employees), CDE Schools of Choice (SOC) assists in the selection of the CSSI Lead Reviewer, team leads and team members. The CSSI team speaks openly with CDE before, during and after the visit. A CDE team member is available on site visits for review team member questions or concerns that may arise unrelated to the CSSI visit. They are also available for any questions or concerns that arise for school leaders regarding the review itself. The SOC team reviews all CSSI reports that will be submitted to the school; however, it is important to note that CDE does not play a role in data analysis, scoring rubrics or determining feedback. They review CSSI

	reports for professionalism and quality without influencing the findings. Additionally, CDE also manages communication between the CSSI team and the school's authorizer should any concerns arise during the visit (e.g. any statutory concerns). The school is also responsible for relaying any feedback, for quality control and improvement efforts, via a follow up survey.
CSSI Lead Reviewer	The designated CSSI Lead Reviewer is the lead consultant that works with CDE SOC to facilitate the annual CSSI Calendar Cycle, consult on practices and procedures, and train CSSI team members and team leads.
CSSI team lead	CSSI team leads are assigned to and lead individual school visits. They build teams and work with school leaders to schedule and prepare for the visit. Additionally, CSSI team leads facilitate visits, write reports, and conduct a share-out of findings with the governing board/school leadership.
CSSI team Members	CSSI members serve as objective but charter friendly data-collectors and analyzers. They participate in the visit and complete their assigned rubric area with key evidence to support scoring.

Who is the CSSI Team?

The CSSI collaborative has access to highly knowledgeable, experienced and talented educators and professionals across Colorado that have worked in and with charter schools. Some team members are independent consultants while other team members work in full time positions within schools, districts and Charter Management Organizations. CSSI team leads build teams for each visit based on the school's mission and model, team member expertise, and team member availability. The goal is to build a well balanced team that offers experience in the school model. Each team member brings knowledge, experience and skill to key review areas such as school finance, governance, school leadership, curriculum and instruction, and tiers of support. CSSI team members are recruited through existing members and a call for reviewers issued by CDE. Applicants must meet the following criteria.

Background and Requirements	
Team Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depth of knowledge and understanding in the reviewed area(s) as evidenced through experience, education, and licensure and certification • 5 years or more of experience in the reviewed area(s) • At least 2 years of this experience is in Colorado • Direct charter school experience and knowledge • Brings key experience in specific Colorado charter models such as College Prep, Montessori, Core Knowledge and Classical education • Proven track record of success and achievement as evidenced through data, resume, recommendations, etc. • Strong oral and written communication skills • Previous experience with school reviews preferred
Team Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 3 years experience in school administration and leadership • At least 1 year of success being a CSSI team member • Exceptional oral and written communication skills • Strong Emotional Intelligence: self-awareness, social-awareness, self-regulation and relationship management
Lead Reviewer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 2 years of success as a CSSI team lead • Team member, lead and/or CDE recommendation

CSSI Visit Cycle

CSSI Visit Cycle	
Scheduling <i>Late July/Early August</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSSI team lead contacts the school leader to schedule the 3-day visit
Before the Visit <i>Starting 8 weeks before the scheduled visit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSSI team lead and the school leader work together to plan and prepare for the visit such as creating a detailed schedule and collecting essential school documents for review.
During the Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day 1: CSSI Team Data Collection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stakeholder Interviews ○ Classroom Visits ○ Document Review • Day 2: CSSI Team Data Collection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stakeholder Interviews ○ Classroom Visits

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Document Review ● Day 3: CSSI Team Comes to Findings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CSSI team completes all interviews and observations. ○ CSSI team conducts a prioritization protocol and comes to findings by identifying key levers for school improvement ○ CSSI team lead provides an overview of findings and recommendations to the school leader
<p>After the Visit 3-4 weeks after the visit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CSSI team lead provides the school with two formal documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CSSI Detailed Report <i>*Full rubric of the CDE Standards for Continuous Improvement scored with evidence</i> ○ CSSI Executive Summary Report <i>*Synthesis of performance and detailed recommendations for school improvement</i> ● CSSI Share Out: CSSI team lead processes findings with the school leader and governing board

Visit Norms and Commitments

The CSSI team guarantees these visit norms and commitments. In addition to staying tethered to these norms, CSSI team members will sign annual team member agreements.

- Mission and Model Neutrality: The CSSI team lead will always attempt to create diverse teams and identify team members with specialized experience in the school's specific model; however, regardless of experience or personal pedagogy, all CSSI team members maintain a commitment to neutrality. The CSSI team strives to provide findings and feedback that are meaningful to each school's unique mission and model.
- Criteria Aligned and Rooted in Data: All data collection and resulting team discourse is clearly aligned to the review criteria; additionally, all findings are strongly rooted in data that is carefully triangulated. Team members work diligently to ensure that staff feelings, personal values and outliers of information do not impact trend identification and findings.
- Protect Personal Anonymity: The CSSI team maintains anonymity for all stakeholders; members do not reveal specific information about individuals that is collected through interviews or classroom visits. This is only broken if child protection concerns or harm is noted. Additionally, this norm also means that the

CSSI team is highly sensitive about being overheard while on-site; team dialogues and discussions are always private and protected.

- Use One Voice: CSSI team members do not provide individual staff members feedback throughout the visit, or report trends at any time during the visit. Feedback is not provided until all data is triangulated and findings are prioritized, and is provided directly to the school leader by the CSSI team lead.
- Non-Judgemental Stance: CSSI team members maintain a non-judgemental stance throughout the duration of the visit and with all stakeholder interactions; team members stay curious and within the lane of inquiry and approach all interactions with asset-based thinking and generosity.
- Radical-Candor: CSSI team members commit to radical candor within our communication with each other and the school. This means that we always provide direct communication, avoiding unclear and passive communication. This direct communication is always paired with care and empathy.



CSSI Team Member
Agreement
[HERE](#)

Cost and Payment

Schools must include the cost of the CSSI visit in their implementation year 2 CCSP budget at the time of application to the grant. The CSSI team will provide the school with individual invoices and W-9s at the time of the visit. The school will send payment directly to CSSI team members within 30 days of the visit and provide 1099 forms at the end of the calendar year. The school will submit for reimbursement to the grant in the same manner as other grant reimbursement requests. Budget line item amount can be determined using the table below based on the number of students the school anticipates enrolling in their last year of the grant. The cost includes visit preparation, 3 days on-site, the CSSI Detailed Report, the CSSI Executive Summary Report, and a share out meeting with the charter governing board.

Visit and Report Cost		
Student Population	# of Team Members	Total Cost
Under 100	4	\$10,200
101-350	5	\$12,200
351-600	6	\$14, 200
601-850	7	\$16,200
851+	8	\$18,200

CSSI team Payment	
Team Lead	\$3900
Team Member	\$2000
Team Member w/Board Report	\$2300



CSSI Invoice [HERE](#)

CSSI: The Details

CDE Standards for Continuous Improvement and Review Criteria

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Standards for Continuous Improvement rubric is organized into 10 central standards that evaluate instructional practices, leadership, culture and organizational effectiveness. These standards are applicable to all public schools, and can be easily applied to a wide variety of school models, educational approaches, and environments. Each standard is organized into indicators and sub-indicators.

Example:

Standard 3: Assessment of and for Learning		The school uses multiple measures and assessment strategies to continuously inform instruction to meet student needs, measure student progress toward and mastery of grade-level expectations, and improve instruction.					
Indicator 3.a. Use of Assessment and Data		Teachers use multiple sources of data and consistent, high quality assessment practices to guide school, department, grade-level, and classroom decisions.					
Indicator Rating		(4) Developed and fully implemented on an ongoing and sustained basis	(3) Developed and generally implemented throughout the school	(2) In development and/or partially implemented	(1) Initial development and/or minimal implementation	(NA) Not-Applicable	Comments
3.a.5. Assessment Purposes.	School leadership and instructional staff understand the purpose of each assessment (e.g., screening, diagnosing, progress monitoring, measuring achievement).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.a.6. Common Assessments.	Grade levels and departments use common assessments and scoring guides to ensure consistent performance expectations and fidelity to curriculum.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.a.7. Review of Classroom Assessments.	Classroom assessments are used consistently in measuring intended outcomes, and are periodically reviewed to ensure alignment to grade-level expectations and learning targets.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

*An Overview of the Standards***Standard 1: Standards and Instructional Planning**

The school implements a curriculum that is aligned to Colorado Academic Standards and ensures rigorous, effective instructional planning.

Standard 2: Standards-Based Instruction

Instructional staff members provide aligned, integrated, and research-based instruction that engages students cognitively and ensures that students learn to mastery.

Standard 3: Assessment of and for Learning

The school uses multiple measures and assessment strategies to continuously inform instruction to meet student needs, measure student progress toward and mastery of grade-level expectations and improve instruction.

Standard 4: Tiers of Support and Special Populations

The school implements a comprehensive system of tiered academic and behavioral support to enable students to master grade-level expectations.

Standard 5: School Leadership

School leadership ensures the school functions as a learning organization focused on shared responsibility for student success and a rigorous cycle of teaching and learning.

Standard 6: School Culture and Climate

The school functions as an effective learning community and supports a climate conducive to performance excellence for students and staff.

Standard 7: Effective Educator

School leadership actively develops a high-quality professional staff through professional learning, supervision, evaluation, and commitment to continuous improvement.

Standard 8: Continuous Improvement

The school implements a mission-driven cycle of continuous improvement that optimized learning and ensures organizational effectiveness.

Standard 9: Governance

The school board demonstrates strong leadership through its procedure to promote the school's mission, strategic planning, current knowledge of legislative issues, policy development, commitment to professional development, provision of resources, oversight/support of administrators, ability to build effective committees, and establishing networked community relationships.

Standard 10: Fiscal Management

The school board demonstrates strong fiscal management and the school's practices demonstrate current and future financial health.

All single charter schools receive a standards 1-10 review; Charter Management Organizations and other school networks may select to opt out of the governance and finance review after already receiving two CSSI visits in which these areas were generally implemented consistently and effectively.

Rating System

To provide detailed school level information, the CSSI team evaluates the degree to which sub-indicators exist and the level of implementation. The rating system is explained below. The CSSI team provides synthesized and high-level evidence to support the score of each sub-indicator.

Level 4	<p>Developed and fully implemented on an ongoing and sustained basis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>All of the indicator language is evident throughout ALL parts of the school (grade levels, classrooms, teachers, students etc.)</i> • <i>All data sources (classroom observations, interviews, and document review) well trend the criteria</i> • <i>The practice has been embedded for some time; it's ongoing and sustained and results are clear</i>
Level 3	<p>Developed and generally implemented throughout the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>All of the indicator language is evident throughout MOST parts of the school (grade levels, classrooms, teachers, students etc.)</i> • <i>All data sources (classroom observations, interviews, and document review) well trend the criteria</i> • <i>The practice is fully implemented but new</i>
Level 2	<p>Partial development and/or partially implemented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Part of the indicator language is evident throughout different parts of the school (grade levels, classrooms, teachers, students etc.); however, part of it is not yet implemented</i> • <i>The practice is implemented in some parts of the school only (grades, classrooms, teachers, etc.)</i> • <i>Not all data sources (classroom observations, interviews, and document review) trend the criteria</i> • <i>This is some evidence of planning for full implementation</i>
Level 1	<p>Initial development and/or minimal implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Little to none of the indicator language is evident throughout different parts of the school (grade levels, classrooms, teachers, students etc.)</i> • <i>Most data sources (classroom observations, interviews, and document review) do not trend the criteria</i> • <i>School officials do not have any plans for implementation</i>



CDE Standards for Continuous Improvement Full Rubric [HERE](#)

Before the Visit: Preparation

The assigned CSSI team lead initiates contact with school leadership in late July/early August, to schedule the visit. Preparing for the CSSI visit is a partnership between school leadership and the CSSI team lead. Approximately 8 weeks before the visit, the CSSI team lead sends the school leader 3 key documents that detail preparation steps. Detailed responsibilities for each stakeholder are provided at the end of the playbook.

- Letter to the Leader: This provides each of the steps the leader will need to take to prepare for the visit such as communication with their stakeholders, scheduling interviews, preparing space, and collecting documents for review.
- 3 Day Interview Schedule Template/Example: The school leader schedules stakeholder interviews and then provides the draft to the CSSI team lead who uses the school's master classroom schedule to schedule instructional observations for the team.
- Document Review Checklist: This provides a checklist of all documents the school will need to collect and share with the CSSI team. The school is encouraged to share the documents digitally but may elect to share paper artifacts when necessary.



Letter to the Leader [HERE](#)
Schedule Template/Schedule
[HERE](#)
Document Review Checklist
[HERE](#)

During the Visit: Data Collection

Data is collected through 3 sources: stakeholder interviews, classroom observations, and document review. Review team members triangulate information across these sources, seeking to identify trends. Review members are very serious about ensuring that the data they collect in stakeholder interviews is precisely aligned to review criteria, and ensuring that one-off or isolated reports are not included in the findings.

Stakeholder Interviews

A variety of stakeholders are interviewed during the school quality visit; the CSSI team aims to interview all leaders, teachers, support staff, business personnel and board members as well as a collection of students and parents. Review team members use a standardized set of interview questions that are aligned to the assessment rubric. CSSI team members are required to take digital notes during stakeholder interviews and to save them for 90 days after the visit. The manner and method of note-taking is selected by the review member based on personal style and preference. The CDE provides a recommended note-taking tool.

Interview Norms:

- Interviews are 30 minutes for all stakeholders except leaders; we ask school leaders and instructional leaders for 60 minutes
- Stick to the script as much as possible but probe as necessary
- Remind the interviewee of the purpose of the visit and confidentiality (see framing script in Google Drive folder with interview scripts)
- Ask for specific examples (e.g. “give me an example of how you used a formative assessment this quarter to drive your instruction”)
- Stay neutral and be aware of your own body language
- Know when you have your answer and move on (i.e. there may not be an answer)
- Don't give feedback or affirm/not-affirm questions or answers of the interviewee
- Don't react or go down a “rabbit hole” with an interviewee that is disgruntled and wants to veer off the script
- Be aware of interviewee emotion and respond accordingly



Parent Interview Script
[HERE](#)

Student Interview Script
[HERE](#)

Leaders/Teachers
Standards 1-8 Interview
Script [HERE](#)

Full Standards 9 & 10
Interview Script

Authorizer Script [HERE](#)

Note-Taking Tools
[HERE](#)

Classroom Visits

The CSSI team will use the Classroom Visit Tool (CVT) to score and record evidence for instructional observations. All teachers are observed for at least one, 20 minute observation. The CVT encompasses 15 sub-indicators that are precisely aligned to Standard 2: Standards Based Instruction.

Before the visit, the CSSI team lead will use the school's interview schedule and class/bell schedule to schedule instructional observations for team members assigned to standards 1-8. The team lead will ensure that all core teachers are observed (as well as specials teachers when feasible) with these parameters:

- Observations are 25-30 minutes long
- Each content will be observed at each grade level
- If a teacher teaches more than one grade level or content, the team will attempt to observe them in each area they teach
- Observations will span the beginning, middle, and end of the lesson cycle.

CSSI team members will use the Classroom Observational Tool to score and record evidence for every observation. The observation tool provides the sub-indicator descriptor and specific "look-for" statements. Each sub-indicator's "look-fors" are scored on the same 1-4 scale as the rubric.

- 4 = All look-fors are present
- 3 = Most look-fors are present
- 2 = Some look-fors are present
- 1 = None or minimal look-fors are present

Team members are encouraged to note as much concrete evidence on the observational tool as possible in order to justify the score given. It is very helpful to note which parts of the indicator were present and effective, and which were not.

The team member assigned to standard 2 collects all scored classroom observational tools and completes the Summary Tool spreadsheet at lunch on day 3. The team member uses quantifiable data to support the scoring of Standard 2.

CSSI team members will use instructional data alone to score the standard 2 sub-indicators that are included in the Classroom Visit Observation Tool. These sub-indicators are: 2.a.1, 2.a.2, 2.a.3, 2.b.1, 2.b.2, 2.b.4, 2.c.1, 2.c.2, 2.c.4, 2.c.5,



Classroom Visit Tool (CVT) and Tally Sheet [HERE](#)

2.c.7, 2.d.1, 2.d.4, 2.d.5, 2.e.1, 2.e.2, 2.e.3, 2.e.6. Interview data will not be triangulated on these sub-indicators; it is important to score based on what was observed in implementation as opposed to what teachers articulate that they do. Their articulation of how they plan and prepare for these instructional practices can be used in the scoring of Standard 1 when appropriate.

Several Standard 2 sub-indicators are not clearly “observable” within a 25-30-minute observation and are not included in the classroom observation tool. Additionally, the sub-indicators on classroom visit tools needed to be limited for viability of data collection within a 25-30-minute observation. Therefore, team members will use interview data to score these sub-indicators in Standard 2: 2.b.3, 2.c.3, 2.c.6, 2.d.2, 2.d.3, 2.d.6, 2.e.4, 2.e.5, 2.e.7.

The CSSI team members assigned to Standard 2 can use their own observational notes in the comments section of the rubric to support the scoring, as well as lift evidence comments from classroom observation tools. Team members are required to provide the percentage of observed value in the comments section of the rubric in order to support the evidence findings for ratings of “1 Minimal” and “2 Partial.” For example, a comment for a rating of “2 Partial Development” for sub-indicator 2.a.1 may read:

“Teachers posted and students could articulate a clear and precise learning goal in 68% of classrooms observed. For example, many teachers presented an “I Can” statement that defined a clear and measurable learning target. However, in other observations, the learning goals lacked specific targets and instead communicated what students would be doing or completing (as opposed to what they are learning). A few classroom observations lacked lesson objectives all together; in these observations, students received directions to work from a textbook chapter or review an assessment without any specific framing on the purpose or goal.”

Classroom Visit Norms:

- Do not engage with the teacher
- Don't be intrusive; be a fly on the wall during teacher directed learning
- Ask students questions about their learning and check for understanding only during partner or independent practice (unless otherwise requested by the school)

- Look at student output and work and determine their progress towards mastery (unless otherwise requested by the school)
- Pay attention to what is on the wall and used by students, and what materials and scaffolds they have
- Keep a neutral and friendly face.

Document Review

The CSSI team lead will provide the school leader a Document Review Checklist before the visit. The checklist is organized by standard. Team members will determine which documents are relevant to their assigned standards and review them closely. Documents are a valuable data source for triangulating evidence gathered from the other two sources; however, something cannot be triangulated alone just within the document collection; evidence of practice must also be present in stakeholder interviews and classroom visits. Schools are asked to share these documents in a digital format such as Google Drive or thumb drives as much as possible; however, schools can select to provide the CSSI team with hard copies of documents in a binder. It is most effective when schools organize the requested documents by standard and provide a direct link to the document within the Document Review Checklist.



Document Review Checklist [HERE](#)

During the Visit: Prioritization Protocol

The CSSI visit prioritization protocol is designed for the following outcomes:

- CSSI team will come to preliminary findings on review criteria
- CSSI team will identify the right key levers and recommendations for targeted school improvement
- CSSI team will prepare to communicate preliminary findings to the school leader

The CSSI team spends approximately three hours on day 3 completing pre-work and coming to preliminary findings and prioritizing targeted areas for school improvement. This is a tight timeline, team members must synthesize their data quickly and efficiently and work together urgently.

<i>Prioritization Protocol</i>	
Pre-Work on Assigned Standards:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Score rubric and color code the Landscape Report in the prioritization document shared by team lead ● Identify 2 strengths within each reviewed standard to leverage in the school improvement process ● Write a findings statement for each standard descriptor and identify three pieces of evidence to support it. The findings statements should read as: the school <i>is (scored 3 or 4), is beginning to (scored 2), or is not yet (scored 1)</i>. ● Focus on providing data points that “prove” the score given: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 4: 3 (+) evidence ○ 3: 2 (+) evidence and 1 (-) evidence ○ 2: 1 (+) evidence and 2 (-) evidence ○ 1: 3 (-) evidence ○ Example: Standard 4: <i>The school is beginning to implement a comprehensive system of tiered academic and social/emotional support.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Document review, instructional observations, and staff interviews revealed that the school offers students tiered social emotional programming including universal instruction (The Rule, Zones of Regulation, Life Skills) and tier II/III supports with mental health providers. ■ The school uses Dibels data to universally place K-3 grade students into reading intervention; students in these interventions are consistently progress monitored. ■ Document review and teacher/leader interviews revealed that while the school has recently created an MTSS flowchart, the school has not articulated participation criteria for different tiers of support,

	<p>identified tier II interventions for classrooms, codified progress monitoring structures or provided teachers with professional development. Overall, interviews revealed a significant amount of confusion and frustration with the MTSS process.</p>
<p>Step 1: Prioritization of Key Levers</p>	<p>After reading through the summary of findings, CSSI team works through these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What are the most pressing priority performance challenges? How are these challenges connected to each other? ● What are the areas of root cause? Don't stop until you get to the final root! <i>*Stay rooted in the criteria; refer to the team's findings.</i> ● Which root cause areas should they address urgently and why? ● What 1-3 key levers/improvement strategies would best address these prioritized areas and why? What is most likely to result in dramatic change?
<p>Step 2: Prepare for Share-Out</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prepare a verbal overview and notes for presentation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strengths ○ Landscape Report ○ Summary of Findings ○ Key Levers for Improvement and Recommendations



Prioritization Protocol
Google Document [HERE](#)

After the Visit: Reporting

Preliminary Reporting

The 3 day visit concludes with a 60 minute feedback session with the CSSI team and the school leadership team. The CSSI team will share an overview of outcomes from the visit.

Day 3 Feedback Session Process Steps

Step 1 Report Strengths to Leverage in the School Improvement Process

- Prompt leadership to share celebrations and reflections

Step 2 Display Landscape Report and Summary of Findings

- Prompt leaders to track their thinking with post-it notes on the posters: What does not surprise you? What surprises you? What do you wonder?
- The CSSI team lead will facilitate a discussion

Step 3: Share-out of key levers and recommendations for school improvement

- Provide leaders with opportunities to process, reflect, inquire and express concerns

Formal Reporting

The CSSI team lead will finalized two formal reports within 3-4 weeks of the visit:

- The CSSI Visit Detailed Report: Full rubric scored with evidence.
- The CSSI Visit Executive Summary
 - An overview of the CSSI process
 - School strengths and team commendations
 - A summary of performance on the CSSI Detailed Report
 - Detailed findings and recommendations for key levers and next steps in the school improvement process.

CSSI Detailed Report Writing Guide for Team Members

Report Component	Expectations
Scoring	Using data triangulation, the CSSI team evaluates the degree to which the descriptor of each sub-indicator exists and the level of implementation.
Evidence Criteria	<p>The CSSI team provides synthesized and high-level evidence to support the score of each sub-indicator. The evidence should meet this criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Show</i> what you know/observed instead of <i>telling</i> but providing specific data and examples while protecting anonymity ● Focus on providing data points that “prove” the score given: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 4: 3 (+) data points ○ 3: 2 (+) data points and 1 (-) data point ○ 2: 1 (+) data points and 2 (-) data points ○ 1: 3 (-) data points

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Indicate your source and triangulate when you can while protecting anonymity (e.g. leaders and teachers reported...) ● Provide specific examples that are helpful when able to while protecting anonymity. ● Attempt to minimize re-using evidence. ● Ensure that all evidence and comments are aligned to the indicator description and rooted in data
Evidence Exemplars	<p><i>Example 1:</i></p> <p>5.b.2. Supervision and Evaluation. School administrators implement supervision and evaluation processes that develop and sustain the performance of a highly competent staff.</p> <p>Score 1:</p> <p>Evidence: Leaders reported that they are currently amending the DPS LEAP framework for teacher evaluation and that there is an upcoming board meeting to discuss the measurements that will be used for the 50% student achievement portion of the evaluation. Leaders reported that teachers did not receive mid-year evaluations but they will receive end of year evaluations. Teachers reported that they are not sure how they will be evaluated or what criteria will be used. Additionally, leaders and teachers reported that teachers are not yet receiving ongoing instructional coaching to improve their instructional performance.</p> <p><i>Example 2:</i></p> <p>6.c.2. Behavioral Expectations. Behavioral expectations are well defined, posted in a variety of settings, and clearly communicated to students and families.</p> <p>Score: 2</p> <p>Evidence: Behavior expectations were consistently reported in teacher and leader interviews and are clearly communicated to students during morning meetings; however, these expectations were inconsistently narrated and upheld throughout classroom observations. For example, while behavioral expectations were met by students in a few classroom observations (48%), student behavior was disruptive to the learning environment and not effectively redirected in many observations. Additionally, student behavior was particularly challenging during common student times such as passing periods and lunch (e.g. rough housing, loud use of profanity, student conflicts, etc.).</p>

	<p><i>Example 3</i></p> <p>8.c.1. Collaborative Process. School leadership uses a collaborative process to develop, implement, and monitor the UIP.</p> <p>Score 3</p> <p>Evidence: A review of the UIP revealed that school leadership and the board collaborated to create the plan along with teachers, parents, and the SAC. Leaders and teachers consistently reported that their major improvement strategies are data-driven instruction and MTSS; most teachers were aware of the components in this year’s UIP. Additionally, staff interviews revealed that formalized data-driven instruction structures and protocols have been implemented at this time. Last, leaders reported that they are formally monitoring the implementation of the UIP and teachers confirmed they get regular feedback.</p>
Style and Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Write in paragraphs without indentation; do not use bullets. ○ Don’t make font or other changes to the template ○ Source evidence in the past tense (e.g. teachers reported, document review indicated, classroom observations revealed...) ○ i.e. = “that is...” ○ e.g = “for example...” ○ Spell Check

CSSI Executive Summary Writing Guide for Team Leads

Report Component	Expectations
Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide numbers of stakeholder interviews and classroom observations
Strengths to Leverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide 1-2 specific commendations for each standard assessed ● Noted strengths should be rubric aligned and cite the sub-indicator (e.g. “90% of observed classrooms had precise, grade level aligned objectives and students could articulate the learning goal 2.a.1”) ● Link how the strengths can be used in school improvement when meaningful.

<p>Landscape Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Average the score for each indicator and color code Landscape Report ● Scale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Blue 3.5-4. ○ Green 2.5-3.4 ○ Yellow 1.4-2.5 ○ Red 1-1.4 																									
<p>Summary of Findings</p>	<p>For each standard assessed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a snapshot of the scored standard <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="5">Standard 7: Effective Educator. School leadership actively develops a high quality professional staff through professional learning, supervision, evaluation and commitment to continuous improvement.</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Indicators:</th> <th>Level 4: Fully Implemented</th> <th>Level 3: Generally Implemented</th> <th>Level 2: Partially Implemented</th> <th>Level 1: Minimally Implemented</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>7.a. High Quality Staff. The school implements processes that support recruitment and retention of high quality professional staff.</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>X</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>7.b. Supervision and Evaluation. The school implements supervision and evaluation processes designed to improve professional practice, instruction, and student success.</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>X</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>7.c. Professional Learning. Instructional staff members and school leadership participate in continuous, high-quality, research-informed professional learning.</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>X</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a summary statement of the standard descriptor and 3 pieces of supporting evidence *This should already be complete from day 3 prioritization protocol ● Describe the descriptor as: <i>is, is beginning to, or is not yet</i> ● Example: Standard 4: The school is beginning to implement a comprehensive system of tiered academic and social/emotional support. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Document review, instructional observations, and staff interviews revealed that the school offers students tiered social emotional programming including universal instruction (The Rule, Zones of Regulation, Life Skills) and tier II/III supports with mental health providers. ○ The school uses Dibels data to universally place K-3 grade students into reading intervention; students in these interventions are consistently progress monitored. ○ Document review and teacher/leader interviews revealed that while the school has recently created an MTSS flowchart, the school has not articulated participation criteria for different tiers of support, identified tier II interventions for classrooms, codified progress monitoring structures or provided teachers with professional development. Overall, interviews revealed 	Standard 7: Effective Educator. School leadership actively develops a high quality professional staff through professional learning, supervision, evaluation and commitment to continuous improvement.					Indicators:	Level 4: Fully Implemented	Level 3: Generally Implemented	Level 2: Partially Implemented	Level 1: Minimally Implemented	7.a. High Quality Staff. The school implements processes that support recruitment and retention of high quality professional staff.			X		7.b. Supervision and Evaluation. The school implements supervision and evaluation processes designed to improve professional practice, instruction, and student success.			X		7.c. Professional Learning. Instructional staff members and school leadership participate in continuous, high-quality, research-informed professional learning.				X
Standard 7: Effective Educator. School leadership actively develops a high quality professional staff through professional learning, supervision, evaluation and commitment to continuous improvement.																										
Indicators:	Level 4: Fully Implemented	Level 3: Generally Implemented	Level 2: Partially Implemented	Level 1: Minimally Implemented																						
7.a. High Quality Staff. The school implements processes that support recruitment and retention of high quality professional staff.			X																							
7.b. Supervision and Evaluation. The school implements supervision and evaluation processes designed to improve professional practice, instruction, and student success.			X																							
7.c. Professional Learning. Instructional staff members and school leadership participate in continuous, high-quality, research-informed professional learning.				X																						

	<p>a significant amount of confusion and frustration with the MTSS process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Providing Evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Show</i> what you know/observed instead of <i>telling</i> but providing specific data and examples while protecting anonymity ○ Focus on providing data points that “prove” the score given: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4: 3 (+) data points ▪ 3: 2 (+) data points and 1 (-) data point ▪ 2: 1 (+) data points and 2 (-) data points ▪ 1: 3 (-) data points ● Indicate your source and triangulate when you can while protecting anonymity (e.g. leaders and teachers reported...) ● Provide specific examples that are helpful when able to while protecting anonymity. ● Attempt to minimize re-using evidence. ● Ensure that all evidence and comments are aligned to the indicator description and rooted in data
<p>Detailed Findings: Key Levers for Targeted School Improvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide clear claims and compelling arguments (i.e. why will the key lever result in student gains? How does it address a root cause, tie it back to the priority performance challenges) ● Provide evidence and examples to support claims; source all evidence ● Provide specific recommendations and next steps; it is effective to provide leadership teams with a step by step process for school improvement planning ● Provide research and resources to support key levers and implementation when possible
<p>Style and Presentation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain a positive tone ● Be aware of your Economy of Language: Be concise and strategic with language ● Pay Attention to Organization: Detailed Findings & Key Levers section: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strengths ■ Big Claim ■ List subtopics ○ Subtopics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Topic Sentence ■ Evidence and Examples

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recommendations and next steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conclusion/Concluding Statement ○ Include transitions between subtopics ● Usage Rules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Don't make font or other changes to the template ○ Write strengths, findings and claims in present tense (e.g. school leadership is not yet using data to drive decision making, for example, ...) ○ Source evidence in the past tense (e.g. teachers reported, document review indicated, classroom observations revealed...) ○ i.e. = "that is..." ○ e.g = "for example..."
--	---



CSSI Executive Summary
Report Template and
Examples [HERE](#)

After the Visit: Sharing Out

Ultimately, the disclosure of findings are at the behest of the charter school's governing board and reports are provided and shared in either a BoD meeting or in a meeting with just the school leader and the BoD President/Chair. When the latter is selected by the school, the BoD President/Chair and School Leader take the findings back to the full governing board. This sharing out protocol typically takes around 30-60 minutes depending on how much the BoD and leadership engage.

Share Out Protocol	
48 Hours Before the Meeting	<p>The CSSI team lead sends the final PDF CSSI Detailed Report and CSSI Executive Summary Report to the school leader and BoD approximately 48 hours ahead of the visit. This provides enough time for digesting the findings without letting too much time for questions or concerns to go unanswered.</p> <p>The CSSI team lead provides the school leader and BoD with an</p>

	<p>annotation activity, asking them to read the CSSI Executive Summary Report while noting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrations • Questions/Concerns • Recommendations that feel right • Resources they would need to implement the recommendation
During the Meeting 30-60 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • CSSI team lead provides framing of the visit and thanks the school for their gracious preparation • Standards 1-8 Annotation Share Out • Standards 9-10 Annotation Share Out • Closing
After the Meeting	The CSSI Visit is closed out. The CSSI team will communicate that school leadership can reach out with any lingering questions or concerns.

After the Visit: Feedback and Improvement

The Schools of Choice Unit at CDE will follow up with schools, evaluators, and the Lead Reviewer after each CSSI review to solicit any feedback or areas of improvement. This feedback will be shared with the Lead Reviewer to help inform any changes to be made to the program in the future.

- [CSSI Review: Post Review School Survey](#)
- [CSSI Review: Post Review Lead Reviewer Survey](#)
- [CSSI Review: Post Review Reviewer Survey](#)

CSSI Stakeholder Detailed Responsibilities

<i>School Leadership</i>	
Before the Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch the CSSI webinar • Review CDE 10 Standards for Continuous Improvement • Engage with CSSI team lead via email to schedule the visit. CSSI team lead will reach out late July or early August

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use the Letter to the Leader and CSSI Schedule Template to create a stakeholder interview schedule approximately 7-8 weeks before the visit ● Provide the CSSI team lead with a detailed class schedule that includes room numbers, grade levels, content areas, and teacher names ● Provide CSSI team lead with most recent School Performance Framework and current Unified Improvement Plan ● Create and implement a clear and effective communication plan to school stakeholders regarding the CSSI team visit (communicate the purpose and the details) ● Collect and organize requested documents on the Document Review Checklist, and share with the CSSI team members on or by first day of the visit ● Engage in a preparation phone call with CSSI team lead approximately 3 weeks before the visit
During the Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Business as usual ● Encourage staff to attend interviews on time ● Encourage staff to stick to classroom/class schedules as much as possible ● The CSSI team may need to request school leader availability for troubleshooting should the need arise during the visit ● Engage in the day 3 findings feedback session with a positive and open mindset that is both “students first” and “improvement driven”
After the Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Receive and read formal CSSI reports 3-4 weeks after the visit ● Participate in the Share-Out meeting with full BoD or the president/chair 3-4 weeks after the visit ● Process CSSI invoices and send payment to team members within 30 days
<i>CSSI team lead</i>	
Before the Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lead communication with the school, including setting a shared purpose for the visit and building a relationship with school leadership

- Communication #1: [Get Acquainted and Schedule the Visit](#) (July/August)
 - Introduce yourself to the school leader
 - Provide links to the [CSSI webinar](#) and playbook.
 - Schedule Visit
- Communication #2: Provide Detailed Step by Step Process for Preparation (approximately 8 weeks before the visit)
 - [Letter to the Leader](#)
 - [Interview Schedule Template](#) (provide a clear deadline for the draft)
 - [Document Review Checklist](#)
 - Request school class schedule(s)
 - Schedule preparation phone call approximately 3 weeks out from the visit
- Communication #3: Get Ready Preparation Phone Call (approximately 3 weeks before the visit)
 - Check in on stakeholder communication; coaching on thorough and clear communication throughout the visit process results in a more centered and positive experience while on campus- for both the team and school officials
 - Review the draft interview schedule and make final adjustments
 - Review team needs: conference space, phone line if interviewing board members via phone, and internet access
 - Answer any lingering questions or concerns held by leadership
 - Schedule [BoD Share-Out](#)
 - Request UIP and SPF
- Prepare for Visit:
 - Use the school's class schedule to create a classroom visit schedule for the review; ensure all teachers are observed at least once. **The CSSI team does not share the classroom visit schedule with school officials.*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create a final CSSI visit schedule, assigning interviews and classroom visits to team members. ○ Provide team members with a step by step process and necessary tools to prepare for the visit at least 72 hours in advance of the visit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Link folder with all CSSI documents ■ Links/attach pertinent school documents such as school website, SPF, and UIP ■ Attach CSSI Visit Schedule ■ Provide an explanation and overview of the school and its model ■ Assign standards to team members ● Print all necessary documents for the visit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CSSI team member agreements ○ CSSI visit schedules ○ CVT copies ○ Interview Scripts ○ W-9 and Invoice
During the Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collect team member agreements, W-9s and invoices from team members and submit to the school ○ Attend all portions of the visit and stay for the scheduled day; some visits may also include commutes up to 90 minutes or overnight travel ○ Set team norms ○ Data Collection and Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stakeholder Interviews: Use interview scripts and take digital notes ■ Classroom Visits: Complete a CVT for each assigned visit and turn them (paper or digital) into the team member assessing Standard 2: Standards Based Instruction ■ Document Review: Review all documents relevant to assigned standard(s) and take notes ■ Team members are required to keep notes up to 90 days ● Serve as school leadership liaison

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitate data collection, sharing, and triangulating ● Problem solving and trouble-shooting for anything that arises, and calls in CDE when needed ● Facilitate prioritization protocol on day 3 and ensure note-taking is effective, cleaned up and sent to school leaders ● Facilitate day 3 oral share-out of findings with school leadership and provide them with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Landscape Report ○ Summary of Findings ○ Notes on Key Levers
After the Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gather, edit, and align the CSSI Visit Detailed Report ● Write CSSI Executive Summary Report; follow writing guidelines CSSI Executive Summary Writing Guide ● Submit reports to CDE for copy editing no more than 14 days after the visit. ● Final reports will be provided to the school leaders and BoD directly from the CSSI team lead 48 hours before the scheduled share-out ● Share-Out: Deliver in person or remote (depending on location) findings to the school's full BoD during a governance meeting or the school leader/BoD president ● Send final reports in PDF format to CDE SOC
CSSI team Members	
Before the Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Read all communication and preliminary documents provided by the team lead; this may include the school's website, SPF and UIP ● Review team member agreement
During the Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sign team member agreement, complete W-9 and fill out invoice ● Attend all portions of the visit and stay for the scheduled day; some visits may also include commutes up to 90 minutes or overnight travel ● Data Collection and Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stakeholder Interviews: Use interview scripts and take digital notes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Classroom Visits: Complete a CVT for each assigned visit and turn them (paper or digital) into the team member assessing Standard 2: Standards Based Instruction ■ Document Review: Review all documents relevant to assigned standard(s) and take notes ■ Team members are required to keep notes up to 90 days <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prioritization: Team members are expected to synthesize the data they collected throughout the visit and share it with the team effectively; all team members contribute to the prioritization process and help the team land on the right key levers for targeted school improvement.
After the Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Team members complete and send their assigned standard(s) within 48 hours of the visit. Team members follow this criteria for completing their rubrics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Focus on providing evidence that “proves” the score that is given ■ Show the evidence instead of telling (i.e. don’t just repeat the sub-indicator language) <p>Example:</p> <p><i>Instead of telling it:</i> “Teachers are not yet engaging in data driven instructional practices.”</p> <p><i>Show it:</i> “School leadership has not yet scheduled time for intentional data dialogue between teachers and it has not adopted a specific data dialogue protocol. Teachers and leaders reported that teachers do not work together at this time to review common assessments or student work. Additionally, teachers reported that they are unsure how to use I-Station data to drive their instruction; they have not yet received training”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Indicate the source and triangulate when applicable while protecting anonymity ■ Provide specific examples while protecting anonymity of grade level, content, teacher, etc.

- Attempt to minimize re-using evidence
 - Ensure that the provided evidence and comments are precisely aligned to the sub-indicator description
- See more details on expectations for completing rubrics in the [CSSI Detailed Report Writing Guide for Team Members](#) section.

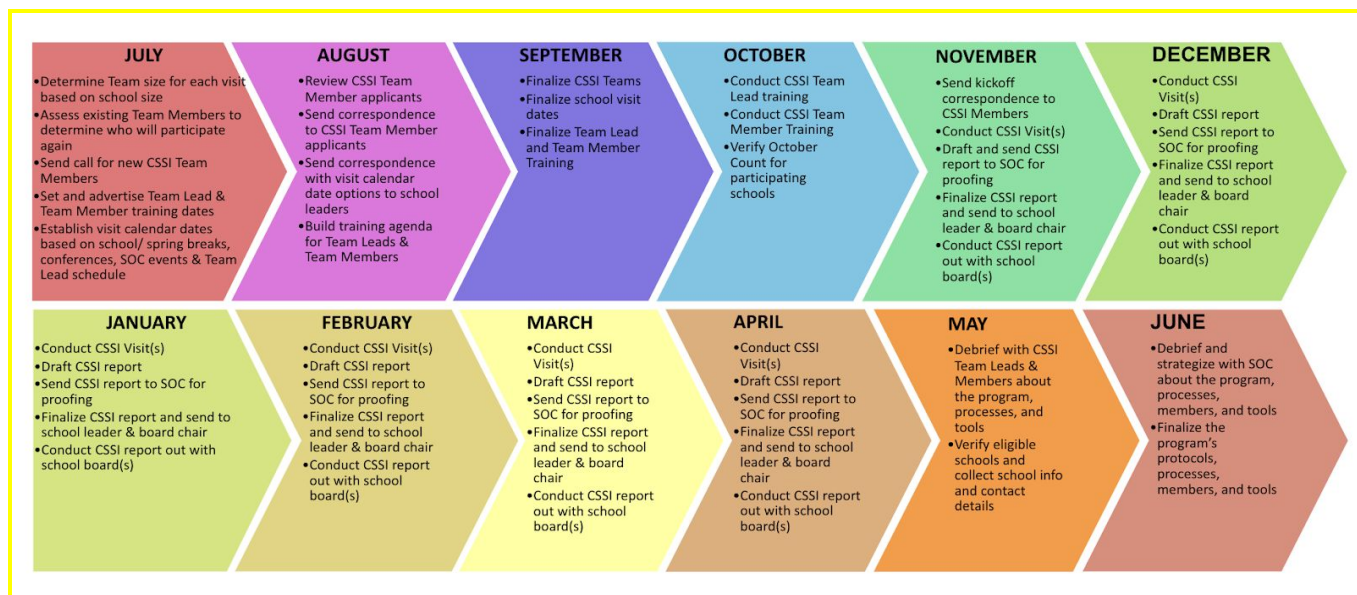
CSSI Lead Reviewer

- Maintains and shares the CSSI "[SY__ Master Visit and Teams Schedule](#)" with CDE and other team leads.
- Works with CDE SOC to select team members
- Assigns visits to team leads
- Trains and supports other CSSI team leads while also serving as one
- Develops and provides annual CSSI training to team members
- Drives programming and continuous improvement in partnership with CDE SOC

CDE SOC

- Retains an internal position that oversees the CSSI program
- Ensures that the program is updated and that all processes and documents are in place within a reasonable timeline
- Solicits and recruits review team members (may be done in collaboration with Team Lead) and provides names to the CSSI Lead Reviewer for feedback on balancing teams and selecting new members
- Communicates with all subgrantees during each year of the grant to ensure schools are aware of and have budgeted for CSSI review
- Manages all CSSI related documents (e.g. information webinar, team member agreements and resumes, CSSI playbook and tools)
- Ensures a staff person is on site for each school review to 1) serve as a liaison to the state for any questions from the review team 2) solicit any feedback or concerns from school leader/team and report to appropriate audience (authorizer, CDE unit, or other)
- Supports annual CSSI training
- Review submitted CSSI reports for clarity, tone and formatting/grammatical errors
- Attends the visit Share-Out meetings with the CSSI team lead

CSSI Program Calendar Cycle



CSSI: Toolbox



- [CDE CSSI Webinar](#)
- [CSSI Master Schedule: Visits and Teams \(Example\)](#)
- [CSSI Team Member Agreement](#)
- [CSSI Letter to the Leader](#)
- [CDE 10 Standards for Continuous Improvement](#)
- [CSSI Schedule Template and Example](#)
- [Classroom Visit Tool](#)
- [Document Review Checklist](#)
- [Stakeholder Interview Scripts](#)
- [Note-Taking Tools](#)
- [CSSI Team Member Invoice](#)

- ❑ [Day 3 Prioritization Protocol](#)
- ❑ [CSSI Executive Summary Report Templates and Examples](#)