Unified Improvement Plan Quality Criteria Rubric: District-Level

Overview

The Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) is intended to provide districts and schools with a consistent format to capture improvement planning efforts that streamline state and federal planning requirements and increase student learning. CDE developed the Quality Criteria rubric to offer guidance for creating high quality improvement plans and to establish the criteria for state and local review of district level UIPs, especially for districts on the accountability clock (i.e., Priority Improvement, Turnaround). The criteria in this document sit in the "meets expectation" column of the rubric.

General Directions

□ Access the pre-populated report, District Summary and Requirements, through UIP Online System to determine the district's unique accountability and program requirements.

□ Use the Meets Expectations and Meets Expectations at a High Level columns to guide the process.

The Big Five Guiding Questions

The "Big Five" are five guiding questions that outline the major concepts of the improvement planning process. The questions build upon each other and facilitate alignment across the entire plan. Does the plan:

○ Investigate the most critical performance areas and prioritize the most urgent *performance challenges*?

○ Identify *root causes* that explain the magnitude of the performance challenges?

○ Identify evidence-based *major improvement strategies* that have likelihood to eliminate the root causes?

○ Present a well-designed *action plan* for implementing the major improvement strategies to bring about dramatic improvement?

○ Include elements that effectively *monitor* the impact and *progress* of the action plan?
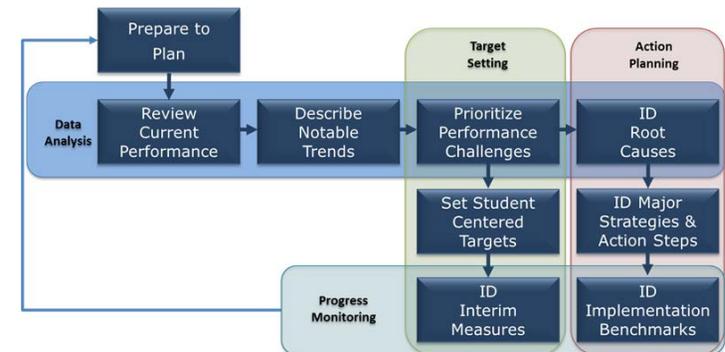
Structure

Organized by the "Big Five," the various plan elements are further defined and include questions that if addressed*, lead to* a well-developed improvement plan. Most of these questions blend best practice and accountability requirements. Districts should aim for meeting the criteria in the two far right columns (Meets Expectations and Meets Expectations at a High Level). The most effective plans build a case that remains coherent across each section of the plan, rather than simply addressing each section independently. Those requirements that only apply to some districts are labeled separately at the end of each section. Greyed out sections will not be reviewed by CDE during the current school year.

Crosswalk between the "Big Five," Sections of the Planning Process and Tabs within the Online UIP

Big Five Question	Section of Planning Process (see flow map graphic)	UIP Online Tab	
		Main Tab	**Sub Tab**
○ Does the plan investigate the most critical performance areas and prioritize the most urgent *performance challenges*?	• Gather and Organize Data • Review Performance • Describe Notable Trends • Prioritize Performance Challenges	Data Narrative	• Brief Description • Prior Year Targets • Current Performance • Trend Analysis • Priority Performance Challenges
○ Does the plan identify *root causes* that explain the magnitude of performance challenges?	• Identify Root Causes	Data Narrative Action Plans	• Root Causes
○ Does the plan identify evidenced-based *major improvement strategies* that are likely to eliminate the root causes?	• Identify Major Improvement Strategies	Action Plans	• Major Improvement Strategies
○ Does the UIP present a well-designed *action plan* for implementing the major improvement strategies to bring about dramatic improvement?	• Identify Major Improvement Strategies • Identify Action Steps	Action Plans	• Major Improvement Strategies • Planning Form
○ Does the plan include elements that effectively *monitor* the impact and *progress* of the action plan?	• Set Performance Targets • Identify Interim Measures • Identify Implementation Benchmarks	Action Plans	• Target Setting • Planning Form

1	**Does the plan investigate the most critical performance areas and prioritize the most urgent performance challenges?**	
Relevant UIP Element	**Topic**	**Meets Expectations**
Brief Description	Demographics and Context	Includes a description of district's demographics and relevant contextual information about district (e.g., number of students served; student demographics, including disaggregated groups)
	Stakeholder Input and Involvement	Describes how a variety of stakeholders (including principals and other district leaders, teachers and district staff, parents and families, and the District Accountability Committee) were meaningfully involved in UIP development.
Prior Year Targets	Previous Performance Targets	Reflects on the previous year's performance targets and improvement efforts.
Current Performance	Current Performance	Describes current district performance relative to local, state and federal metrics and expectations (e.g. SPF metrics, ESSA indicators).
Trend Analysis	Notable Trends	Describes positive and negative trends in student performance data and includes key elements measure, metric, group, direction and comparison point, as appropriate for available n-counts.
	Data and disaggregation	Describes performance trends of all students and disaggregated groups of students, when count allows for public reporting. (When the number of students (n) is too small for public reporting an explanation for that student group is provided.)
	Data Sources	Includes multiple data sources with an explanation of the sources that were included or excluded for analysis.
Priority Performance Challenges	Identification of PPCs	Identifies a limited number (e.g., 3 or fewer) of student-centered performance challenges that focus district's improvement efforts (e.g., appropriate magnitude).
	Selection	Priority Performance Challenges align to the trend analysis by focusing on challenges that are logical and high-leverage; plan includes strong rationale for the selected priority performance challenges.
	Address Indicators	Priority Performance Challenges address performance indicators or sub-indicators where system is not yet meeting expectations (i.e., local, state and/or federal indicators, as applicable).
Additional Requirements for Some Districts in Data Narrative, Notable Trends, Priority Performance Challenges		
On Watch	Sustained Improvement (Prior Targets)	Reflection on improvement efforts demonstrate understanding of changes to support sustained or accelerated improvement.
Late on the clock **Year 4 or later**	Prior year targets and previous efforts	Includes a description of previous actions to address identified challenges and their degree of effectiveness (e.g., successes, gaps). This may include required Turnaround actions.

EASI Grant *For grantees within Exploration or Offered Services*	Integration of evaluation	Integrates the results of the diagnostic review into the improvement plan.
Gifted Education	Prior Years Target	Describes the performance of gifted education students compared to previously identified targets.
	Performance Challenge	Explicitly identifies for gifted education a student-centered performance challenge describing a strategic focus for district improvement efforts, either as a part of a larger district challenge or exclusively for gifted education students.

2	**Does the plan identify root causes which explain the magnitude of the performance challenges?**	
Relevant UIP Element	**Topic**	**Meets Expectations**
Root Causes	Actionable Root Cause	Identifies root causes that are under the control of the district, aimed at the systems level, and target the underlying reasons for the priority performance challenge(s)
	Root Causes Selection Process	Explains how root causes were identified, including, data sources used, stakeholder involvement, and the rationale for selecting a root cause.
	Additional Requirements for Some Districts	
Late on the clock Year 4 or later	Reassessment of RCs Over Time	Root cause analysis reflects a current examination of causes.
Early Learning Needs Assessment *For K-3 serving districts in Priority Improvement or Turnaround*	*Early Learning Needs Assessment*	Summarizes findings from an ELNA that meets the minimum requirements and commits to next steps based on those findings.
	ELNA for Districts in Turnaround	Early Learning Needs Assessment includes a complete analysis of early elementary student achievement data. Plan identifies appropriate research-based next steps to improve early childhood programs and partnerships.
EASI Grant *For grantees within Exploration or Offered Services*	Identification of Systems Needs of District	Provides an integrated systems analysis as a result of exploration work through EASI grant participation. Process and perception data are leveraged in the validation of root causes.

Course Taking Analysis *For secondary schools*	Analysis of course taking patterns	Includes an analysis of student course taking patterns by disaggregated groups.

3	**Does the plan identify evidence-based major improvement strategies that are likely to eliminate the root causes?**	
Relevant UIP Element	**Topic**	**Meets Expectations**
Major Improvement Strategies (MIS)	Evidence-Based Strategies	Provides clear rationale for the selection of Major Improvement Strategies, including the evidence-base and explanation of why the strategy is a good fit for the district's need, student population and staff capacity.
Additional Requirementsfor Some Districts in Major Improvement Strategies		
Accountability Clock Strategies *For districts on clock*	Likelihood of success	Conveys a sense of urgency and has a likelihood of resulting in adequate change in performance for the district to exit the accountability clock within a reasonable timeframe.
	Turnaround strategy *For Turnaround*	Identifies a state-required turnaround strategy and details within the action plan that are aligned to the needs identified in the data narrative.

4	**Does the plan present a well-designed plan for implementing the major improvement strategies to bring about dramatic improvement?**	
Relevant UIP Element	Topic	**Meets Expectations**
Action Plans	Alignment to MIS	Aligns action steps to MIS.
	Specific and Reasonable Action Steps	Lists action steps that are thorough, attainable and can be completed within the designated time frame.
	Plan Duration	Guides plan implementation for the duration of plan public posting (e.g. two years for districts exercising biennial flexibility).
	Assigned Resources	Assigns adequate resources (e.g., personnel, funds) necessary to implement action steps.

Additional Requirements for Some Districts		
On Watch	Sustained Improvement	Action steps build upon previous improvement efforts that moved the district off the clock or provides strong rationale for change in data analysis.
EASI Grant *For grantees within District Designed and Led; Offered Services*	Aligned Action Plan	Action plan aligns with activities approved through the EASI grant.
Student Course Taking Report	Action to address Inequities in course taking patterns	Includes action steps to address identified patterns of significant disparities in disaggregated groups taking challenging coursework.
Gifted Education	Actions to Support Gifted Students	Describes an explicit approach to meet the performance needs of gifted education students.

⑤		Does the plan include elements to effectively monitor the impact and progress of the action plan?
Relevant UIP Element	Topic	**Meets Expectations**
Performance Targets	Measures and Metrics	Specifies the measure (assessment method) and metric (standard of measurement).
	Quality of Target	Identifies ambitious, attainable targets that align to the Priority Performance Challenges. Where possible, targets are set using the same measure as PPCs (e.g. if the PPC is focused on SAT mean scale score, target is focused on SAT mean scale score).
Interim Measures	Alignment to Target	Specifies interim measures that are aligned to an annual target and assess the impact of the strategies on student outcomes multiple times per year.
	Quality of Interim Measures	Lists interim measures that specifies expected student progress over the course of the year.

Implementation Benchmarks	Alignment to MIS	Each Major Improvement Strategy has at least one aligned implementation benchmark.
	Quality of Implementation Benchmarks	Plan provides benchmarks for each major improvement strategy that enable staff to determine whether implementation of strategies is occurring in an effective manner and articulates a plan for adjusting implementation, as needed.
Additional Requirements for Some Districts		
READ Act *For districts serving K-3*	READ Act Targets (SRD)	Specifies ambitious and attainable target(s) as measured by the district's READ Act assessment for reducing the number of students who have significant reading deficiencies.
	READ Act Targets (Grade Level Expectations)	Specifies target(s) to ensure that each student achieves grade level expectations in reading by end of grade 3.
Gifted Education	Gifted Education Targets	Describes annual performance targets for gifted education students.
	Gifted Education Interim Measures	Describes interim measures aligned to annual performance targets for gifted education students.
EASI Grant *For grantees within District Designed and Led; Offered Services*	Evaluation plan	Includes implementation benchmarks that describe how the district will monitor implementation of activities approved in the EASI grant.