

Policy Code: 3430 School Improvement Plan

The School Improvement Plan is an important tool to improve student performance and reach the school's annual performance goals as set by the state and the local Boards of Education.

The Board affirms the General Assembly's belief that all children can learn and that the mission of public schools is to challenge, with high expectations, each child to learn, achieve, and fulfill his or her potential. Accordingly, the board has established its vision, standards and means of accountability for the educational program in its policies. The superintendent will provide guidance and establish any other standards necessary for effective implementation of the policies. Principals are responsible for leading each school in implementing the policies.

Each school must develop a school improvement plan that considers the goals set out in the mission statement for the public schools adopted by the State Board of Education ("State Board") and the annual performance goals for that school as established by the State Board under [G.S. 115C-105.35](#). In developing their school improvement plans, all schools will ensure that sufficient resources and curriculum are directed towards meeting the goal of having all students performing at grade level or higher in the basic subject and skill areas identified by the State Board. In addition to the basics emphasized in the state testing program, the Board expects schools to be guided by the educational goals of the district.

The Board encourages schools to consider innovative means of educating students to meet educational goals. Board policies provide an opportunity for a school to incorporate innovative ideas into its school improvement plans; however, if a school would like to try an innovative method that requires deviation from Board policy, the school may request to the Board for a waiver of the Board policy. (See also Policy 2400, Board Policies) Any waiver request must identify the particular Board Policy that inhibits the school's ability to improve student performance, set out with specificity the circumstances under which the waiver may be used, and explain how the requested waiver will permit the school to improve student performance. The Board will consider such requests to the extent the waiver is permissible by law and likely to result in improved student performance at the school.

Principals, assistant principals, teachers, and other instructional staff at each school are responsible for designing and implementing strategies to reach their educational goals. The school improvement plan must specify the effective instructional practices and methods to be used to improve the academic performance of students. Input from the school community, including parents, students and representatives from businesses, and other agencies is critical in developing an educational program that will meet the needs of the students and the community.

A. School Improvement Team

Each school will have a school improvement team (SIT) that will develop the school improvement plan to improve student performance. The school improvement team must follow all legal requirements for developing and obtaining school approval of the school improvement plan. School improvement teams also must be familiar with state and local board requirements related to managing and using fiscal resources, and must comply with these requirements in developing and implementing school improvement plans. The school improvement team will be composed of the principal, an assistant principal, instructional personnel, certified instructional support personnel, and teacher assistants assigned to the school building, and parents of students attending the school. Representatives of each group of school personnel shall be elected by their respective groups by secret ballot. Parent representatives will be elected by parents in elections sponsored by PTA or PTSA, and in accordance with [G.S. 115C-105.27\(a\)](#). In addition, two students shall serve on each middle school SIT and three students shall serve on each high school SIT. Student representatives will be elected by students attending that school.

Additional local membership guidelines are enumerated in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools' School Improvement Team Operational Framework. Schools are encouraged to work to ensure that School Improvement Teams reflect interests and populations within their student bodies. The school improvement team is encouraged to involve and seek assistance from central office personnel.

School improvement team meetings will be held at a convenient time to facilitate substantial parent participation. The principal will ensure that the school improvement team complies with the Open Meetings Law in regard to its meetings. Deliberations on the school safety components of the plan must be in closed session in accordance with [G.S. 143-318.11\(a\)\(8\)](#).

B. Mandatory Components of the Plan

A school improvement plan must include the following components to identify efforts by the school to improve student performance and to reach the educational goals of the Board. These components may be addressed through the use of specific goals or through Indicators on the NCSTAR (Indistar) platform. A school improvement plan shall remain in effect no more than two years; however, the school improvement team may amend the plan as often as is necessary or appropriate. The principal will notify the superintendent if the school improvement team significantly modifies a board accepted school improvement plan. The Board will review the modifications along with any recommendations from the superintendent and accept or reject the modifications.

1. All school improvement plans shall be, to the greatest extent possible, data-driven. The School Improvement Team shall use the Education Value Added Assessment System (EVAAS) or a compatible and comparable system approved by the State Board to analyze student data to identify root causes for problems and to determine actions to address them and for the principal to appropriately place students in courses. School improvement plans shall contain clear, unambiguous targets, explicit indicators and actual measures, and expeditious time frames for meeting the measurement standards.
2. The plan must take into consideration the annual performance goals for public schools that are set by the State Board under [G.S. 115C-105.35](#) and the goals set out for the public schools adopted by the State Board. In addition, the plan must address major district priorities and district initiatives as directed by the superintendent (Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program, Policy 3000).
3. The plan must specify the effective instructional practices and methods to be used to improve the academic performance of students identified as at-risk of academic failure or at-risk of dropping out of school. The plan should include intervention strategies for students who are not at grade level proficiency or are not likely to meet other measures of standards for promotion. (Student Progression and Placement, policy 3420)
4. The plan must include a results-based staff development component and identify how staff development funds allocated to the school will be used. In addition, the plan must identify how professional development is clearly matched to the goals and objectives of the safe school plan.
5. The plan must provide a duty-free lunch period for every teacher on a daily basis or as otherwise approved by the school improvement team.
6. The plan must provide a duty-free instructional planning time for every full-time assigned classroom teacher, with the goal of providing an average of at least five hours of planning time per week.

7. As part of the school district's efforts to maintain safe and orderly schools, the plan must address safety and discipline concerns including any special conditions at the school and any requirements in the local level safe schools plan for school level objectives or strategies. Pursuant to [G.S. 115C-105.47](#) (Local Safe Schools Plan) and [G.S. 115C-105.27](#) (Development and Approval of School Improvement Plans), each school shall have a safe school plan that establishes procedures for addressing school safety. The safe school plan must include behavior management programs that take positive approaches to improving student behaviors and should comply with the requirements of policy 1510/4200/7270, School Safety, and all protocols established by the Superintendent or designee under that policy. Strategies should be integrated into the school improvement plan. The full safe schools plan should be attached to the school improvement plan.

8. In accordance with Board Policy 1310/4002, Parental Involvement, the plan must identify the goals and strategies for parents to be involved in their child's education and the educational program of the school. The strategies must include ways to enhance parental involvement, such as:

- meaningful two-way communication between home and school;
- parent involvement in student learning;
- promotion of volunteering;
- parent involvement in school decisions that affect children and families;
- promotion of student health awareness;
- promotion of responsible parenting; and
- community collaboration.

9. The plan must provide at least an annual process for review of the school improvement plan by the school improvement team. The annual process must include a review of student scores from all state and local board mandated tests. The annual review process also must include a means for the school improvement team to modify the plan. School improvement plans will be modified when the school has not met the expected growth score established by the State.

10. The plan must attempt to identify and eliminate unnecessary and redundant reporting requirements for teachers and, to the extent practicable, streamline the school's reporting system and procedures, including requiring forms and reports to be in electronic form when possible and incorporating relevant documents into the student accessible components of the Instructional Improvement System.

In addition, a school improvement plan may include the following components:

1a. The plan may include a request for waivers of state laws, rules or local board policies. Any waiver request must identify the particular state law, rule or policy that inhibits the school's ability to improve student performance; set out with specificity the circumstances under which the waiver may be used; and explain how the requested waiver will permit the school to improve student performance. The waivers which may be sought are established in [G.S. 115C-105.26](#).

2a. The plan may include a request to transfer state funds from one allotment category to another, as permitted by state law. The request must identify the funding allotment categories involved in the transfer and identify how the transfer will facilitate improving student performance. The possible transfers are established in [G.S.](#)

[115C-105.26.](#)

3a. The plan may provide for the use of textbooks that have not been adopted by the State Board (See Policy 3200, Selection of Instructional Materials).

4a. The plan may include innovative efforts to meet local educational goals. The following are examples of innovative efforts identified in Board Policies that the plan may address:

- i. modifying the school calendar (See Policy 3300, School Calendar and Time for Learning);
- ii. implementing alternative scheduling of classes or other strategies intended to reduce transitional time and limit interference from non-instructional activities (Policy 3300);
- iii. adding hours of instructional time (Policy 3300);
- iv. providing additional means for evaluating instructional programs (Policy 3140, Evaluation of Instructional Programs);
- v. developing and implementing pilot programs (Policy 3110, Innovation in Curriculum and Instruction);
- vi. expanding the subject areas or objectives of the curriculum (Policy 3100, Curriculum Development);
- vii. eliminating curricula on subject areas or objectives that are not state-required (Policy 3100); and
- viii. modifying the system-wide instructional and curriculum guides (See Policy 3115, Curriculum and Instruction Guides).

C. Development and Review of the Plan

The superintendent will provide guidance to principals to ensure that they establish and work with school improvement teams to develop, renew, and amend school improvement plans. The superintendent is directed to develop regulations to outline procedures for writing school improvement plans. School improvement teams should review available student performance data, survey feedback, and specific school standards established by the state and local Boards in developing the school improvement plan. The superintendent will establish the date by which school improvement plans must be submitted. The superintendent and schools are encouraged to use professional development resources to provide training for staff and school improvement team members on the development, implementation, and evaluation of school improvement plans.

The principal first shall present the proposed school improvement plan to all of the assistant principals, instructional personnel, instructional support personnel, and teacher assistants assigned to the school building for their review and vote by secret ballot. The principal then shall submit the school improvement plan to the superintendent only if the proposed school improvement plan has the approved majority of the staff who voted on the plan.

The superintendent or designee will review the plans and seek legal review as necessary prior to presenting the plans with written recommendations to the Board. If the superintendent intends

to recommend rejection of a plan, the superintendent will notify the principal and explain the reasons. The school improvement team may submit a modified plan, approved by staff vote, to the superintendent.

The board will review the school improvement plans. The review of the school safety components of the plans must be in closed session. The board shall make findings on the safety components of the plan. Neither the safety components of the plans nor the board's findings on the safety components of the plans may be set out in the minutes of the board.

After review of the school improvement plans, the Board will accept or reject each school improvement plan. If rejected, the Board will explain the specific reason(s) for its rejection. Any plan modified by the school improvement team after being rejected by the Board must be resubmitted to the school personnel for vote and, upon majority approval, resubmitted to the superintendent for review. The superintendent will re-submit the modified plan to the Board with recommendations. The Board will review the modifications along with any recommendations from the superintendent and accept or reject the plan.

If the Board and the school improvement team cannot reach agreement on the plan within 60 days after its initial submission, the Board or school may request to use the dispute resolution process developed by the State Board under [G.S. 115C-105.27](#) or, if use of the dispute process is not requested, the board may develop a school improvement plan for the school.

The school improvement plan must be reviewed at least annually by the school improvement team in accordance with the review process established in the school's plan. An annual status report must be written by the principal in accordance with the review process established by the district. If a school does not earn an overall performance grade of at least a C or does not meet its expected growth standard established by the State Board, the principal must submit to the superintendent and the board a report from the school improvement team. The report is to explain the reasons the standard(s) was not met and describe any modification that will be made in the school improvement plan. After considering any recommendations of the superintendent, if the board is not satisfied with the response of the school improvement team, the board may suggest modifications to the plan.

D. Elimination of Redundant or Unnecessary Reporting Requirements

If, at any time before or after the board approved the school improvement plan, the school improvement team identified a more expeditious manner of providing information to the board that will eliminate a redundant or unnecessary reporting requirement for teachers at its school, the team may make written request to the superintendent to eliminate the redundant or unnecessary report. The superintendent shall recommend to the board whether the reporting requirement should be eliminated for that school. If the superintendent does not recommend elimination of the reporting requirement, the school improvement team may request a hearing by the board as approved in policy 2500, Hearings before the Board.

E. Compliance with Requirements

Any employee, parent or other interested party is encouraged to notify the principal of any concerns regarding compliance with this policy or [G.S. 115C-105.27](#). In addition, any employee, parent, or other interested party may submit in writing to the superintendent concerns regarding compliance with this policy or [G.S. 115C-105.27](#). The superintendent shall make a good faith effort to investigate the concern and shall provide a written response upon request.

F. Posting the School Improvement Plan Online

The school improvement plan, except for its school safety components which are not public record, must be posted on the school's website. The names and positions of the members of the school improvement team, along with the date of each member's election to the team, must also be posted.

G. Staff Development

The superintendent shall develop a process by which the schools can learn from other schools' improvement plans. The superintendent and the schools are encouraged to use staff development resources to provide training to staff on the development, implementation, and evaluation of school improvement plans.

School administrators must be evaluated by their supervisors on the school-based management process and on the effectiveness of the school improvement plan.

Legal References: [G.S. 115C-47](#)(38), [-81](#), [-83.15](#), [-84.2](#), [-98](#), [-105.20](#), [-105.21](#), [-105.25](#), [-105.26](#), [-105.27](#), [-105.27\(a\)](#), [-105.27\(b\)\(5\)](#), refers specifically to courses "such as Algebra I", [-105.32](#), [-105.35](#), [-105.41](#), [-105.47](#), [-301.1](#), [-307\(g\)](#), [143 art. 33C](#), [S.L. 2015-46](#), [S.L. 2015-241](#), Sec. 8A.3.(a) and Sec. 8A.6.(a); SBE policy [GCS-C.021](#).

Cross References: Parental Involvement (Policy 1310/4002), School Safety (Policy 1510/4200/7270), Compliance with the Open Meetings Law (Policy 2320), Board Policies (Policy 2400), Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program (Policy 3000), Curriculum Development (Policy 3100), Innovation in Curriculum and Instruction (Policy 3110), Curriculum and Instruction Guides (Policy 3115) Lesson Planning (Policy 3120), Evaluation of Instructional Programs (Policy 3140), Selection of Instructional Materials (Policy 3200) Time for Learning (Policy 3300), and Student Progression and Placement (Policy 3420)

Other Resources: North Carolina School Improvement Planning Implementation Guide, Version 2.3 – July 2016, N.C. State Board of Education/Department of Public Instruction, available at <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/media/4632/download>

Adopted:

Revised 9/5/02, Revised 8/9/07, Revised: 4/28/09, 10/1/09, 5/5/11, 9/15/11, 9/26/14, 2/5/15, 6/2/16, 10/18/18, 11/4/21, 1/19/23

Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools
