

Schools that use the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation process may substitute the SACS plan for the school renewal plan provided that it includes the components (a) through (g) listed above and described below.

a. Comprehensive Needs Assessment

The annual needs assessment will provide focus for planning teams to set priorities for the plan. The comprehensive needs assessment must identify targeted areas of discrepancy between the desired performance levels and the current status as indicated by available data. Any discrepancies in the following areas identified by the school and district report cards must be included in the plan:

- (1) achievement,
- (2) achievement by subgroups,
- (3) graduation rates,
- (4) attendance,
- (5) discipline,
- (6) teacher/administrator quality and professional growth, and
- (7) other priority areas.

b. Performance Goals

Measurable performance goals, written in five-year increments, shall be developed to address the major areas of discrepancy found in the needs assessment in key areas reported in the district and school report cards. Performance goals in the district strategic plan and school renewal plans must address

- (1) student achievement,
- (2) teacher/administrator quality,
- (3) school climate (parent involvement, safe and healthy schools, and other locally identified areas), and
- (4) other innovation initiatives or priorities as identified by districts and schools.

c. Interim Performance Goals

Interim performance goals will establish annual measurable targets for the five-year performance goals.

d. Strategies and Action Plans

Strategies shall be derived from scientifically-based education research and best practice and shall be designed to meet the performance and interim performance goals. Action plans, which may include innovative initiatives, will provide details (action/activity, person responsible, start and end dates for major action steps, professional development, necessary resources, and progress measures) regarding the implementation of each data-driven strategy to ensure continuous improvement. Staff development shall meet national professional development standards and must provide participants the knowledge and skills necessary to implement the strategies. Coordination of funding from local, state, federal, and private sources is imperative. Schools visited by an external review team (ERT) must incorporate appropriate recommendations into their annual update.

e. Evaluation of the Strategies

Ongoing evaluation (formative and summative) will assess the progress toward performance goals and annual interim performance goals. Measures of effectiveness must include outcome and process indicators of improvement. The methods of assessing the efficacy of the strategies must provide data regarding the impact of the strategies and whether they should be continued, modified, or terminated. After the initial year of the plan, the evaluation results from the annual update will become a key component of the ongoing needs assessment process.

f. Evidence of Comprehensive Consensus Building

Shared decision making is central to the formulation of a functional plan. Therefore, a collaborative consensus building process shall be used in the development of the district strategic plan and school renewal plans. Stakeholders, including teachers, administrators/principals, parents/guardians, and community representatives, must be actively involved in the district strategic planning and school renewal planning processes. The School Improvement Council must actively participate in the development of the school renewal plan.

g. Assurances

Assurances, signed by the district superintendent, attest that the district and schools comply with all applicable federal and state statutory and fiscal requirements.