



Alaska State System of Support (SSOS) Operations Manual November, 2010

Building Local Capacity

2010-2011 Academic Year

This document is a publication of the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (EED) and may be reprinted without permission. The department continuously seeks feedback regarding this document. Please email comments to SSOS team (alaskastepp@alaska.gov), or mail to:

State System of Support
P.O. Box 110500
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0500

Table of Contents

Part I: Introduction

SSOS Purpose and Mission.....	3
SSOS Organizational System.....	4

Part II: Framework, Evidence, and Evolution

Tri-Tiered Model of Support.....	6
SSOS Services Available to Districts by Tier.....	7
Tier Identification Process.....	9
The Cycle of Support.....	10
Considerations made by the SSOS.....	11

Appendices

A. School Improvement Planning Calendar.....	13
B. Federal Law and Alaska Statutes Related to the SSOS.....	14
C. Alaska Administrative Codes Related to the SSOS.....	16
D. Six Domains of Effective Schools and Districts.....	23
E. Desk Audit vs. Instructional Audit vs. Self-Study.....	24
F. Elements of the Instructional Audit Tool.....	25
G. Elements of the Self-Study Tool.....	27
H. Alaska STEPP.....	28
I. Elements of the Alaska Peer Review Guidance Document.....	30
J. Consequences of not Making Adequate Yearly Progress.....	38
K. Menu of Available Services.....	39
L. Reporting Template for Technical Assistance Coaches.....	40
M. Reporting Template for Content Coaches.....	45
N. Reporting Template for Lead Technical Assistance Coaches.....	50
O. Cultural Standards for Alaska Students.....	59
P. List of Persons in the SSOS Structure.....	61
Glossary.....	62

Purpose and Mission

The mission of the State System of Support (SSOS) is to support districts as they build their capacity to implement sustainable school improvement strategies with fidelity. Authority for developing and implementing a system of support for districts and schools comes from both State and Federal law (see Appendices B and C). This document provides an overview of the SSOS program and resources that are available to districts and schools in Alaska.

SSOS was established to help all students (AS 14.03.015):

- Succeed in education and work,
- Shape a personally worthwhile and satisfying life,
- Exemplify the best values of society, and
- Be effective in improving the character and quality of the world.

The SSOS program goal is for all districts and schools to:

- Demonstrate yearly increases in student achievement in all subgroups,
- Show improvement in the school value table index growth score, and
- Exhibit gains in the growth of individual student achievement with the eventual goal of two consecutive years of meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

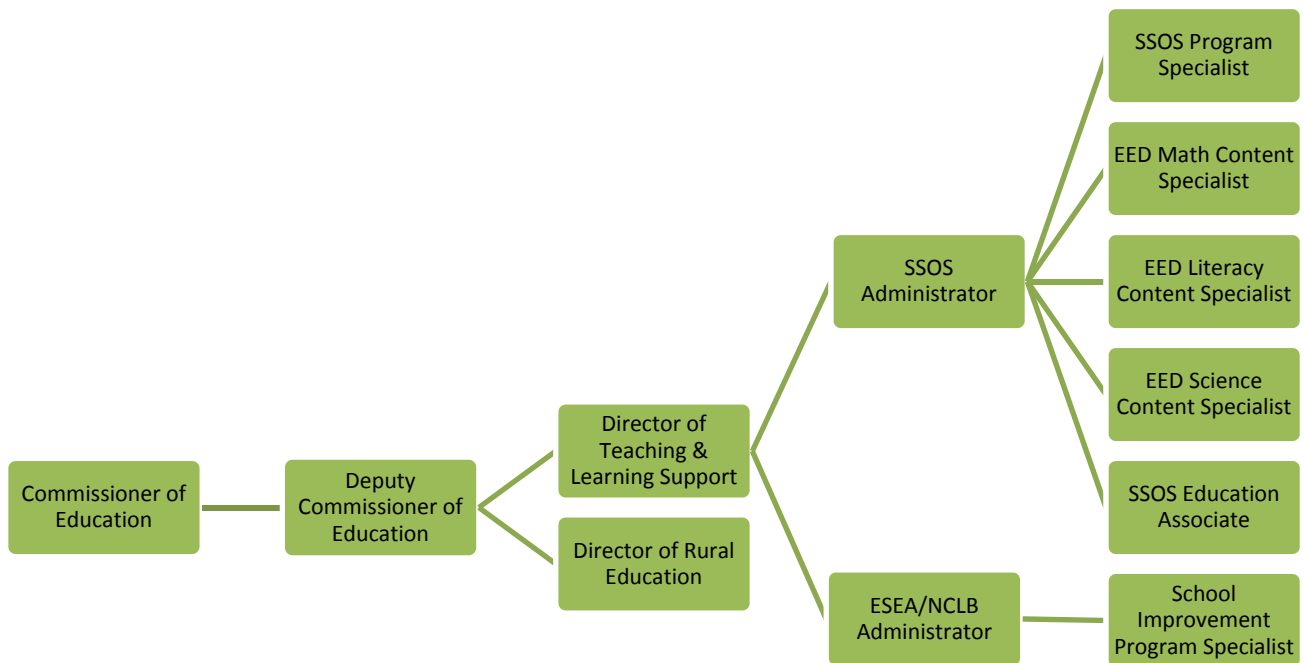
The SSOS specializes in helping Alaskan districts, schools, and school boards:

- Develop, sustain, and monitor improvement efforts,
- Build local capacity and increase staff retention rates,
- Align curriculum with Alaska Grade Level Expectations (GLEs),
- Gain meaningful exposure to all content areas,
- Use formative and summative assessment to make decisions and to inform instruction,
- Develop a multi-tiered approach to curriculum delivery that incorporates quality instruction and effective interventions for all students,
- Implement effective instructional strategies that are aligned to curriculum as well as addressing the needs of diverse learners,
- Implement effective High School Graduation Qualifying Exam (HSGQE) Remediation Plans,
- Foster a positive school climate and learning environment that is attentive to local culture,
- Foster staff collaboration through weekly staff meetings that discuss individual student progress,
- Align professional development policies and practices with resources and academic goals,
- Utilize instructional leaders to model and reinforce behavioral expectations, and
- Understand their role in improving student achievement.

SSOS Organizational System

The SSOS primary mission is to help districts build their capacity to sustain student growth. State and Federal government statutes require growth in student achievement and provide funds to ensure that the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (EED) supports and holds districts accountable for the same.

EED's departmental SSOS organizational system is as follows:

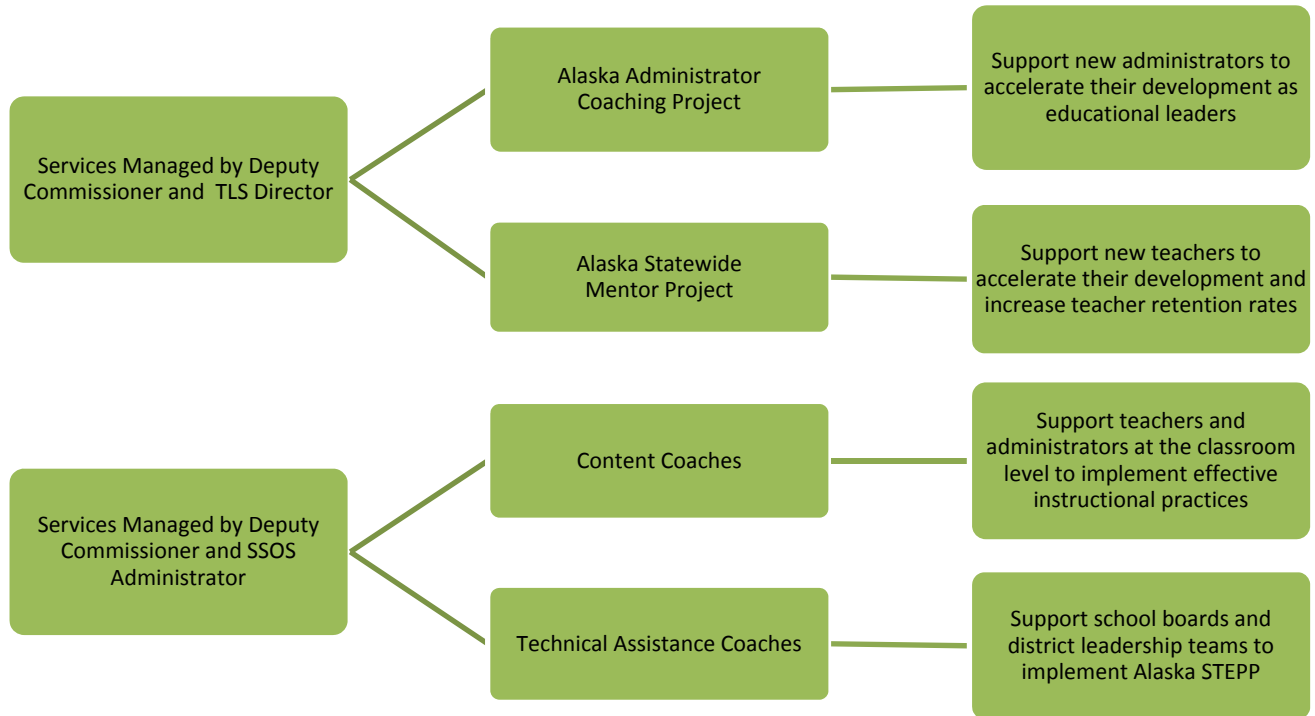


The SSOS collaborates with all divisions and sections of EED and works in partnership with the following agencies:

- Alaska Administrator Coaching Project (AACP)
- Alaska Comprehensive Center (ACC)
- Alaska Parent Information Resource Center (AKPIRC)
- Alaska Staff Development Network (ASDN)
- Alaska Statewide Mentor Project (ASMP)
- Alaska State Writing Consortium (ASWC)
- Assessment & Accountability Comprehensive Center (AACC)
- Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB)
- Center on Innovation and Improvement (CII)
- Consortium on Reading Excellence (CORE)
- Education Northwest
- Mid-Continent Research for Education & Learning (McRel)
- Measured Progress
- Rural Alaska Principal Preparation & Support (RAPPS)
- Special Education Service Agency (SESA)
- WestEd

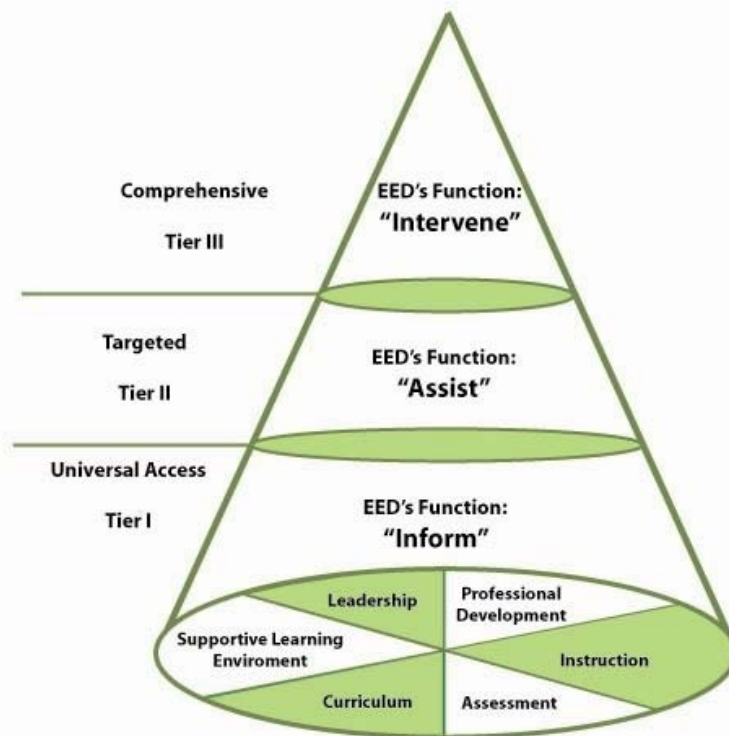
In addition, the SSOS is comprised of service providers who work in the field:

Alaska Administrative Coaches who work with new administrators to accelerate their development as educational leaders, Alaska Statewide Mentors who work with new teachers to accelerate their development and increase teacher retention rates, Content Coaches (CCs) who work at the classroom level with teachers and administrators to implement effective instructional practices, and Technical Assistance Coaches (TACs) who work with school boards and district leadership teams to implement Intervention District Improvement Plans (I-DIPs) created by Alaska STEPP (see Appendix H) or the Self-Study Tool (see Appendix G).



Tri-Tiered Model of Support

The SSOS uses a tri-tiered model to represent SSOS efforts to help districts build their capacity to implement sustainable school improvement strategies. EED provides aligned resources, information, professional development, content coaches, and technical assistance within six domain areas that represent aspects of best practices that substantially influence school and student performance. The six domains are: curriculum, assessment, instruction, supportive learning environment, professional development, and leadership (see Appendix D). Depending on which tier a district is in, EED provides the district with varying degrees of support within each domain.



SSOS Services Available to Districts by Tier

While all districts have access to the SSOS, the schools and districts designated at higher levels of accountability through more years of not making AYP, or as audit-identified “872” schools, will have targeted support or may be required to participate in comprehensive support activities.

At the Universal Access level of support, all districts and schools have access to information that supports the six domain areas. Examples of support provided at the Universal Access level are information provided through the ACC and EED websites (visit <http://dev.alaskacc.org/ssos> or <http://www.eed.state.ak.us/>), through audio or web conferences, and through regional or State conferences offered to participants from all districts. At the Targeted level of support, EED provides increased resources and support available to schools and districts identified in greater need. Examples of this support are on-site visits or workshops provided by CCs. At the Comprehensive level of support, EED provides focused support and requirements through the I-DIP for those districts and schools at the highest level of need. Examples of this support include CCs, TACs, and on-site professional development or training.

Tier I: Universal Access

- Description:** Designed to provide all districts with access to information about the best practices in the six domains of effective schools (curriculum, assessment, instruction, supportive learning environment, professional development, and leadership).
- Example:** Districts and schools meeting AYP.
- EED Expectations:** Tier I sites use most effective practices to improve student achievement and ask for support when they need it.
- Support Provided by EED:** SSOS is available to help identify and leverage resources for school and district improvement. In addition, EED offers access to our website, audio and web conferences, and regional or State conferences.

Tier II: Targeted

- Description:** Designed to provide districts and schools in greater need with additional assistance.
- Example:** Districts and schools not meeting AYP, “872” schools, and most Level 4 Districts in Corrective Action.
- EED Expectations:** Tier II schools and districts submit District Improvement Plans (DIPs), “872” schools and Title I schools at AYP Level 2 or above are required to submit School Improvement Plans (SIPs).
- Support Provided by EED:** SSOS staff ensures that leadership teams identify the evidence of implementation as well as its impact on students. In addition to providing Tier II with a centralized pool of resources, EED offers expertise provided by Content Coaches (CCs) who work directly with teachers and administrators, in districts with limited capacity, on implementing effective instructional practices.

Tier III: Comprehensive

- Description:** Designed to provide districts in the highest level of need with rigorous and explicit interventions.
- Example:** High needs “872” schools; Level 4 Districts in Intervention.
- EED Expectations:** Tier III schools and districts focus on key areas that will have an immediate impact on student achievement and to collaborate regularly to discuss assessment data and student work. Site leaders practice instructional leadership and implement: a core curriculum aligned to Alaska GLEs; a framework for Response to Instruction (RTI); a Curriculum Based Measure (CBM) system to monitor student growth; and to participate in a facilitated Self-Study process.
- Support Provided by EED:** In addition to providing Tier III schools and districts with a centralized pool of resources and Content Coaches (CCs), SSOS provides on-site trainings and Technical Assistance Coaches (TACs) who work directly with school boards and district leadership teams to facilitate the Self-Study and to implement their intervention district improvement plan (I-DIP). Support teams composed of CCs and TACs visit assigned sites on a regularly scheduled basis.

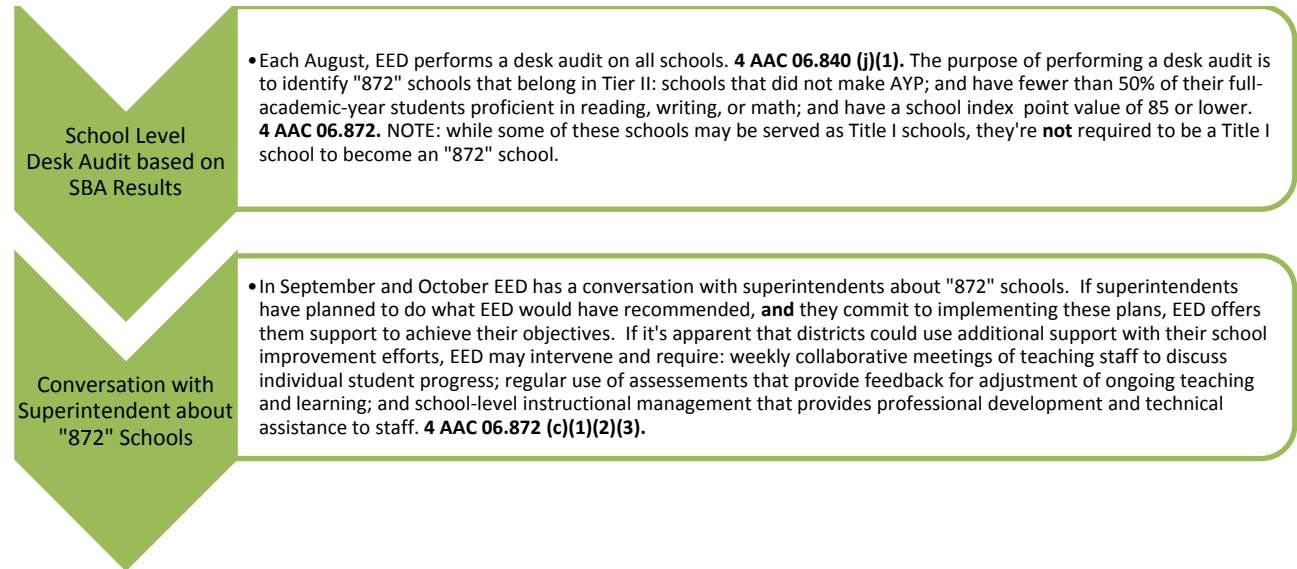
Responsibilities of the Content Coaches and Technical Assistance Coaches

Content Coaches	Technical Assistance Coaches
<p>Extend expertise in improving instructional practices at the building leadership and teacher level by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting curriculum alignment to Alaska standards • Modeling exemplary teaching • Advancing classroom implementation of DIP instructional components: content area curriculum, instruction, and assessment • Content focused staff/professional development • Support for GLE walkthroughs <p>Content Coaches are not operational substitutes for school staff.</p>	<p>Extend expertise in improving instructional practices at the district or building leadership level by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advancing implementation of DIP components • Monitoring district-wide instructional practices • Briefing superintendents, district staff, the deputy commissioner with assessment data • Supporting site GLE walkthroughs • Coordinating (ead technical assistance coach) coaching team efforts assigned to district <p>Technical Assistance Coaches are not operational substitutes for district staff.</p>

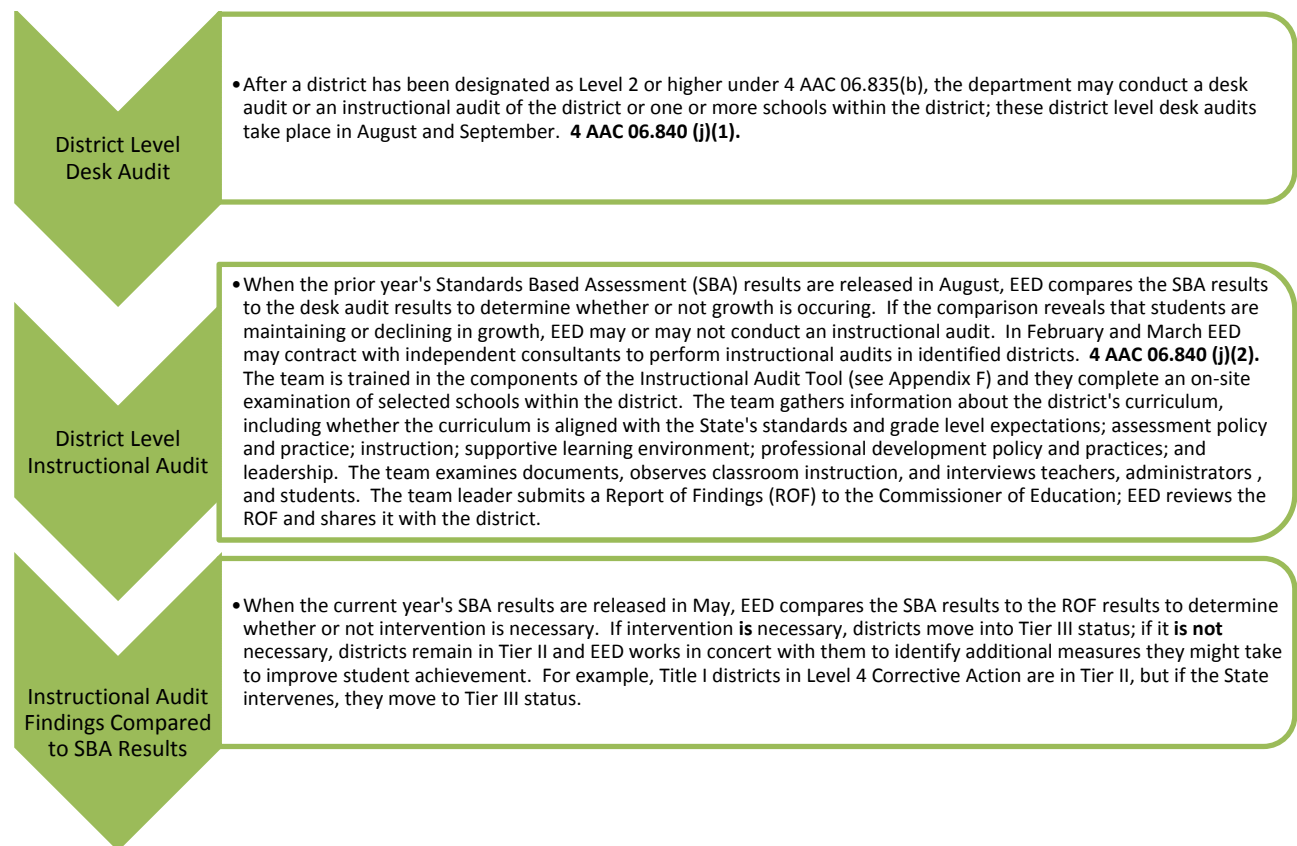
Tier Identification Process

All schools and districts are in one of three tiers; the following diagram outlines the tier identification process.

School Level Desk Audit

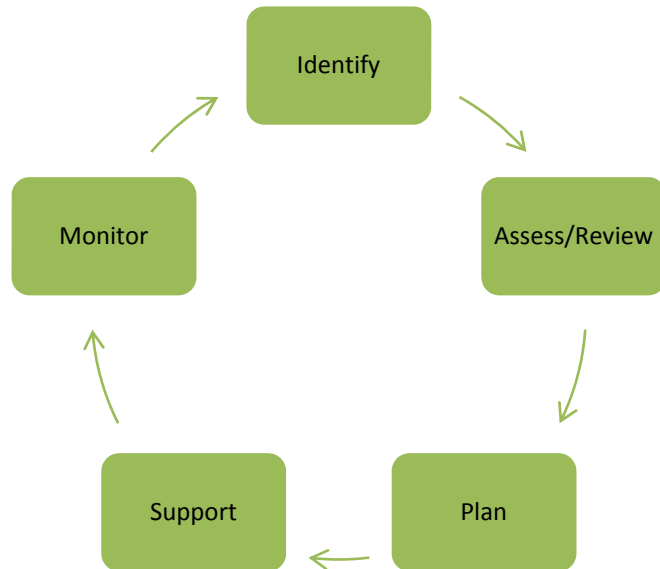


District Level Audit



The Cycle of Support

In an effort to support sustainable school improvement in Alaskan schools, EED's Cycle of Support is outlined below:



Identify

- Review SBA and desk audit results
- Identify Tier II and Tier III schools and districts
- Notify schools and districts of status

Assess/Review

- EED Commissioner or designee has a conversation with “872” schools to find out the components of their program to improve instruction practices, their needs, what their action plans are, and how EED can best support their efforts to implement their plans
- EED reviews I-DIPs, and Title I DIPs and SIPs
- SSOS Support Teams are assigned to Tier III schools and districts

Plan

- Lead TAC begins site visits to help modify I-DIP as needed
- Lead TAC works with district to schedule regular site visits for SSOS Support Team
- EED approves I-DIP or provides district with additional support to refine I-DIP

Support

- Direct services provided as required in I-DIP
- State-approved vendor services for academic programs provided as required by I-DIP

Monitor

- CCs report to TAC and EED on district's progress towards implementing effective classroom practices
- Lead TAC reports to district and EED on district's progress towards meeting I-DIP requirements
- EED provides district and SSOS Support Team with continual feedback on efforts to meet I-DIP objectives

* NOTE: districts participating in Alaska STEPP will have a more unique implementation timeline and process.

Considerations made by the SSOS

EED asks service providers to report back regularly on their districts’ progress towards meeting the following targets/objectives:

1. Districts and schools will demonstrate yearly increases in student achievement in all subgroups, will show improvement in the school index score, and will exhibit gains in the growth of student achievement, with the eventual goal of two consecutive years of meeting AYP.
2. Districts and schools will provide evidence of curriculum aligned to Alaska GLEs and Content and Performance Standards, use of progress monitoring assessments and using data to make instructional decisions, use of effective instructional strategies, promotion of supportive learning environments, executing professional development based on district needs, and supporting effective instructional leadership.

In an effort to create sustainable school improvement in Alaskan schools, service providers have considered the following concepts to help districts meet the above-stated targets/objectives:

Communication	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Find ways to address Federal mandates while removing burdens from the district. 2. Reinforce the value of the services available in order to identify and remove barriers. 3. Establish a single point of contact for the district and team. 4. Establish transparent communication between all stakeholders (District, EED, TACs, and CCs). 5. Promote inter-district collaboration on improvement efforts. 6. Emphasize results-driven consultation. 7. Emphasize sites’ progress on I-DIP goals while celebrating growth. 8. Develop a time-bound framework for reassessing and reprioritizing work as needed.
Deployment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Make time in the spring to map out how the stakeholders will work together throughout the year. Identify details related to dates, sites, goals/purpose for visits, types of service, and how these services are connected to the goals stated in the I-DIP/SIP. 10. Ensure that all parties can articulate the vision stated in the I-DIP and that the I-DIP is a continuous improvement process which is evaluated and revised, not rewritten every year. 11. Schedule site visits and professional development opportunities in advance. 12. Make informed decisions based on district needs and capacity. 13. Facilitate prioritization of needs within the school/district. 14. Provide districts with coordinated and explicit efforts versus offering “random acts of service”.
Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Get the necessary AIMSweb* passwords for the appropriate staff (EED, TACs, and CCs). 16. Schedule AIMSweb* professional development sessions for TACs, CCs, and district personnel. 17. Schedule quarterly data driven debriefing sessions to examine and share performance data with EED. <p style="text-align: center;">* NOTE: or other curriculum based measurement system utilized by the district</p>
Leadership	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Reinforce school reform to improve student achievement. 19. Emphasize results-driven leadership and instill systems-wide change. 20. Reinforce the need for GLE walkthroughs and providing teachers with feedback related to their work. 21. Assist districts in their efforts to improve staff retention rates. 22. Collaborate with school boards and community members. 23. Plan and support the implementation of the I-DIP and other needs as defined.

It is helpful for the SSOS team when district personnel:

24. Reinforce teacher, site leader, and district buy-in for research-based best practices and implementation of programs designed to increase student achievement.
25. Establish an open communication system about the intervention plan, players, process, and progress.
26. Differentiate coaching assignments based on site needs and identifying goals to be addressed before receipt of services.
27. Identify a contact person who can provide information about local accommodations, local customs, and logistical travel information.
28. Provide all Content Coaches and Technical Assistance Coaches with access to the appropriate staff, materials, and data information management systems.
29. Ensure that services provided to the district become embedded in the district's ways of practice.

Appendix A: School Improvement Planning Calendar

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Fiscal year begins July 1 •Summer training for SSOS service providers as needed •Preliminary AYP data released •I-DIP feedback provided by EED to districts <p>July</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Final AYP data released •EED distributes GLE books •Desk audits for all schools and Level 3 and 4 districts •EED identifies "872" schools <p>August</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •I-DIP revisions due •SSOS works with districts to schedule monthly site visits •Fall AIMSweb testing window •Providers' Conference every other year <p>September</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •DIPs due •EED has conversations with superintendents about "872" schools •HSGQE testing window •Fall training for SSOS service providers <p>October</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •SIPs due <p>November</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Fall HSGQE results available •HSGQE Individualized Remediation Plans due to EED by December 15th <p>December</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •HSGQE Individualized Remediation Plans must be implemented by start of semester 2 •Winter training for SSOS service providers •Winter AIMSweb testing window <p>January</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Instructional audits •ELP testing window •Terra Nova testing window <p>February</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Instructional audits •ELP testing window <p>March</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •HSGQE testing window •SBA testing window •Spring AIMSweb testing window* •Alternative Governance Plans due for Title I schools at Level 5, Year 1 <p>April</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •HSGQE and SBA testing results available •EED reviews new CC/TAC applications •End-of-year training for SSOS service providers <p>May</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Alaska School Leadership Institute hosted by ASDN/EED •Fiscal year ends June 30 •I-DIPs due for next academic year <p>June</p>

*** NOTE: the Spring AIMSweb testing window provides districts with teacher-centered results; should districts choose not to conduct spring universal AIMSweb screening, they are strongly encouraged to work with EED to analyze the prior year's AIMSweb data in comparison to final SBA results.**

Appendix B: Alaska Statutes and Federal Law Related to the SSOS

AS 14.03.015. State education policy.

It is the policy of this state that the purpose of education is to help ensure that all students will succeed in their education and work, shape worthwhile and satisfying lives for themselves, exemplify the best values of society, and be effective in improving the character and quality of the world about them.

AS 14.03.123. School and district accountability.

- (a) By September 1 of each year, the department shall assign a performance designation to each public school and school district and to the state public school system in accordance with (f) of this section.
- (f) In the accountability system for schools and districts required by this section, the department shall
 - (1) implement 20 U.S.C. 6301 – 7941 (Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965), as amended;
 - (2) implement state criteria and priorities for accountability including the use of
 - (A) measures of student performance on standards-based assessments in reading, writing, and mathematics, and including competency tests required under AS 14.03.075;
 - (B) measures of student improvement; and
 - (C) other measures identified that are indicators of student success and achievement; and
 - (3) to the extent practicable, minimize the administrative burden on districts.

AS 14.07.020. Duties of the department.

- (a) The department shall
 - (1) exercise general supervision over the public schools of the state except the University of Alaska;
 - (16) establish by regulation criteria, based on low student performance, under which the department may intervene in a school district to improve instructional practices, as described in AS 14.07.030 (14) or (15); the regulations must include
 - (A) a notice provision that alerts the district to the deficiencies and the instructional practice changes proposed by the department;
 - (B) an end date for departmental intervention, as described in AS 14.07.030(14)(A) and (B) and (15), after the district demonstrates three consecutive years of improvement consisting of not less than two percent increases in student proficiency on standards-based assessments in math, reading, and writing as provided in As 14.03.123(f)(2)(A); and
 - (C) a process for districts to petition the department for continuing or discontinuing the department's intervention;
 - (17) notify the legislative committees having jurisdiction over education before intervening in a school district under AS 14.07.030(14) or redirecting public school funding under AS 14.07.030(15).
- (b) In implementing its duties under (a)(2) of this section, the department shall develop

- (1) performance standards in reading, writing, and mathematics to be met at designated age levels by each student in public schools in the state; and
- (2) a comprehensive system of student assessments, composed of multiple indicators of proficiency in reading, writing, and mathematics...

AS 14.07.060. Regulations.

The board shall adopt regulations that are necessary to carry out the provisions of this title. All regulations shall be adopted under AS 44.62 (Administrative Procedure Act).

AS 14.50.080. Consent to reasonable conditions.

The governor or the board as the federal law may require may accept all reasonable conditions which may be required by the federal government as a condition to receiving federal money for education purposes.

NCLB. Section 1116. Academic assessment and local educational agency and school improvement.

NCLB. Section 1117. School support and recognition.

Appendix C: Alaska Administrative Codes Related to the SSOS

4 AAC 06.800-899. School and district accountability.

4 AAC 06.759. High school graduation qualifying examination: remediation.

- (a) A district shall provide remediation to a student who has not passed one or more subtests of the state high school graduation qualifying examination (HSGQE) after the fall administration of the HSGQE in the student's 11th grade year. Remediation must begin no later than the start of the student's 11th grade year and continue as necessary for the student to pass all subtests of the HSGQE. Nothing in this subsection prevents a district from offering remediation at an earlier time.

4 AAC 06.800. Purpose.

The purpose of the school and district accountability system is to ensure that by school year 2013-14, all students will reach proficiency or better in language arts and mathematics.

4 AAC 06.840. Consequences of not demonstrating adequate yearly progress.

- (j) At any time after a district has been designated as Level 2 or higher under 4 AAC 06.835(b), the department may conduct a desk audit or an instructional audit of the district or one or more schools within the district. The department may require a district to provide information, including a self-assessment, as part of either audit process. To the extent permitted under federal law, the department will use federal programmatic funds allocated to the district to pay the cost of an instructional audit.
- (1) "desk audit" means a review of data to determine the reasons a district has not demonstrated adequate yearly progress;
 - (2) "instructional audit" means an on-site review of the instructional policies, practices, and methodologies of the district or one or more schools within the district; an instructional audit may include a review of the district's or school's
 - (A) curriculum, including whether the curriculum is aligned with the state's standards and grade level expectations adopted in 4 AAC 01.140 and 4 AAC 04.150;
 - (B) assessment policy and practice;
 - (C) instruction;
 - (D) school learning environment;
 - (E) professional development policy and practices; and
 - (F) leadership.
- (k) If a district is designated under 4 AAC 06.835(b) as Level 3, the department will prepare to take corrective action in the district consistent with this subsection. If the district is designated as Level 4, by the end of the school year in which the district receives the designation, the department will implement one or more of the following corrective actions in the district:
- (3) defer programmatic funds or reduce administrative money provided to the district from federal sources;

- (4) institute and implement a new curriculum based on state content standards adopted in 4 AAC 04.140 and performance standards adopted in 4 AAC 04.150, including the provision, for all relevant staff, of appropriate professional development that
 - (A) is grounded in scientifically-based research; and
 - (B) offers substantial promise of improving educational achievement for low-achieving students;
 - (5) replace the district personnel who are relevant to the district's receipt of the designation;
 - (6) remove schools from the jurisdiction of the district and provide alternative arrangements for public governance and supervision of these schools;
 - (7) in conjunction with at least one other action in this subsection
 - (A) authorize students to transfer from a school operated by the district to a higher-performing public school operated by another district; and
 - (B) provide to these students transportation, or the costs of transportation, to the other school;
 - (8) appoint a receiver or a trustee to administer the affairs of the district in place of the chief school administrator, and school board.
- (l) Following the audit process described in (j) of this section, or, if no audit has been conducted, before implementing corrective action in a district under (k) of this section, the department will give notice to the district regarding the possible corrective actions, if any, under consideration for the district. A district has 15 days after receipt of notice to submit comments and evidence to the department before corrective action is implemented. When determining the appropriate corrective action under (k) of this section, the department will consider
- (1) the results of any audit conducted under (j) of this section;
 - (2) the actions taken by the district to address the district's failure to demonstrate adequate yearly progress;
 - (3) the growth that the district has shown in the proficiency level of its students;
 - (4) the public interest; and
 - (5) comments and evidence submitted by the district.

4 AAC 06.845. School improvement plan

- (a) A school required to submit a school improvement plan under 4 AAC 06.840(c) shall submit the plan to its district for approval not later than 90 days after designation under 4 AAC 06.835(a).
- (b) After receiving a plan from a school under (a) of this section, a district shall
 - (1) establish a peer review process to assist with a prompt review of the plan;
 - (2) work with the school as necessary to modify the plan; and
 - (3) no later than 45 days after receiving a plan from a school, approve the plan for submission to the department if the plan meets the requirements of this section.
- (c) In developing a school improvement plan, a school must
 - (1) consult with parents, school staff, and other interested persons;

- (2) cover a two-year period;
- (3) incorporate strategies based on scientifically based research that will strengthen the core academic subjects in the school and address the specific academic issues that caused the designation;
- (4) adopt policies and practices concerning the school's core academic subjects that have the greatest likelihood of ensuring that all students will meet a proficiency level of proficient or advanced on the state assessments by school year 2013-14;
- (5) provide assurance that the school will allocate and spend at least 10 percent of the funding allocated to the school under 20 U.S.C. 6301 - 6339 (Part A of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act) to provide the school's teachers and principal with high-quality professional development that directly addresses the academic performance problem that caused the designation;
- (6) explain how the high-quality professional development will directly address the academic performance problem that caused the designation;
- (7) establish specific annual, measurable objectives for continuous and substantial progress by all students collectively and each subgroup of students enrolled in the school that will ensure that all students will meet a proficiency level of proficient or advanced on the state assessments by school year 2013-14;
- (8) describe how the school will provide written notice about the designation of the school to parents of each student enrolled in the school, in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that the parents can understand;
- (9) specify the responsibilities of the school and district, and the responsibilities agreed to by the department, in implementing the improvement plan;
- (10) include strategies to promote effective parental involvement in the school;
- (11) incorporate, as appropriate, activities for students before school, after school, during the summer, and during any extension of the school year; and
- (12) incorporate a teacher mentoring program.

(d) A school shall implement its plan immediately after receiving approval from the district. If the department determines that changes in the plan will improve the performance and progress of students at the school, the department will require changes to the plan at any time, including after implementation.

4 AAC 06.850. District improvement plan.

- (a) A district required to submit a district improvement plan under 4 AAC 06.840(h) shall submit the plan to the department for approval not later than 90 days after designation under 4 AAC 06.835(b).
- (b) In developing a district improvement plan, a district shall
 - (1) cover a two-year period;
 - (2) consult with parents, school staff, and other interested persons;

- (3) incorporate scientifically based research strategies that strengthen the core academic program in the schools served by the district;
- (4) identify actions that have the greatest likelihood of improving the achievement of students in meeting the academic performance requirements in 4 AAC 06.810;
- (5) address professional development needs of the instructional staff;
- (6) include specific measurable achievement goals and targets for all students collectively and each subgroup of students;
- (7) address the fundamental teaching and learning needs in the schools of the district, and the specific academic problems of low-achieving students, including a determination of why any of the district's prior plans failed to bring about increased student academic performance;
- (8) incorporate, as appropriate, activities before school, after school, during the summer, and during an extension of the school year;
- (9) specify the responsibilities of the department under the plan, including specifying the technical assistance to be provided by the department; and
- (10) include strategies to promote effective parental involvement in the school.

(c) For each district for which the department has conducted an instructional audit under 4 AAC 06.840(j), the department will, after consultation with the district, draft a district improvement plan unless the department finds that the district has adequate instructional policies, practices, and methodologies. The district improvement plan may include

- (1) adoption of the program described in 4 AAC 06.872(c);
- (2) technical assistance to the district regarding the implementation of a program for improvement under the improvement plan; or
- (3) one or more corrective actions described in 4 AAC 06.840, 4 AAC 06.865, or 4 AAC 06.870 for the district as a whole or at a school in the district.

(d) The technical assistance required under (c)(2) of this section may be provided by department personnel or by a contractor, and may include a site visit. The department may redirect the district's funding under AS 14.17 to provide money to pay for services by a contractor that the commissioner determines are necessary under this section. If a district fails to take an action required under the district improvement plan, the commissioner may, after notice to the district and an opportunity for the district to respond, cause the district's funding under AS 14.17 to be redirected to pay for the action or to a holding account for the district until the action is completed. The department will not redirect a district's funding under this subsection, and will not impose corrective action that involves personnel under (c)(3) of this section, if in each of the three previous years the district demonstrated increases of at least two percentage points in the standards-based assessment in mathematics, reading, and writing under 4 AAC 06.737.

(e) A district may petition the department at any time to cease or continue an intervention taken by the department under this section. In considering whether to grant a petition under this subsection, the department will consider the

- (1) factors described in 4 AAC 06.840(j)(2); and

(2) public interest.

(f) The department will not take action under (c) - (d) of this section unless it has reached a conclusion, after consideration of the evidence, that its action will likely improve student achievement.

(g) Compliance with (c) - (f) of this section does not necessarily constitute compliance with a district's other responsibilities for school or district improvement under 4 AAC 06.800 - 4 AAC 06.899.

4 AAC 06.852. Technical assistance.

(a) If a school is designated as Level 2 or higher under 4 AAC 06.835(a), the district within which the school is located shall ensure that the school receives appropriate technical assistance as the school develops and implements its improvement plan under 4 AAC 06.845 and throughout the plan's duration.

(b) A district may arrange for the technical assistance to be provided by one or more of the following:

- (1) the district;
- (2) the department;
- (3) an institution of higher education;
- (4) a private or not-for-profit organization, a private for-profit organization, an educational service agency, or another entity with experience in helping schools improve academic achievement.

(c) Technical assistance must be based on scientifically based research and include assistance in

- (1) analyzing data from the state assessments, and other examples of student work, to identify and develop solutions to problems in
 - (A) instruction;
 - (B) implementing the requirements for parental involvement and professional development; and
 - (C) implementing the school improvement plan, including district-level and school-level responsibilities under the plan.
- (2) identifying and implementing professional development and instructional strategies and methods that have proved effective, through scientifically based research, in addressing the specific instructional issues that caused the district to designate the school; and
- (3) analyzing and revising the school's budget so that the school allocates its resources more effectively to the activities most likely to
 - (A) increase student academic achievement; and
 - (B) remove the school from its designation.

4 AAC 06.872. School-level desk audits.

(a) Each year, at the same time the department is conducting district desk audits under 4 AAC 06.840(j), the department will conduct a school-level desk audit of all schools in the state. The department will identify a school as needing additional analysis if the school

- (1) did not make adequate yearly progress under 4 AAC 06.805;

- (2) has fewer than 50 percent of its full-academic-year students score proficient or higher on the mathematics, reading, or writing standards-based assessment under 4 AAC 06.737; and
 - (3) has a school index point value under 4 AAC 33.540 of 85 or lower.
- (b) The department will determine whether the schools identified in (a) of this section would benefit from being placed on a program for improvement of instructional practices as described in (c) of this section. In making this determination, the department will consult with the superintendent of the district in which the school is located and will consider
 - (1) the reasons the school has been identified, including whether the school serves a special population;
 - (2) whether the state has imposed a district improvement plan under 4 AAC 06.850(c) as a result of an instructional audit under 4 AAC 06.840(j);
 - (3) whether the district has implemented a comparable program in the school;
 - (4) whether the school has shown substantial growth in student achievement; and
 - (5) for a school with fewer than 20 tested students, multiple years of data.
- (c) After the department has determined under (b) of this section that a school would benefit from a program for improvement of instructional practices, the department will send notice of this determination to the district in which the school is located. In the notice, the department will inform the district of the deficiencies that need to be remedied and a timetable for implementation of the program and for amendment of the school improvement plan developed under 4 AAC 06.845 for the school. Within 30 days after receiving the notice, the district shall take action under the timetable as required by the department, and shall verify in writing to the department that it has taken that action. A program for improvement of instructional practices must include
 - (1) weekly collaborative meetings of teaching staff to discuss individual student progress; logs of the meeting shall be recorded and sent to the superintendent;
 - (2) regular use of assessments that provide feedback for adjustment of ongoing teaching and learning in order to improve achievement of intended instructional outcomes; and
 - (3) school-level instructional management that provides professional development and technical assistance to staff and addresses grade-level expectations in the instruction.
- (d) The department will provide technical assistance to the district regarding the implementation of the program in (c) of this section, unless the commissioner determines that technical assistance is not required. Technical assistance may be provided by department personnel or by a contractor, and may include a site visit. The department may redirect money from the district's funding under AS 14.17 to pay for services by a contractor that the commissioner determines are necessary under this section.
- (e) The commissioner may require the district to implement or amend at a school under a program for improvement of instructional practices
 - (1) corrective action described in 4 AAC 06.840 or 4 AAC 06.865; or
 - (2) a remediation plan under 4 AAC 06.759 for students at the school who have not passed the state high school graduation qualifying examination (HSGQE).
- (f) If a district fails to take the action required under this section, the commissioner may, after notice to the district and an opportunity for the district to respond, cause the district's funding under AS 14.17 to be redirected to pay for the action or to a holding account for the district until the action is completed. Before requiring action under this subsection, the commissioner will consider the
 - (1) comments from the superintendent of the district;
 - (2) action taken by the district to improve the school;
 - (3) number of years the school has been identified under this section; and
 - (4) factors listed in (b) of this section.

- (g) The department will not redirect a district's funding under (d) or (f) of this section, and will not impose corrective action that involves personnel under (e) of this section, if in each of the three previous years the district demonstrated increases of at least two percentage points in the standards-based assessment in mathematics, reading, and writing under 4 AAC 06.737.
- (h) A district may petition the department at any time to cease or continue an intervention taken by the department under this section. In considering whether to grant a petition under this subsection, the department will consider the
 - (1) factors described in (b) and (f) of this section; and
 - (2) public interest.
- (i) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the department will not take action under this section unless it has reached a conclusion, after consideration of the evidence, that its action will likely improve student achievement.
- (j) Compliance with this section does not necessarily constitute compliance with a district's other responsibilities for school or district improvement under 4 AAC 06.800 - 4 AAC 06.899.

Appendix D: Six Domains of Effective Schools & Districts

Curriculum

A school or district curriculum is an educational plan that defines the content to be taught, the resources and instructional methods to be used, and the assessment processes to be employed to document student progress and achievement. It is aligned with Alaska Performance Standards and GLEs and allows for the collection of data to inform instruction. Ideally, the curriculum (a) coheres across grade levels so that the goals and objectives can be met, and (b) attends to the Cultural Standards for Alaska Students (Appendix N).

Assessment

Assessment is the process of collecting, recording, scoring, monitoring, and interpreting information about a student's progress, a teacher's instruction, and a school's overall effectiveness. Some assessments are used for a record of accountability, but a primary purpose of assessment at the classroom level is to inform instructional decisions and ultimately to improve student achievement. In addition to summative data collected through State assessments, each school must be engaged in formative assessments and assessments to monitor progress that provide ongoing information to teachers. Formative measures provide the basis for decisions about what each student is learning. Teachers must be supported in their efforts to collect progress monitoring data for students at regular increments throughout the school year.

Instruction

Instruction concerns the methods that are used to teach curriculum and to help students achieve performance targets. Effective instruction recognizes that every student has individual needs, interests, and learning styles. Therefore, it incorporates a variety of instructional strategies and progress monitoring techniques to further learning for all students, as well as targeted remediation for some students in areas of need as determined by data from progress monitoring and formative assessments.

Supportive Learning Environment

Factors that contribute to creating a supportive learning environment include safety and order, an emphasis on academic achievement, parent/community involvement strategies, attention to local culture, and attention to assessment and monitoring. Schools that foster a positive school climate create a culture of cohesiveness and a high level of morale among students as well as staff.

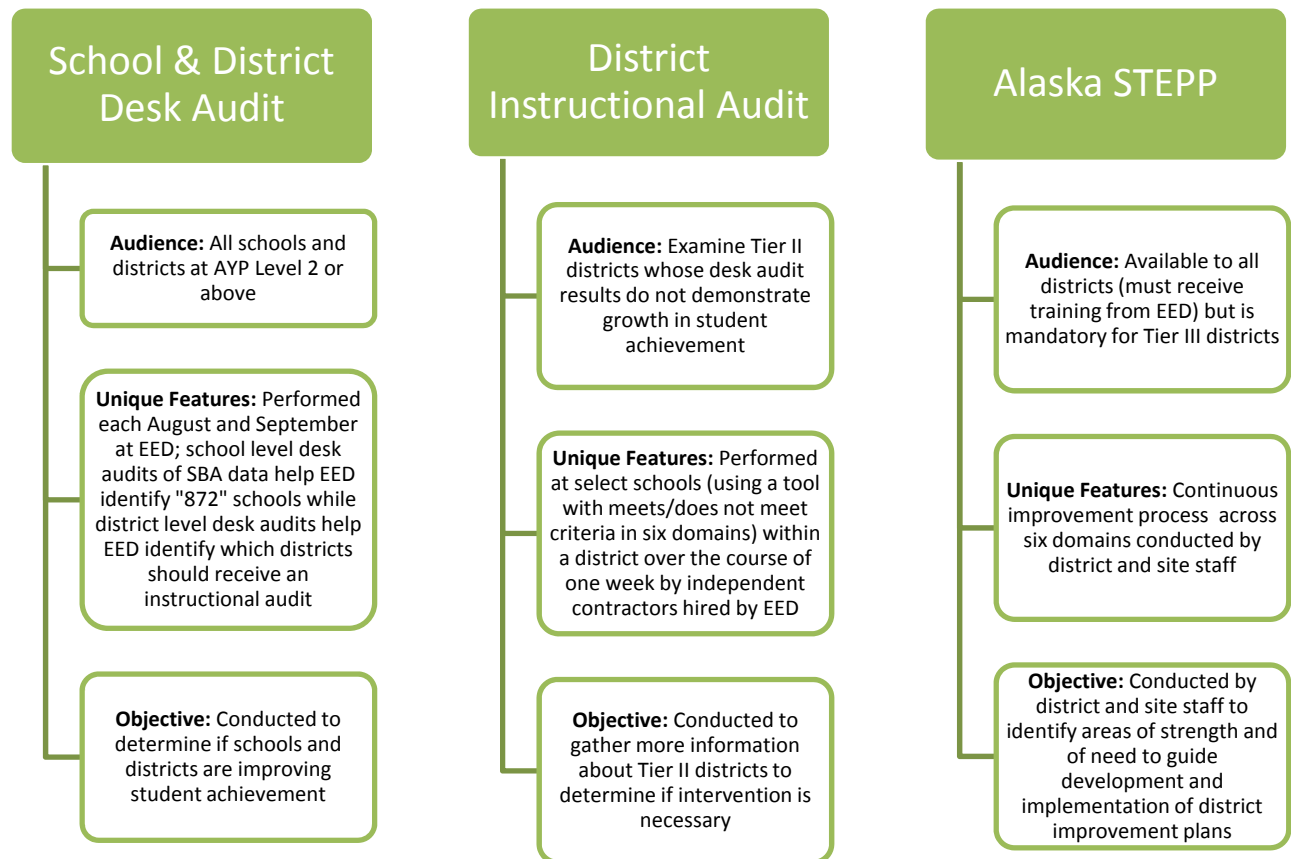
Professional Development

Well-planned, ongoing professional development involves school personnel in their own learning and ultimately leads to improved student achievement. It is practical, job-embedded, and results-oriented. Professional learning communities support effective staff development and allow for coaching, mentoring, collaborating, and a collective responsibility for student learning.

Leadership

School leadership is a process of influence leading to effective teaching and learning. Successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and professional values. They choose to articulate this vision at every opportunity and they encourage their staff and community to share that vision. Management of the school's structures and activities is focused toward the achievement of this shared vision.

Appendix E: Desk Audit vs. Instructional Audit vs. Alaska STEPP



Appendix F: Elements of the Instructional Audit Tool

1.0 Curriculum.

- 1.1 Alaska state standards and GLEs are aligned with school/district curriculum.
- 1.2 A system is used regularly to measure implementation of Alaska state standards and GLEs.
- 1.3 There is a schedule for the review and/or development of the curriculum based on the Alaska content standards for each curriculum area and the schedule is consistently followed.
- 1.4 Statewide assessment data are used each year to identify gaps/areas of curriculum that are not being taught.
- 1.5 A review process is used to make the curriculum more responsive to the needs of the school's student population.

2.0 Assessment.

- 2.1 Assessments are aligned with Alaska's Performance Standards, GLEs, and district curriculum.
- 2.2 The school uses established systems for collecting, managing, analyzing, and reporting data.
- 2.3 Data from classroom assessments are used by school staff members as a source of information about student learning and to guide instructional decisions.
- 2.4 Assessments are administered in an ongoing fashion, multiple times a year, in order to determine student progress.
- 2.5 Formative assessments are used on a regular basis to inform instruction and to address the instructional needs of students.
- 2.6 School administrative leaders and instructional staff members review SBA data to evaluate school programs and student performance.

3.0 Instruction.

- 3.1 There is a system in place to ensure that classroom instructional activities are aligned to Alaska's content and performance standards and GLEs.
- 3.2 There are coordinated, school wide efforts to help low-performing students become proficient.
- 3.3 There is a system in place to provide timely/early instructional intervention to help low-performing students.
- 3.4 The use of research-based instructional practices dominates instructional planning and teaching.
- 3.5 Classroom instruction addresses diverse student learning needs.
- 3.6 High academic expectations for student learning are routinely conveyed to students so that they know what is needed for them to achieve at proficient levels.
- 3.7 Teachers use formative assessments to measure the effectiveness of instruction and to monitor student progress.
- 3.8 Teacher daily lesson plans demonstrate an alignment of instruction with Alaska content standards and GLEs.

4.0 Supportive Learning Environment.

- 4.1 Effective classroom management strategies that maximize instructional time are evident throughout the school.
- 4.2 School wide operational procedures are in place to minimize disruptions to instructional time.
- 4.3 School wide behavior standards are consistently communicated by staff and understood by the students.
- 4.4 The school has an established attendance policy that is used consistently.
- 4.5 Extended learning opportunities are made available and are utilized by students in need of additional support.
- 4.6 School and classroom environment reflects awareness and an understanding of local cultural values.

- 4.7 School staff communicates with parents about learning expectations, and ways to reinforce learning at home.
- 4.8 School staff members communicate with parents and community members to inform them about school priorities and to engage their support.
- 4.9 Physical facilities are safe and orderly.

5.0 Professional Development.

- 5.1 Student achievement data are a primary factor in determining professional development opportunities.
- 5.2 Written policies and procedures are consistently used in the evaluation of all personnel.
- 5.3 The teacher evaluation process is aligned to the Alaska Professional Teaching Standards.
- 5.4 Professional development is embedded into the daily routines and practices of school staff.
- 5.5 All teachers receive ongoing and systematic feedback and support for instructional improvement.
- 5.6 There is a mentoring program in place that supports new teachers in the development of instructional and classroom management skills.
- 5.7 Sufficient time and resources are allocated to support professional development and growth geared toward the goals outlined in the school improvement plan.

6.0 Leadership.

- 6.1 School administrative leaders facilitate the development and implementation of the school's goals.
- 6.2 School administrative leadership regularly analyzes assessment and other data, and uses the results in planning for improved achievement for all students.
- 6.3 School administrative leadership actively assists staff members in understanding formative and summative student achievement data and in how to use these data to make changes in instruction.
- 6.4 School improvement goals are Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound (SMART) and are based on student achievement data.
- 6.5 School administrative leaders systematically monitor the implementation of the school improvement plan.
- 6.6 School administrative leaders ensures that staff members, including new staff members, have access to and are trained to implement Alaska Content and Performance Standards and GLEs.
- 6.7 School administrative leaders conduct formal and informal observations and provide timely feedback to staff members on their instructional practices.
- 6.8 School administrative leaders build a positive relationship with parents and community members regarding school improvement efforts.
- 6.9 There is a process for the principal to receive support and guidance as part of the administrator evaluation procedures.
- 6.10 School administrative leaders oversee the progress of students who do not meet adequate yearly progress.

Appendix G: Overview of the Self-Study Tool

The Self-Study Tool (SST) was developed to help schools conduct an internal review as part of their school improvement effort. The SST materials are based on the Instructional Audit Tool that has been used throughout Alaska to conduct on-site school audits by external teams of educators. The SST process provides teams from a school community an opportunity to engage in discussion and evidence-based inquiry. It is not intended to be the basis for evaluation or for making comparisons across schools. The end product is not a score, but the identification of current strengths and limitations, which can assist school staff members in their school improvement efforts.

The tool is organized around six domains that represent important areas of successful school functioning: curriculum, assessment, instruction, supportive learning environment, professional development, and leadership.

Each domain consists of a series of key elements that are grounded in school improvement literature. It is not necessary for a school team to conduct the self-study across all six domains at once. For instance, a team might choose to begin by examining only one or two domains, such as instruction and/or supportive learning environment.

To complete this self-study, the entire school faculty, or a smaller leadership team, works in small groups to locate evidence, make ratings, and summarize findings. Parents, community members, and students may also be involved. When a team engages in the self-study process, it is important for each team member to begin with an open mind, setting aside assumptions and relying on evidence to make ratings on each of the elements. Some of the options for use of the SST include:

- Teams may start by examining a single domain area, using the initial discussion questions and then dividing up the elements they wish to tackle. In a subsequent meeting they can share their evidence, and then the whole group can come to a consensus on the rating of each element. Ultimately, the entire group needs to agree.
- Teams may focus on one or more, but not all, domains. Different teams might each work on the same domain and then compare their ratings, or the teams might “jigsaw” the effort so that each group looks at a different domain.
- Larger school districts with the capacity to do so, may wish to employ one team or several smaller teams in the use of the SST to review their status in all domains. Because this option requires collecting evidence to make ratings, it is the most thorough, yet time consuming of all the options.

The findings from any of these options can be useful for determining school direction and goal setting for school improvement planning. The three essential aspects of the process, which should remain consistent, are that 1) all ratings are based on evidence; 2) teams reach a consensus on the ratings; and 3) the process is transparent- findings are presented back to the entire school faculty and to the school community.

For complete details, please see the instructions in the Self-Study Tool booklet.

Appendix H: Outline of Alaska STEPP

Alaska STEPP is an online tool for school and district improvement planning. Implemented statewide in stages over three years, Alaska STEPP will be used by all districts and schools for improvement planning.

Alaska STEPP substitutes for the paper-based:

- District Improvement Plans (DIP)
- School Improvement Plans (SIP)
- Self Study Tool (SST)
- Title 1 Comprehensive Schoolwide Plan
- District and School Accreditation processes

Planning for improvement leads districts and sites to assess respective strengths and challenges, to celebrate strengths and to address needs effectively. Improvement plans have required elements in order to be in compliance with state and federal law. Alaska STEPP includes all state and federal requirements in the form of SMART indicators and of supplemental forms.

Alaska STEPP uses the research based indicators of the Instructional Audit Tool as its foundation. It then guides districts and schools into plan implementation to affect student learning in a positive manner.

This tool changes improvement planning in the following ways:

- Completed online in web-based environment instead of on paper
- Links self assessment and planning
- Provides research based ideas in areas of need
- Encourages constant and consistent use as a continuous improvement model
- Leads users through assessment, goal setting and task writing to break down big ideas into concrete tasks assigned to specific people with due dates
- Provides a longitudinal set of information that shows progress toward goals
- Links several programs and/or requirements of the state and federal programs so that schools/districts have less overall “paperwork” to complete

The Process of Alaska STEPP

Alaska STEPP includes 6 steps.

1. **Register a district or school** (done once).
2. **Enter District/School Information.** This information includes contact and demographic data (done yearly).
3. **Form a Team.** Each site forms a team made up of a cross-section of people. At a school this team should include the principal, a mix of staff, and parents of students. The optimal size for a team is 5-10. At the district level the team should include district administrators, parents, community members, site staff. The team may change from year to year, as needed. However, all the information about who was responsible for tasks will remain in STEPP for a record that can be referenced as needed.
4. **Assess Indicators.** There are 42 research based indicators to identify specific attributes, actions, and processes that lead to improvement in student achievement. Alaska STEPP uses a rubric or scoring guide

format in which schools/districts assess themselves on a four point scale. The process includes discussion of possible evidence that may lead the team to choose one rating over another.

The indicators are grouped into 6 domains: curriculum (what we teach), assessment (how we know how students know the material), instruction (how we teach), supportive learning environment (how we set up a school to optimize learning), professional development (how we support teachers to do their best work), leadership (how we organize, support, and lead school communities towards great student achievement).

The indicators are further grouped into two categories that specifically link to their use in STEPP. These are labeled Key and SMART.

- Key indicator: first step of a process and/or a high leverage activity.
- SMART indicator: state and federal school improvement requirements.

All participating schools and districts are required to complete the Key and SMART indicators in Alaska STEPP.

5. Create School Plan. Once an indicator is assessed the team creates a plan to improve or sustain efforts in that area. Alaska STEPP has a step-by-step process for creating tasks that include due dates, time frames, persons responsible, time frames, and notes.

A powerful element of Alaska STEPP is the built-in resource called “WiseWays.” These are research based, practical strategies linked to each indicator. They are accessed by clicking on the WiseWays button on the planning page.

6. Monitor School Plan. Alaska STEPP is a continuous improvement model. It calls for district or school self-monitoring of progress toward task completion by active review of data changes in data. The self-monitoring provides the essential action for continuous or ongoing improvement of a school/district.

EED Support For The Process

EED supports districts in this improvement planning model by offering onsite training for principals and other leaders in improvement planning and the use of the tool. Participating districts also will take part in monthly webinars that review technical aspects of the tool, present further information on school improvement, and encourage collegial support and problem solving across the district to work towards common goals.

Role of Technical Assistance Coaches and Content Coaches

In intervention districts the coaches will support implementation in several ways.

- Attend district trainings and supporting staff learn new process
- Attend/facilitate PLC meetings for which indicators are being assessed or planned,
- Read and reference site plans to support their advance
- Provide coaching comments on site plans as appropriate
- Provide feedback to EED to support these sites/districts more effectively

Appendix I: Elements of the Alaska Peer Review Guidance Document

Introduction

An Alaska school or district curriculum is an educational plan that defines the content to be taught, the resources (e.g., textbooks, kits, atlases, resource guides, etc) and instructional methods to be used, and the assessment processes to be employed for documenting student progress and achievement. Further, a district curriculum must include a plan for staff development. Overall, the curriculum is expected to be aligned with Alaska Performance Standards and Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) and allow for the collection and use of data to inform instruction. The Department of Education & Early Development also supports the inclusion of Alaska Cultural Content Standards adopted by the Alaska State Board of Education in school and district curricula.

Alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment with the Alaska GLEs is an essential element of focus for districts. Ideally, curricula are vertically aligned across grade levels and content areas. If standards-aligned curriculum is implemented with fidelity in each classroom, student achievement is fostered and instructional goals and objectives are met.

Purpose of Guidance

The Department of Education & Early Development (EED) issues this Guidance to provide districts with information to prepare for the department's peer review, as designated by state regulation 4 AAC 05.080 and enforced through regulation 4 AAC 06.840.

This Guidance represents the department's current thinking on this topic. Based on feedback from Alaska Peer Reviewers or other invited experts, new critical elements or important sources of evidence may be added to the Guidance. It does not create or confer any rights for or on any person. This Guidance does not impose any requirements beyond those required under applicable law and regulations. This document is intended to guide districts through a peer review process focused on examining evidence about curriculum-to-standards alignment but not to teach or instruct districts about the methods for performing curriculum-to-standards or curriculum-to-assessment alignment studies.

District Curricular System

A district may include in its curricular system multiple approaches to its design.

- A district's curricular system may employ either a uniform set of materials district-wide or a combination across schools. Districts using a combination of materials and resources must address issues of comparability and equivalency. For example, a student attending one elementary school must be able to continue to progress toward proficiency in the standards even if moved into another elementary school within the district that uses different materials.
- A district's curricular system may be supplemented through the use of correspondence course materials. These correspondence materials are approved by the Commissioner when evidence of alignment to standards and comparability and equivalency to other district course materials has been collected.
- A district's curricular system may include local standards which incorporate the local culture.

A district may support curriculum-to-standards alignment and fidelity of implementation of standards-based instruction by

- Identifying key resources and materials to be used for each grade and content area and verifying their alignment to state standards;
- Identifying or developing appropriate measures for gauging student progress toward achievement targets for each grade and content area and verifying their alignment to state standards;
- Indicating the processes for ensuring alignment to the state's academic content standards in each content area and grade and the timeframe for review;
- Providing information regarding the progress of teachers relative to staff development goals for effective curriculum implementation ;
- Establishing criteria to ensure that curricular materials, resources, and assessments are coherent, comprehensive, and synchronized with the levels of cognitive complexity (depth) and content breadth embodied by the state's academic standards;
- Demonstrating that all materials can be sufficiently differentiated to address the instructional needs of all students, including those who are currently performing at far below proficient, below proficient, proficient, and advanced levels;
- Receiving school board approval per regulation 4 AAC 05.080; and
- Receiving the department's final approval per state regulation 4 AAC 06.840.

The Peer Review Process

To determine whether districts have met curriculum-to-standards alignment requirements, EED will be using the Alaska Peer Review process. This process relies on involvement of local, state, and national experts and colleagues in the fields of standards and curriculum. The Alaska Peer Reviewers will evaluate districts' curricular systems only against state regulations and requirements. In other words, peer reviewers examine characteristics of a district's curricular system that will be used to hold the district accountable under regulation 4 AAC 06.840 *Consequences of not demonstrating adequate yearly progress*.

The Alaska Peer Review process does not directly examine a district's local standards or formative assessment instruments. Rather, it examines *evidence* compiled and submitted by each district that is intended to show that all facets of its curricular system (resources, materials, instruction, and assessment) meet state requirements. Such evidence may include, but is not limited to, final aligned curriculum documents, results from alignment studies, adopted policies, and curriculum committee meeting minutes. Peer reviewers will advise the department on whether a district's curricular system meets a particular level of sufficiency based on the totality of evidence submitted. Peer reviewers also provide constructive feedback to help districts strengthen their systems.

Role of Peer Reviewers

With this Guidance document as a framework, peer reviewers will use expert professional judgment to evaluate the evidence supplied by the district and determine the degree to which the district's final curricular system complies with the state requirements. Their evaluation of the final curricular system serves two purposes. First, the peer reviewers' comments are sent to the district as a technical assistance tool to support improvements in the system. Second, the peer reviewers' comments are used to inform the EED during final decision-making about each district's compliance status.

Review Process

- The Alaska Peer Review teams are trained in advance of the review process. They are facilitated through a mock review process by curriculum and instruction specialists and calibrated to ensure common understanding and interpretation of each critical element in the Guidance prior to reviewing any district's evidence.
- Districts will submit evidence of compliance consistent with the peer review schedule announced by the department. The evidence is then distributed by the department to each member of the Peer Review team in advance of a review meeting to allow for a thorough independent review based on the Guidance. At the review meeting, a team of at least three peer reviewers discusses the evidence provided by the district and records their opinions. Sufficient evidence must be provided to convince these experienced professionals that the curricular system is being implemented in a manner that meets state requirements.
- During this process, this Guidance is used as a framework to support a series of analytic judgments by peer reviewers. The review team addresses each of the critical elements in the Guidance document, evaluating the status of each component of the district's curriculum based on the evidence provided.
- To ensure common understanding of the value or usefulness of different pieces of evidence, decision rules will be recorded by peer reviewers. Decision rules are guidelines related to the application of Guidance criteria that explain how or why reviewers assigned a particular rating or reached a particular decision about a piece or type of evidence. That same rationale then is applied in all situations in which that type of evidence is presented, thereby promoting consistency in decisions over time and across reviewers.
- For each district evaluated, the peer reviewer team will provide a brief statement of the degree to which the curricular system meets state requirements and a summary of the changes needed, if any, to meet those requirements. The peer reviewers are responsible for providing feedback to each district that is informative and is consistent with professional standards and best practice. Generally, if changes in a district's curricular system are required in order to meet state requirements, peer reviewers present options rather than prescriptive instructions.
- The Alaska Peer Review team then prepares a report based on its examination of the evidence for all districts in that round of review.
- To ensure reliability of decisions over time (i.e., across rounds of review) and across peer reviewers, decisions will be monitored by the department. Peer reviewers also will be monitored to ensure ongoing calibration.

Review Teams

On each team, one person is designated team leader; this person is responsible for seeing that peer notes are clear, complete, and delivered to EED staff at the end of the review meeting. An EED staff person, assigned as a resource to each Peer Review Team, is responsible for (1) assisting the review team in obtaining adequate and appropriate information from the district prior to the review meeting; (2) contacting the district during the review meeting to obtain clarification or additional information needed by the reviewers; (3) securing resources needed to support the team during the meeting; and (4) accurately reporting the review team's deliberations as EED determines the district's compliance status. Department staff may question or even challenge the peer reviewers in order to promote clarity and consistency with the Guidance; they will not, however, impose their views or require substantive changes to the peer reviewers' judgments.

Role of the School District

Districts should familiarize themselves with instructions for completing the review document. To facilitate the peer review process, a district should organize its evidence with a brief narrative response to each of the critical elements in the Guidance (e.g., 1.1, 1.2, etc.). In the Guidance, the department has provided a suggested submission model to help districts develop their narratives and identify documents that constitute appropriate evidence of meeting the requirements for each critical element.

Districts are urged when possible to provide all acceptable evidence listed in the Guidance. In some occurrences the same evidence may be referenced in multiple sections. Further, districts can submit evidence that is not listed in the Guidance. Some sections identify specific evidence the department is requiring with the submission. These are marked with an asterisk.

Districts then submit final review documents and all evidence to the department in electronic and hard copy (one) formats.

Each district will be asked to designate a representative who can be contacted by telephone during the review process to provide clarification or additional information, if requested.

Once peer reviewers complete their review, feedback will be forwarded to the department and then to districts. If any critical elements are missing information that could not be secured through a telephone conversation with the designated representative, districts will be given a timeline for resubmitting evidence to meet the peer review requirements.

Section 1.0 School/district curriculum are aligned with Alaska Standards and Grade Level Expectations (GLEs).

Overview and Definitions

To establish common expectations for the academic achievement of all students, the State expects all public school districts to adhere to a set of challenging academic content standards and grade level expectations. These standards should guide the selection of appropriate district resources and materials for classroom instruction. Those materials and resources selected for use must be aligned to state standards and adaptable to allow for differentiated instruction and ensure inclusion of those students with disabilities and students who are not yet proficient in English.

Standards

Content standards are the overarching goals that describe, in the broadest terms, what all students in Alaska should know and be able to do. Performance standards state what students should know and be able to do at grades 5-7, 8-10, 11-14, and 15-18. Grade-level expectations are specific statements of the knowledge and/or skills that students are expected to demonstrate at each grade level. They serve as checkpoints that monitor progress toward the performance standards and ultimately the content standards. The grade-level expectations do not replace the performance standards; rather, they serve to explicate and clarify the standards. They also serve to define and communicate eligible content, or the range of knowledge and skills from which priorities for instruction and state assessment are drawn.

Stakeholders

Participants in the alignment process should be drawn from district personnel. These staff should be using the curriculum and know the GLEs and the content addressed. They may be experienced teachers, administrators, and other specialists working directly with students. In some cases, they may be drawn from a broader group of community stakeholders. Districts should consider cultural diversity and other demographic considerations when identifying alignment participants.

Proficiency Descriptors

Proficiency level descriptors are statements that describe the knowledge and skills expected at different proficiency levels with respect to the content standards, performance standards, and grade-level expectations. Alaska has four

proficiency levels: far below proficient, below proficient, proficient, and advanced. The proficiency level descriptors describe the expected level of performance at each of these four levels.

Evidence-Based Research

All materials/resources require a decision making process supported by the appropriate balance of sound theory and relevant empirical evidence. Most publications reference evidence of research. Overall, a district's decision needs to be thoughtful showing evidence of diligence in selecting materials.

Cognitive Complexity/Depth of Knowledge/Level of Rigor

Cognitive complexity, also known as depth of knowledge, refers to the level of rigor or cognitive demand required for a student to demonstrate mastery of a particular standard or GLE. Typically, standards for any grade or content area will include a range of levels of cognitive complexity (i.e., some more complex and some less complex). District curriculum should encourage the teaching of advanced skills as well as foundational skills and show a balanced progression toward higher levels of cognitive complexity as GLEs carry into the next grade.

Response to Instruction/Intervention

Response to Instruction/Intervention (RTI) is a framework for instruction that has a purpose: to improve the academic achievement and educational outcomes of *every student*. The RTI model supports the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to students' individual needs, monitoring progress frequently to guide decision making about changes in instruction or educational goals, and using data to monitor each child's response to instructional strategies or interventions. The RTI concepts supported by EED make use of a multi-tiered approach that incorporates quality instruction and effective interventions for all students. The use of 'tiered' models is common in both education and mental health. The RTI model can be applied in all academic content areas, such as math, written language and reading. It can also be applied to social behavior and school environment.

Differentiation

To differentiate instruction is to recognize students varying background knowledge, readiness, language, preferences in learning, interests; and to react responsively. Differentiated instruction is a process to approach teaching and learning for students of differing abilities in the same class. The intent of differentiating instruction is to maximize each student's growth and individual success by meeting each student where he or she is, and assisting in the learning process.

1.0 School/district curriculum are aligned with Alaska Standards and Grade Level Expectations (GLEs).

- 1.1 A process was used to identify appropriate resources and materials available for each GLE.
 - a) Who were the stakeholders involved and how often did they meet? Of the stakeholders, which have experience and knowledge in the content and GLEs?
 - b) How did proficiency descriptors guide resource selection?
 - c) What was the process to identify and select aligned, evidence-based researched materials? How were gaps in the resources and materials determined? How were materials selected to address gaps?
 - d) How are the resources/materials used in your district? Are the ways in which they are being used consistent with the developers' (or vendors') stated purpose?
 - e) What evidence supports claims that the materials are aligned to state standards? At what level were they found to align (e.g., was the unit of analysis the standard or GLE level)?
- 1.2 All learners were considered in the selection of resources and materials.
 - a) What considerations were made for students with disabilities, English language learners, and advanced learners?

- 1.3 A process was used to ensure that the full range of content (breadth) represented in the GLEs is represented in the collection of resources/materials.
 - a) Who were the stakeholders and how often did they meet?
 - b) How did the stakeholder group determine a full range of content for the collection of materials?

- 1.4 A process was used to ensure the full range of depth of knowledge (DOK) or cognitive complexity represented in the GLEs is represented in the collection of resources/materials.
 - a) Who were the stakeholders involved and how often did they meet?
 - b) How did stakeholders assign/identify the cognitive complexity (i.e., Blooms taxonomy descriptors or Webb’s depth of knowledge levels) for each GLE?
 - c) How did the stakeholder group determine an appropriate range of cognitive levels for the collection of materials?
 - d) How does the curriculum framework show progression in student understanding?
 - e) How do the materials support differentiated instruction so that the needs of struggling learners and gifted students can be addressed?

Section 2.0 School/district curriculum has aligned formative/summative assessment components.

Overview and Definitions

To ensure that districts are able to evaluate whether all students are progressing toward proficient and advanced levels, aligned formative and summative assessments are required to support classroom instruction and monitor student progress. All public school students must participate in the district assessment system, including those with disabilities and those who are not yet proficient in English.

Districts may choose to implement a variety of formative/summative assessments. The evaluative system might include common assessments, interim formative assessments, curriculum-based measures, and end-of-course assessments. If a district only uses assessments referenced against national norms at a particular grade (i.e., norm-referenced curriculum based measures), those assessments must be augmented with additional items to ensure the tool accurately measures the full depth and breadth of the state academic content standards.

Formative Assessments

Formative assessment is part of the instructional process. When embedded in classroom practice, formative assessment provides the information needed to adjust teaching strategies during the time of instruction to support optimal learning outcomes. In this sense, feedback from formative assessment informs both teachers and students about student understanding at a point where instruction can be adjusted and interventions implemented as needed.

Summative Standards-Based Assessments

Summative assessments are given periodically to determine at a particular point in time what students know and do not know in relation to state standards. Summative assessment at the district/classroom level is an accountability measure that is generally used at the end of a unit or course of instruction as part of the grading process.

Although the information that is gleaned from this type of assessment is important, it can only help in evaluating certain aspects of the learning process. Because they are administered (1) at the end of instruction, not during, and (2) at less frequent intervals, e.g., every few weeks, months, or once a year, results from summative assessments can be used to help evaluate the effectiveness of programs, school improvement goals, alignment of curriculum, or student placement in specific programs. Summative assessments happen too far down the learning path to provide the finely-grained information to guide instruction at the classroom level or to make adjustments and interventions to teaching strategies *during* the learning process.

2.0 School/district curriculum has aligned formative/summative assessment components.

- 2.1 Ongoing use of aligned classroom assessments document student progress and achievement.
 - a) a) What types of formative assessment practices are used in your district?
 - b) How are results from formative assessments used in your district? Are they providing instructional feedback to students and teachers?
 - c) What evidence supporting claims of instructional sensitivity of formative assessments has been collected? Or means to support the implementation of instructional-sensitive formative assessments?
- 2.2 A structure is in place to support continued use of aligned formative/summative assessments.
 - a) What is the process for collaboratively examining student work for alignment to proficiency descriptors and GLEs?
 - b) How are tools and strategies for formative/summative assessments shared?
 - c) How are formative/summative assessments connected to other school improvement initiatives?

Section 3.0 School/district curriculum is implemented with fidelity.

Overview and Definitions

The governing body of a district shall adopt, in the manner required by AS 14.14.100(a) a curriculum that describes what will be taught students in grades kindergarten through grade 12. The district curriculum can incorporate local standards along with required state standards.

Comparability and Equivalency

Students who move between schools must receive comparable instruction through materials that are equally aligned to the grade level expectations. Assurances are necessary that schools are pacing through materials at rates that are equivalent over time so students are able to maintain comparable progress toward the standards regardless of school attended.

Stakeholders

District level participants must include experienced teachers, administrators, and other specialists working directly with students at each grade level. Districts involving stakeholders in this process ensure cultural identities and other demographic considerations when designing or adopting a curriculum.

Fidelity

Fidelity (or integrity) of implementation is the delivery of instruction in the way in which it was designed to be delivered, i.e., in keeping with the intent of the standards, district and school policies for effective instruction, and community expectations.

3.0 School/district curriculum is implemented with fidelity.

- 3.1 The curriculum is fully adopted by the school board.
 - a) The curriculum contains a statement that the document is used to guide for planning instructional strategies. Does the audience for the statement point to the teachers? Does the statement express the purpose of the curriculum?
 - b) The curriculum contains a statement of goals that the curriculum is expected to accomplish. Will the listed goals be measured? Where do the goals reflect district philosophy?

- c) The curriculum must set out content that can reasonably be expected to accomplish the goals. How does the curriculum support instruction in preparation of the summative spring assessments?
 - d) There is a review process to determine if the curriculum is responsive to the learning needs of all students. How will data be used to determine the curriculum is meeting the needs of all earners? Who are the stakeholders involved in reviewing the curriculum? What assurances exist that all subgroups are represented in the curriculum?
 - e) A schedule or plan to address each content area undergoing review at least once every six years. How does the timeline address grades K-12 in each specific content area?
- 3.2 A system is in place that guarantees teachers are prepared to use district curriculum.
- a) How are teachers prepared to use curriculum materials with fidelity? How does this preparation provide multiple entry points for novice as well as experienced teachers?
 - b) How are new teachers to the district prepared to implement the curriculum with fidelity?
 - c) How does district leadership programs support and monitor for implementation of curriculum?

Appendix J: Consequences of Not Meeting Adequate Yearly Progress

For Schools Receiving Title I, Part A Funds

Level 1	Alert: Prepare and implement a school plan, consult with district and EED to receive technical assistance to meet AYP in next year.
Level 2	School Improvement Status Year 1: Develop a school improvement plan. After district review and approval, implement plan. District sends plan to EED. Provide school choice, if choice is available, or supplemental educational services (SES) and inform parents of designation and choice (or SES) options as appropriate.
Level 3	School Improvement Status Year 2: Continue to implement school improvement plan (revised as necessary), continue to provide choice, offer supplemental services if not already provided due to limited choice, and inform parents.
Level 4	Corrective Actions: Continue school improvement plan, choice, SES, and inform parents. <i>In addition, district must take one of the following actions:</i> replacement of staff; implementation of a new curriculum; decrease management authority at school level; appoint an outside expert; extend the school day or year; or restructure the internal organization of the school. [4 AAC 06.865 & NCLB 1116(b)(7)]
Level 5	Restructuring: Year 1 - Continue school improvement plan, choice and SES, and inform parents. <i>District required to prepare a restructuring plan for alternative governance using one of the following actions:</i> reopen as a charter school, replace all or most of the staff, enter into a contract with a management company, turn over operation of the school to the state, or any other major restructuring of a school's governance arrangement consistent with section 1116 of NCLB. Restructuring: Year 2 - Implement restructuring plan for alternative governance. Continue to implement school improvement plan, continue to provide school choice and supplemental services, inform parents. [4 AAC 06.870 & NCLB 1116(b)(8)]

For Schools Not Receiving Title I, Part A Funds

Level 1	Alert: Prepare and implement a school plan, consult with district and Department to receive technical assistance to meet AYP in next year.
Level 2 & Above	School Improvement: School shall develop & implement school plan, and notify parents.

For Districts

Level 1	Alert: Consult with the Department regarding reasons for not meeting AYP.
Level 3	District Improvement: District shall develop & implement a district improvement plan, submit the plan to EED, request technical assistance from EED, and provide notice to parents. [4 AAC 06.840(h), 06.850, & NCLB 1116(c)]
Level 4	District Corrective Action: Continue district improvement plan. <i>EED must take at least one corrective action:</i> defer programmatic funds or reduce administrative money from federal sources; institute new curriculum; replace district personnel; remove schools from jurisdiction of district; authorize students to transfer to another district; or appoint trustee to administer districts in place of school board. [4 AAC 06.840(k) & NCLB 1116(c)(10)(C)]

Financial Consequences

District	Set-aside 20% (or amount equal to) of district's Title IA allocation to provide choice/SES if any Title I school is in Level 2 or above
District	Spend 10% of district's Title IA allocation to provide professional development if district is identified at Level 2 or above and receives IA funds (may include 10% school-level allocation for professional development).
School	Spend 10% of school's Title IA allocation for professional development if school is in Level 2 or above.

Appendix K: Menu of Available Services

Curriculum

Resource	Tier I	Tier II	Tier III
Curriculum Alignment Institute	X	X	X
Content Coaches (CCs)		X	X
Technical Assistance Coaches (TACs)			X

Assessment

Resource	Tier I	Tier II	Tier III
Alaska Computerized Formative Assessments (ACFA)	X	X	X
Curriculum Based Measures: AIMSweb Training			X
Data Interaction for Alaska Student Assessments (DIASA)	X	X	X
Content Coaches (CCs)		X	X
Technical Assistance Coaches (TACs)			X

Instruction

Resource	Tier I	Tier II	Tier III
Response to Instruction/Intervention Guidance Document	X	X	X
Response to Instruction/Intervention PowerPoint	X	X	X
Content Coaches (CCs)		X	X
Alaska Statewide Mentor Project (ASMP)	X	X	X
Technical Assistance Coaches (TACs)			X

Supportive Learning Environment

Resource	Tier I	Tier II	Tier III
SESA's PBS Resource Center/Clearinghouse	X	X	X
SESA's PBS Implementation Support			X
Content Coaches (CCs)		X	X
Technical Assistance Coaches (TACs)			X

Professional Development

Resource	Tier I	Tier II	Tier III
Alaska Reading Course	X	X	X
Content Coaches (CCs)		X	X
Technical Assistance Coaches (TACs)			X

Leadership

Resource	Tier I	Tier II	Tier III
Alaska Administrator Coaching Project (AACP)	X	X	X
Rural Alaska Principal Preparation Project (RAPPS)	X	X	X
Alaska School Leadership Institute (ASLI)		X	X
Collaborative Meeting Training	X	X	X
GLE Walkthrough DVD	X	X	X
Observation Protocols	X	X	X
Content Coaches (CCs)		X	X
Technical Assistance Coaches (TACs)			X
Governance Technical Assistance Coach			X

Appendix L: Reporting Template for Technical Assistance Coaches

Technical Assistance Coach Site Visit Report

Alaska Department of Education & Early Development
State System of Support

Project Log Information

Technical Assistance Coach (TAC) Reporting:

District:

Site, *if applicable*:

Focus of Visit:

Participants:

Site Visit Report Cycle

Reports completed and posted 7 days after site visit ends.

Service Dates:

Report Date:

The following dates reflect when the reports will be compiled and archived at EED.

August 31, 2010 October 31, 2010 January 31, 2011 March 31, 2011 May 31, 2011

Data Related to the District or Site for this Visit

--

Curriculum
check boxes that correspond to work and observations in the domain during this visit

Verification of Documents & Best Practice:

* Reported Every Cycle

- Curriculum alignment framework document is complete for all SBA tested content areas
- Teachers use the district curriculum in their lesson planning
- Curriculum gaps are identified and filled with supplemental materials
- Materials have been purchased and distributed to staff
- Teachers implement the aligned reading, writing, math, and science curricula*
- School provides students with meaningful exposure to non-tested content areas*

Follow Up Observations Regarding School Progress Towards Recommendations From Previous Visit

Observations of School Implementation and Progress in Domain	Recommendations to School based on Observations

Assessment
check boxes that correspond to work and observations in the domain during this visit

Verification of Documents & Best Practice:

* Reported Every Cycle

- Professional development related to assessment literacy is scheduled and embedded throughout the year
- Universal screenings are administered multiple times a year for all students*
- Progress monitoring is used by teachers to address students' learning needs
- Collaborative meetings are focused on making data driven decisions to improve student achievement*

Follow Up Observations Regarding School Progress Towards Recommendations From Previous Visit

Observations of School Implementation and Progress in Domain	Recommendations to School based on Observations

Instruction <i>check boxes that correspond to work and observations in the domain during this visit</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice: * Reported Every Cycle <input type="checkbox"/> School schedules designate a 90-minute-block for core reading instruction* <input type="checkbox"/> In addition to the 90-minute core reading block, school schedules designate 30-60 minutes for reading intervention* <input type="checkbox"/> District provides reading and math specialists to work with students and/or staff who need additional support <input type="checkbox"/> School has a schedule/system that ensures that there is designated time for intervention efforts in reading and math: core, core + more, core + more + more <input type="checkbox"/> Research-based intervention materials have been purchased and are implemented to support low-performing students to become proficient <input type="checkbox"/> There is instruction in academic content areas such as Science, Social Studies, Writing, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers differentiate instruction based on student needs <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers use collaborative meetings to examine student work and share strategies	
Follow Up Observations Regarding School Progress Towards Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Observations of School Implementation and Progress in Domain	Recommendations to School based on Observations

Supportive Learning Environment <i>check boxes that correspond to work and observations in the domain during this visit</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice: <input type="checkbox"/> School and classroom schedules emphasize uninterrupted instructional time <input type="checkbox"/> There is a unified approach to classroom management strategies; materials and professional development are provided to staff to ensure that the expectations are met <input type="checkbox"/> Local cultural values are incorporated in curriculum, instruction, learning environment <input type="checkbox"/> Principal and teachers communicate with parents about learning expectations, student progress, and ways to incorporate learning at home	
Follow Up Observations Regarding School Progress Towards Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Observations of School Implementation and Progress in Domain	Recommendations to School based on Observations

Professional Development <i>check boxes that correspond to work and observations in the domain during this visit</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice: <input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Leader/Staff examine student data to determine what professional development is needed <input type="checkbox"/> Site in-service schedules are directly related to student achievement data <input type="checkbox"/> Site staff participates in EED sponsored professional development events <input type="checkbox"/> Principal/Instructional leader participates in RAPPs webinar series	
Follow Up Observations Regarding School Progress Towards Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Observations of School Implementation and Progress in Domain	Recommendations to School based on Observations

Leadership <i>check boxes that correspond to work and observations in the domain during this visit</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice: * Reported Every Cycle <input type="checkbox"/> Leaders conduct GLE walkthroughs and provide timely feedback to teachers* <input type="checkbox"/> Leaders monitor the progress of the school improvement plan* <input type="checkbox"/> Leaders participation in the Alaska Administrative Coaching Program, as appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> School leadership participates in collaborative meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Principal briefs Superintendent on AIMSweb and other screening assessment results <input type="checkbox"/> Leaders review and respond to coaches comments in reports and/or Alaska STEPP	
Follow Up Observations Regarding School Progress Towards Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Observations of School Implementation and Progress in Domain	Recommendations to School based on Observations

HSGQE Individual Remediation Plans <i>check boxes that correspond to work and observations in the domain during this visit</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice: * Reported Every Cycle <input type="checkbox"/> There is a plan for each student who has not passed one or more sections of the HSGQE* <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers follow through on HSGQE plans in the classroom*	
Follow Up Observations Regarding School Progress Towards Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Observations of School Implementation and Progress in Domain	Recommendations to School based on Observations

Inservice/Professional Development Provided by Technical Assistance Coach

Upcoming Site Visits

Additional Comments <i>May include information reported by site. Include dates as appropriate</i>

Signatures			
_____	_____	_____	_____
Technical Assistance Coach's Signature	Date	Principal's Signature	Date
<input type="checkbox"/> I am including comments (see attached). <input type="checkbox"/> I am not including comments.			

Principal comments

Appendix M: Reporting Template for Content Coaches

Content Coach Site Visit Report

Alaska Department of Education & Early Development
State System of Support

Project Log Information

Content Coach (CC) Reporting:**District:****Site:****Focus of Visit:****Participants:**

Site Visit Report Cycle

Reports completed and posted 7 days after site visit ends.

Service Dates:

Report Date:

The following dates reflect when the reports will be compiled and archived at EED.

August 31, 2010 October 31, 2010 January 31, 2011 March 31, 2011 May 31, 2011

Data Related to the Site for this Visit

--

Curriculum
check boxes that correspond to work and observations in the domain during this visit

Verification of Documents & Best Practice:

* Reported Every Cycle

- Curriculum alignment framework document is complete for all SBA tested content areas
- Teachers use the district curriculum in their lesson planning
- Curriculum gaps are identified and filled with supplemental materials
- Materials have been purchased and distributed to staff
- Teachers implement the aligned reading, writing, math, and science curricula*
- School provides students with meaningful exposure to non-tested content areas*

Follow Up Observations Regarding School Progress Towards Recommendations From Previous Visit

Observations of School Implementation and Progress in Domain	Recommendations to School based on Observations

Assessment
check boxes that correspond to work and observations in the domain during this visit

Verification of Documents & Best Practice:

* Reported Every Cycle

- Professional development related to assessment literacy is scheduled and embedded throughout the year
- Universal screenings are administered multiple times a year for all students*
- Progress monitoring is used by teachers to address students' learning needs
- Collaborative meetings are focused on making data driven decisions to improve student achievement*

Follow Up Observations Regarding School Progress Towards Recommendations From Previous Visit

Observations of School Implementation and Progress in Domain	Recommendations to School based on Observations

Instruction <i>check boxes that correspond to work and observations in the domain during this visit</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice: * Reported Every Cycle <input type="checkbox"/> School schedules designate a 90-minute-block for core reading instruction* <input type="checkbox"/> In addition to the 90-minute core reading block, school schedules designate 30-60 minutes for reading intervention* <input type="checkbox"/> District provides reading and math specialists to work with students and/or staff who need additional support <input type="checkbox"/> School has a schedule/system that ensures that there is designated time for intervention efforts in reading and math: core, core + more, core + more + more <input type="checkbox"/> Research-based intervention materials have been purchased and are implemented to support low-performing students to become proficient <input type="checkbox"/> There is instruction in academic content areas such as Science, Social Studies, Writing, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers differentiate instruction based on student needs <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers use collaborative meetings to examine student work and share strategies	
Follow Up Observations Regarding School Progress Towards Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Observations of School Implementation and Progress in Domain	Recommendations to School based on Observations

Supportive Learning Environment <i>check boxes that correspond to work and observations in the domain during this visit</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice: <input type="checkbox"/> School and classroom schedules emphasize uninterrupted instructional time <input type="checkbox"/> There is a unified approach to classroom management strategies; materials and professional development are provided to staff to ensure that the expectations are met <input type="checkbox"/> Local cultural values are incorporated in curriculum, instruction, learning environment <input type="checkbox"/> Principal and teachers communicate with parents about learning expectations, student progress, and ways to incorporate learning at home	
Follow Up Observations Regarding School Progress Towards Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Observations of School Implementation and Progress in Domain	Recommendations to School based on Observations

Professional Development <i>check boxes that correspond to work and observations in the domain during this visit</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Instructional Leader/Staff examine student data to determine what professional development is needed <input type="checkbox"/> Site in-service schedules are directly related to student achievement data <input type="checkbox"/> Site staff participates in EED sponsored professional development events <input type="checkbox"/> Principal/Instructional leader participates in RAPPS webinar series	
Follow Up Observations Regarding School Progress Towards Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Observations of School Implementation and Progress in Domain	Recommendations to School based on Observations

Leadership <i>check boxes that correspond to work and observations in the domain during this visit</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice:	
* Reported Every Cycle	
<input type="checkbox"/> Leaders conduct GLE walkthroughs and provide timely feedback to teachers* <input type="checkbox"/> Leaders monitor the progress of the school improvement plan* <input type="checkbox"/> Leaders participation in the Alaska Administrative Coaching Program, as appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> School leadership participates in collaborative meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Principal briefs Superintendent on AIMSweb and other screening assessment results <input type="checkbox"/> Leaders review and respond to coaches comments in reports and/or Alaska STEPP	
Follow Up Observations Regarding School Progress Towards Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Observations of School Implementation and Progress in Domain	Recommendations to School based on Observations

HSGQE Individual Remediation Plans <i>check boxes that correspond to work and observations in the domain during this visit</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice: * Reported Every Cycle <input type="checkbox"/> There is a plan for each student who has not passed one or more sections of the HSGQE* <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers follow through on HSGQE plans in the classroom*	
Follow Up Observations Regarding School Progress Towards Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Observations of School Implementation and Progress in Domain	Recommendations to School based on Observations

Inservice/Professional Development Provided by Content Coach

Upcoming Site Visits

Additional Comments <i>May include information reported by site. Include dates as appropriate</i>

Signatures			
_____	_____	_____	_____
Content Coach's Signature	Date	Principal's Signature	Date
		<input type="checkbox"/> I am including comments (see attached). <input type="checkbox"/> I am not including comments.	

Principal comments

Appendix N: Reporting Template for Lead Technical Assistance Coaches

Lead Technical Assistance Coach District Service Report

Alaska Department of Education & Early Development
State System of Support

Project Log Information

Lead Technical Assistance Coach Reporting:

District:

Service Dates:

Focus of Visit:

Participants:

Service Dates:

Focus of Visit:

Participants:

District Service Report Cycle

August 31, 2010 October 31, 2010 January 31, 2011 March 31, 2011 May 31, 2011

District Data for this Reporting Cycle

Curriculum <i>check boxes that correspond to work and observations in this domain during this reporting period</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice: * Reported Every Cycle <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum alignment framework document is complete for all SBA tested content areas <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum gaps are identified and filled with supplemental materials <input type="checkbox"/> Materials have been purchased and distributed to staff <input type="checkbox"/> District ensures implementation of the aligned reading, writing, math, and science curricula* <input type="checkbox"/> District provides students with meaningful exposure to non-tested content areas*	
Observations of District Implementation and Progress in this Domain	Recommendations to District Based on Observations
Date:	
Follow Up Observations of District Implementation and Progress Toward Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Date:	
Additional Observations	
Date:	
Recommendations to District Based on Observations	
Date:	

Assessment <i>check boxes that correspond to work and observations in this domain during this reporting period</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice: * Reported Every Cycle <input type="checkbox"/> Professional development related to assessment literacy is scheduled and embedded throughout the year <input type="checkbox"/> Universal screenings are administered multiple times a year for all students* <input type="checkbox"/> District ensure that progress monitoring is used by teachers to address students' learning needs <input type="checkbox"/> Lead TAC observes that collaborative meetings are focused on making data driven decisions to improve student achievement*	
Observations of District Implementation and Progress in this Domain	Recommendations to District Based on Observations
Date:	
Follow Up Observations of District Implementation and Progress Toward Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Date:	
Additional Observations	
Date:	
Recommendations to District Based on Observations	
Date:	

Instruction <i>boxes checked reflect areas of observation in this domain during this reporting period</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice: * Reported Every Cycle <input type="checkbox"/> School schedules designate a 90-minute-block for core reading instruction* <input type="checkbox"/> In addition to the 90-minute core reading block, school schedules designate 30-60 minutes for reading intervention* <input type="checkbox"/> District provides reading and math specialists to work with students and/or staff who need additional support <input type="checkbox"/> District has a policy and ensures that there is designated time for intervention efforts in reading and math: core, core + more, core + more + more <input type="checkbox"/> Research-based intervention materials have been purchased and are implemented to support low-performing students to become proficient <input type="checkbox"/> District ensures that there is instruction in academic content areas such as Science, Social Studies, Writing, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> District ensures teachers differentiate instruction based on student needs <input type="checkbox"/> District ensure site staff use collaborative meetings to examine student work and share strategies	
Observations of District Implementation and Progress in this Domain	Recommendations to District Based on Observations
Date:	
Follow Up Observations of District Implementation and Progress Toward Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Date:	
Additional Observations	
Date:	
Recommendations to District Based on Observations	
Date:	

Supportive Learning Environment <i>boxes checked reflect areas of observation in this domain during this reporting period</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice: <input type="checkbox"/> There is a district-wide expectation that school schedules emphasize uninterrupted instructional time <input type="checkbox"/> District requires a unified approach to classroom management strategies and provides materials and professional development to staff to ensure that the expectations are met <input type="checkbox"/> District incorporates local cultural values within the curriculum, instruction, and learning environment <input type="checkbox"/> District communicates with parents about learning expectations, student progress, and ways to incorporate learning at home	
Observations of District Implementation and Progress in this Domain	Recommendations to District Based on Observations
Date:	
Follow Up Observations of District Implementation and Progress Toward Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Date:	
Additional Observations	
Date:	
Recommendations to District Based on Observations	
Date:	

Professional Development <i>boxes checked reflect areas of observation in this domain during this reporting period</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice: * Reported Every Cycle <input type="checkbox"/> District examines data to determine what professional development events need to take place <input type="checkbox"/> District and site in-service schedules meet professional development needs <input type="checkbox"/> District participates in EED sponsored professional development events <input type="checkbox"/> District participates in RAPPS webinar series <input type="checkbox"/> Lead TAC observes that collaborative meetings are focused on making data driven decisions to improve student achievement*	
Observations of District Implementation and Progress in this Domain	Recommendations to District Based on Observations
Date:	
Follow Up Observations of District Implementation and Progress Toward Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Date:	
Additional Observations	
Date:	
Recommendations to District Based on Observations	
Date:	

Leadership <i>boxes checked reflect areas of observation in this domain during this reporting period</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice: * Reported Every Cycle <input type="checkbox"/> Lead TAC accompanies leaders while they conduct GLE walkthroughs and provide timely feedback to teachers* <input type="checkbox"/> Lead TAC observes leaders monitoring the progress of the district and/or school improvement plans* <input type="checkbox"/> District participates in the Alaska Administrative Coaching Program, as appropriate <input type="checkbox"/> School leadership participates in collaborative meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Principal briefs Superintendent on AIMSweb results <input type="checkbox"/> Leaders review and respond to coaches comments in reports and/or Alaska STEPP	
Observations of District Implementation and Progress in this Domain	Recommendations to District Based on Observations
Date:	
Follow Up Observations of District Implementation and Progress Toward Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Date:	
Additional Observations	
Date:	
Recommendations to District Based on Observations	
Date:	

HSGQE Individual Remediation Plans <i>boxes checked reflect areas of observation in this domain during this reporting period</i>	
Verification of Documents & Best Practice: * Reported Every Cycle <input type="checkbox"/> There is a plan for each student who has not passed one or more sections of the HSGQE* <input type="checkbox"/> Lead TAC interviews principal about the system of development and implementation of HSGQE plans (once/year) <input type="checkbox"/> Lead TAC observes the implementation of plans in the classroom* <input type="checkbox"/> Lead TAC speaks with the Superintendent in the fall to verify that there is a system for completing HSGQE remediation plans for students who have not passed one or more sections of the HSGQE and that these plans are in place <input type="checkbox"/> Lead TAC speaks with the Superintendent in January to verify that all HSGQE remediation plans are in place and that these plans are being implemented; Lead TAC reviews plans and ensures their implementation.	
Observations of District Implementation and Progress in this Domain	Recommendations to District Based on Observations
Date:	
Follow Up Observations of District Implementation and Progress Toward Recommendations From Previous Visit	
Date:	
Additional Observations	
Date:	
Recommendations to District Based on Observations	
Date:	

Inservice/Professional Development Provided by Lead Technical Assistance Coach

Upcoming Site Visits

Additional Comments <i>May include: information reported by district, information from Content Coach and/or Technical Assistance Coach Site Reports Include dates as appropriate</i>

Signatures			
_____	_____	_____	_____
Lead TAC Signature	Date	Superintendent's Signature	Date
		<input type="checkbox"/> I am including comments (see attached).	
		<input type="checkbox"/> I am not including comments.	

Superintendent's Comments (optional)

Appendix O: Cultural Standards for Alaska Students

Standard A

Culturally knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community.

Students who meet this cultural standard are able to:

- 1) assume responsibilities for their role in relation to the well-being of the cultural community and their lifelong obligations as a community member;
- 2) recount their own genealogy and family history;
- 3) acquire and pass on the traditions of their community through oral and written history;
- 4) practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;
- 5) reflect through their own actions the critical role that the local heritage language plays in fostering a sense of who they are and how they understand the world around them;
- 6) live a life in accordance with the cultural values and traditions of the local community and integrate them into their everyday behavior; and
- 7) determine the place of their cultural community in the regional, state, national, and international political and economic systems.

Standard B

Culturally knowledgeable students are able to build on the knowledge and skills of the local cultural community as a foundation from which to achieve personal and academic success throughout life.

Students who meet this cultural standard are able to:

- 1) acquire insights from other cultures without diminishing the integrity of their own;
- 2) make effective use of the knowledge, skills, and ways of knowing from their own cultural traditions to learn about the larger world in which they live;
- 3) make appropriate choices regarding the long-term consequences of their actions; and
- 4) identify appropriate forms of technology and anticipate the consequences of their use for improving the quality of life in the community.

Standard C

Culturally knowledgeable students are able to actively participate in various cultural environments.

Students who meet this cultural standard are able to:

- 1) perform subsistence activities in ways that are appropriate to local cultural traditions;
- 2) make constructive contributions to the governance of their community and the well-being of their family;
- 3) attain a healthy lifestyle through which they are able to maintain their social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and spiritual well-being; and
- 4) enter into and function effectively in a variety of cultural settings.

Standard D

Culturally knowledgeable students are able to engage effectively in learning activities that are based on traditional ways of knowing and learning.

Students who meet this cultural standard are able to:

- 1) acquire in-depth cultural knowledge through active participation and meaningful interaction with Elders;
- 2) participate in and make constructive contributions to the learning activities associated with a traditional camp environment;
- 3) interact with Elders in a loving and respectful way that demonstrates an appreciation of their role as culture-bearers and educators in the community;
- 4) gather oral and written history information from the local community and provide an appropriate interpretation of its cultural meaning and significance;
- 5) identify and utilize appropriate sources of cultural knowledge to find solutions to everyday problems; and
- 6) engage in a realistic self-assessment to identify strengths and needs and make appropriate decisions to enhance life skills.

Standard E

Culturally knowledgeable students demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the relationships and processes of interaction of all elements in the world around them.

Students who meet this cultural standard are able to:

- 1) recognize and build upon the interrelationships that exist among the spiritual, natural, and human realms in the world around them, as reflected in their own cultural traditions and beliefs as well as those of others;
- 2) understand the ecology and geography of the bioregion they inhabit;
- 3) demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between world view and the way knowledge is formed and used;
- 4) determine how ideas and concepts from one knowledge system relate to those derived from other knowledge systems;
- 5) recognize how and why cultures change over time;
- 6) anticipate the changes that occur when different cultural systems come in contact with one another;
- 7) determine how cultural values and beliefs influence the interaction of people from different cultural backgrounds; and
- 8) identify and appreciate who they are and their place in the world.

Appendix P: Listing of Persons in the SSOS Structure (2010-2011)

Commissioner of Education and Early Development	Mr. Larry LeDoux
Deputy Commissioner of EED	Mr. Les Morse
Director of Rural Education	Ms. Phyllis Carlson
Director of Teaching and Learning Support	Ms. Cynthia Curran
ESEA/NCLB Administrator	Ms. Margaret MacKinnon
ESEA School Improvement Program Specialist	
Ms. Angela Love	angela.love@alaska.gov
SSOS Administrator	
Mr. Jon Paden	jon.paden@alaska.gov
SSOS Program Specialist	
Ms. Elizabeth Davis	elizabeth.davis@alaska.gov
SSOS Content Specialist: Literacy	
Ms. Maria Offer	maria.offer@alaska.gov
SSOS Content Specialist: Math	
Ms. Cecilia Miller	cecilia.miller@alaska.gov
SSOS Content Specialist: Science	
Dr. Bjorn Wolter	bjorn.wolter@alaska.gov
SSOS Education Associate	
Ms. Dena Iutzi-Mitchell	dena.iutzi-mitchell@alaska.gov

Glossary

“872” School – School that meets specific criteria, per 4 AAC 06.872, indicating need for EED and district consultation.

AACP- Alaska Administrator Coaching Project. Is part of the ASMP; it is a state initiative in which principals and superintendents receive support through leadership institutes, workshops, and coaches. The goals are to develop instructional leaders, increase student achievement, and reduce administrator turnover. Under the AACP, inexperienced administrators or those new to Alaska are paired with a coach for one or two years. The administrators receive guidance in organization and facilitation, teacher observation and evaluation, the use of data to improve instruction, and the use of effective school-level and classroom practices.

ACC – Alaska Comprehensive Center. Supports EED with high quality, research-based resources. The ACC is one of sixteen centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education to support states in increasing student achievement. The website presented by the ACC is for all educators serving Alaska’s K-12 schools. It brings together in one place current information about improvement planning and strategies that districts can use to meet the provisions of NCLB and increasing student performance. For more information visit <http://dev.alaskacc.org/ssos>.

ACFA- Alaska Computerized Formative Assessments. ACRA are computer-based formative assessments using the CAL online computer test delivery and reporting system. Items are linked to specific Alaska performance standards and grade level expectations (GLEs). The system is intended to provide feedback that can be used to adapt teaching and learning to meet student needs.

AIMSweb- A 3-tier progress monitoring system based on direct, frequent and continuous student assessment which is reported to teachers and administrators via a web-based management and reporting system for the purpose of determining response to instruction.

AIMSweb Diagnosing- Looking for reading vulnerabilities within each student.

AIMSweb Early Literacy Assessment Schedule -

Kindergarten			First Grade		
Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring
Beginning Sound Fluency (optional)	Beginning Sound Fluency				
Letter Naming Fluency	Letter Naming Fluency	Letter Naming Fluency	Letter Naming Fluency		
	Letter Sound Fluency	Letter Sound Fluency	Letter Sound Fluency		
	Phonemic Segmentation Fluency	Phonemic Segmentation Fluency	Phonemic Segmentation Fluency	Phonemic Segmentation Fluency	
	Nonsense Words Fluency (optional)	Nonsense Words Fluency	Nonsense Words Fluency	Nonsense Words Fluency	Nonsense Words Fluency
				R-CBM Fluency	R-CBM Fluency

AIMSweb Progress Monitoring- Assessing intervention efforts and its impact on student achievement. Conducted every 2-3 weeks to identify how individual students are responding to instruction. Is the intervention having a positive impact?

AIMSweb Universal Screening- Commonly referred to as benchmarking. Testing all students, usually three times a year, measures performance compared to students of their own age.

Alaska Reading Course- EED developed a scientifically based Alaska Reading Course focusing on the five critical elements of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. It includes word study and comprehension through writing of text. The course gives any teacher necessary skills to deliver reading instruction.

Alaska STEPP- Steps To Educational Progress and Partnership, an entirely web-based school improvement system used by district and school improvement teams to inform, coach, sustain, track, and report improvement activities.

AMO – Annual Measurable Objective. AMO is the percentage of students that must score at a proficient level or higher on state assessments. By year 2013-14 the AMOs for language arts and math are 100%.

ASMP- Alaska Statewide Mentor Project. EED created the ASMP in partnership with the University of Alaska in support of their shared mission to improve academic achievement for students in Alaska. The ASMP includes two components: teacher mentoring for beginning teachers; and principal coaching for new school principals. The goals of the program are to increase teacher retention, increase student achievement, and equip principals with the skills to be instructional leaders and effective managers.

AYP - Adequate Yearly Progress. When a school or district meets the state's goals for reading/language arts and mathematics, it makes AYP.

Best practice - A best practice is a technique or methodology that, through experience and research, has proven to reliably lead to a desired result. A commitment to using the best practices is a commitment to using all the knowledge and technology at one's disposal to ensure success.

CBM – Curriculum Based Measurement. Assessment of student progress aligned to the GLEs.

Desk Audit – A review of assessment data to determine the reasons a district or school has not demonstrated adequate yearly progress.

DIASA- Data Interaction for Alaska Student Assessments. An online database, allows for dynamic access to SBA student performance results. It is password protected with hierarchical access to varying levels of depth into the data, in order to protect individual students. The data interaction system permits approved users to create their own reports, graphs or data files; conduct ad hoc data queries and analysis; disaggregate on user-selected subgroup variables; drill down from summaries to individual students; and print reports in PDF format or export to other software programs.

Domain – Broad area of policy or practice related to effective and successful school functioning.

EED – Alaska Department of Education & Early Development.

Formative Assessment - An assessment conducted at the classroom level intended to be used by teachers to monitor and adjust instruction based on student need.

GLE - Grade Level Expectations. GLEs are based on Alaska's Content and Performance Standards, provide teachers with grade level teaching roadmaps, and for what may be assessed in the Standards Based Assessments (SBA).

GLE Walkthroughs- A process developed for principals to monitor the coverage of the grade level expectations in math, reading, writing, and science during classroom instruction. GLE recording sheets are distributed to principals and also available electronically upon request. GLE walkthrough training has been offered on-site by visiting classrooms, as well as through observing teaching episodes on DVD. Teachers are encouraged to use the GLE recording sheets when

planning lessons.

Instructional Audit – An on-site review of the instructional policies, practices, and methodologies in the six domains of effective practice.

LEA – Local Education Agency. In Alaska, school districts are LEAs.

NCLB - No Child Left Behind Act. NCLB is the latest version of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, signed into law January 8, 2002.

PBS – Positive Behavior Support. School-wide behavioral supports for positive environments.

RTI - Response to Instruction/Intervention. In Alaska, RTI provides a framework to support all students using a tri-tiered triangle model that addresses both academic instruction and behavioral support.

SESA- Special Education Service Agency. A non-profit, political subdivision of the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development. Specializes in offering Positive Behavior Support (PBS) services at the school-wide level.

SESA's PBS System- A three-tiered positive behavior support (PBS) system of intervention with a primary focus on prevention. Tier 1 emphasizes the use of universal supports for all students to increase pro-social behavior, while decreasing problem behaviors. School-wide PBS offers targeted interventions for at-risk students at Tier 2, and provides individualized, intensive interventions for students at Tier 3. The PBS Center staff will provide the necessary professional development and coaching support to schools and districts with following general outcome goals for students: decreases in problem behavior, increases in pro-social skills, increases in positive school climate, and increases in academic performance.

SSOS - State System of Support. State and federal law requires EED to provide a system of intensive and sustained support to districts and schools that are in need of improvement, in corrective action, or in restructuring.

SEA – State Education Agency. In Alaska, the SEA is the Department of Education & Early Development.

Title I – The key program of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, formerly known as No Child Left Behind, NCLB) law that provides federal funding aid focused toward schools with high-poverty.