RUBRIC:

Pennsylvania Essential Practices for Districts

CONDITION:

Empower Leadership for District Continuous Improvement

District leadership establishes a vision for continuous improvement and cultivates a culture of collective responsibility to provide the conditions for all students to be college, career, and community ready. There is a shared commitment to collaboratively identify, plan, implement, monitor, evaluate, and communicate the conditions necessary to continuously improve student learning and outcomes.



PRACTICE 1: Foster a vision and culture of high expectations for success for all stakeholders

NOT YET EVIDENT

- District leadership does not define or communicate a clear vision for district and school continuous improvement.
- There is no clear vision for the success of all students, including students who have historically experienced opportunity and achievement gaps.
- The district does not yet take observable action to build a culture of trust, shared responsibility, and a growthorientation among district staff and stakeholders.

EMERGING

- District leadership demonstrates efforts to define a vision for district and school continuous improvement; the vision is informal and/or inconsistently communicated.
- The developing vision may articulate expectations for the success of students but does not yet specifically address students who have historically experienced opportunity and achievement gaps.
- The district has initiated steps toward building a culture of trust, shared responsibility, and/or a growthorientation among district staff and/ or stakeholders; efforts may be developing and/or limited to only a few stakeholder groups.

OPERATIONAL

- District leadership defines and regularly communicates a clear vision for district and school continuous improvement.
- The vision clearly articulates expectations for the success of all students, including students who have historically experienced opportunity and achievement gaps.
- The district takes observable action to build a culture of trust, shared responsibility, and a growthorientation among district staff and stakeholders.

- District leadership, in collaboration with a diverse array of school and community stakeholders, defines and regularly communicates a clear vision for district and school continuous improvement.
- The vision clearly articulates expectations for the success of all students and district leaders publicly communicate, review, and address these opportunity and achievement gaps in order to advocate for district and school needs.
- The district takes observable action to build a culture of trust, shared responsibility, and a growth-orientation among district staff and stakeholders, resulting in high levels of school, family, and community belief and trust in the district and district leadership (e.g., as measured by formal surveys).











PRACTICE 2: Establish and maintain a focused system for continuous improvement and ensure organizational coherence

NOT YET EVIDENT

- The district does not yet have a system to collect and/or report multiple data sources to understand holistic district strengths and opportunities.
- The district leadership team has limited or no processes in place to review data and identify priorities and strategies for continuous improvement; there may be no formal district or school improvement processes.
- The district leadership team does not yet have processes in place to monitor comprehensive plan implementation and impact.

For larger districts:

- Central office staff do not yet have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and/or organizational structures are not coherently organized to support district needs.
- The district does not yet gather feedback or data on the quality of central office services, policies, and practices.

EMERGING

- The district collects and reports some data to understand district strengths and opportunities; data may not be aggregated or disaggregated to provide a holistic view of district strengths and opportunities.
- The district leadership team initiates some planning processes that include a review of data and identification of priorities and strategies for continuous improvement; these processes may not yet consistently align to school improvement processes and needs.
- The district leadership team monitors comprehensive plan implementation but monitoring inconsistently assesses impact and identifies course corrections.

For larger districts:

- Central office staff have defined organizational structures, roles and responsibilities; it is not evident how these central office structures are coherently aligned to the vision for district and school continuous improvement.
- The district informally gathers feedback and data on the quality of central office services, policies, and/or practices based on what schools need.

OPERATIONAL

- The district annually collects, reports, and aggregates/ disaggregates data (e.g., by individual student, student group, course, grade level, school, district) to understand holistic district strengths and opportunities.
- The district leadership team engages in a formal, annual planning process, including a review of data and identification of priorities and strategies for continuous improvement that address root causes within district control; there is evidence of some alignment of district plans to school needs.
- The district leadership team monitors comprehensive plan implementation and impact quarterly, and makes adjustments when data suggest a need for mid-course corrections.

For larger districts:

- Central office organizational structures, roles, and responsibilities staff are clearly defined and aligned to the vision for district and school continuous improvement.
- The district annually gathers feedback and data on the quality of central office services, policies, and practices based on what schools need to make annual improvements to district functions.

EXEMPLARY

- The district frequently collects, reports, and aggregates/disaggregates multiple sources of data (e.g., by individual student, student group, course, grade level, school, and district) to understand holistic district strengths and opportunities; this process prioritizes historically marginalized student groups.
- The district leadership team engages in a formal, annual planning process to review data and identify priorities and strategies for continuous improvement that address root causes within district control. There is evidence of intentional alignment of district plans to school needs.
- The district leadership team monitors comprehensive plan implementation and impact monthly, and makes adjustments when data suggest a need for mid-course corrections.

For larger districts:

- Central office organizational structures, roles, and responsibilities are clearly defined and aligned to the vision for district and school continuous improvement; stakeholders understand and articulate how central office staff and structures consistently work together.
- The district frequently gathers feedback and data on the quality of central office services, policies, and practices, resulting in continuously improved services, policies, and practices in alignment with the district's vision, mission, values, and priorities.











PRACTICE 3: Engage in meaningful two-way communication with stakeholders to establish and sustain shared responsibility for student learning across the district

NOT YET EVIDENT

- District leadership does not yet engage families, students and other stakeholders as part of the district's comprehensive planning, implementation, and monitoring process.
- The district has no plan and/or no structures in place to communicate with a variety of stakeholders about progress toward achieving the district's goals for student learning.
- Stakeholders have no formal opportunities to offer input in addressing school issues with district and school leaders.

EMERGING

- District leadership initiates some engagement of families, students and other stakeholders in the comprehensive planning, implementation and monitoring process, but it is not yet consistent and/or formalized.
- The district has an initial plan or informal structures in place for communicating with a variety of stakeholders about progress toward achieving the district's goals for student learning.
- Stakeholders, including families and/ or community, have at least one formal opportunity during the year to offer input in addressing school issues with district and school leaders.

OPERATIONAL

- Meaningful engagement of families, students, and other stakeholders is an evident part of the district's comprehensive planning, implementation, and monitoring process.
- The district has a formal structure for communicating with a variety of stakeholders about progress toward achieving the district's goals for student learning.
- Stakeholders, including families and community, have multiple opportunities during the year to offer input in addressing school issues with district and school leaders.

EXEMPLARY

- Meaningful engagement of families, students, and other stakeholders is evident in comprehensive planning, implementation, and monitoring processes. The district continually evaluates and improves the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement strategies as a key part of the comprehensive planning process.
- The district has a formal structure for communicating with a variety of stakeholders about progress toward achieving the district's goals for student learning, including a focus on how well the district is supporting administrators, teachers, staff, and families.
- Stakeholders, including families and community, have multiple opportunities during the year to exchange ideas in addressing district and school issues, resulting in evidence of feedback being incorporated into district and school decisions.











Focus on Continuous Improvement of Instruction

District leadership facilitates access to tools, systems, and structures to ensure effective, standards-aligned instructional programs that are evidence-based, differentiated, individualized, and informed by data-based planning and reflection.

PRACTICE 4: Ensure effective, standards-aligned curriculum and assessment

NOT YET EVIDENT

- Schools have limited access to high-quality, standards-aligned curriculum and instructional materials.
- Schools have limited access. to rigorous, standards-aligned assessments.
- The district does not yet monitor schools' curriculum and assessment implementation progress.
- The district does not yet report student assessment data.

EMERGING

- The district ensures schools have access to high-quality, standards-aligned curriculum and instructional materials; materials may not be consistently available and utilized in all content areas, grade levels and all schools.
- The district ensures all schools have access to rigorous, standards-aligned assessments in critical/state-testing content areas and grade levels; some schools are not yet fully utilizing them.
- The district has an initial plan for monitoring schools' curriculum and assessment implementation progress; plan implementation is inconsistent and/or does not yet inform support for school leaders and teachers.
- The district has a system for reporting student assessment data, but does not yet have consistent systems to disaggregate by student group and analyze the data.

OPERATIONAL

- The district ensures all schools utilize high-quality, standards-aligned curriculum and instructional materials in all content areas and grade-levels.
- The district ensures all schools utilize rigorous, standards-aligned assessments in critical/state-testing content areas and grade levels.
- The district monitors schools' curriculum and assessment implementation progress in order to inform support for school leaders and teachers.
- The district has a system for reporting, disaggregating by student group, and analyzing student assessment data.

- The district ensures all schools utilize high-quality, standards-aligned, culturally relevant curriculum and instructional materials in all content areas and grade-levels and works to strengthen K-12 curricular alignment.
- The district ensures all schools utilize rigorous, standards-aligned assessments in all content areas and grade levels.
- The district monitors schools' curriculum and assessment implementation progress in order to inform support for school leaders and teachers and to lift districtwide trends and next steps.
- · The district has a system for reporting, disaggregating by student group, and analyzing student assessment data and that data is accessible and useful to central office and school staff.











PRACTICE 5: Support schools in implementing evidence-based instructional strategies and programs to ensure all students have access to rigorous, standards-aligned instruction

NOT YET EVIDENT

- The district does not yet monitor schools' implementation of evidencebased programs and instructional strategies.
- The district provides limited or no resources and targeted training to support evidencebased and standards-aligned instruction.
- The district provides limited or no resources and academic supports for students with special education and language development needs.

EMERGING

- The district takes some steps to monitor schools' implementation of evidencebased programs and instructional strategies; there is not a formal routine to do this and/or efforts are inconsistent.
- The district provides some resources and targeted training that support evidencebased and standards-aligned instruction; support does not consistently align to school needs.
- The district provides some resources and academic supports for students with special education and language development needs; support does not consistently align to evidence-based, grade-level, and standards-aligned instruction and/or is not yet fully accessible.

OPERATIONAL

- The district monitors the effectiveness of all schools' implementation of evidencebased programs and instructional strategies.
- The district provides resources and targeted training that are aligned to school needs to support evidencebased and standards-aligned instruction.
- The district provides resources and academic supports to ensure all students with special education and language development needs access evidence-based, grade-level, and standards-aligned instruction.

- The district monitors the effectiveness of all schools' implementation of evidence-based programs and instructional strategies, and monitoring processes include an analysis of gaps in student outcomes.
- The district provides resources and targeted training that are aligned to school needs to support evidence-based and standardsaligned instruction; support prioritizes the highest-need students, staff, and schools.
- The district provides resources and academic supports to ensure all students with special education and language development needs access evidence-based, grade-level, and standards-aligned instruction, as a result, there is evidence of students' progress towards learning goals.









PRACTICE 6: Build the capacity of central office and school building administrators as instructional leaders to effectively monitor, supervise, and support high-quality teaching and learning

NOT YET EVIDENT

- District leadership has not yet defined a clear vision of central office and school building administrators as instructional leaders.
- The district does not have systems and structures in place to support school leaders with developing, implementing, and monitoring plans; planning is the sole responsibility of the school.
- Limited or no resources, training, and coaching is available to develop school and district leaders' ability to improve teacher practice.
- Limited or no resources and training are available to build school-level capacity to use student assessment data to inform high-quality instruction.

EMERGING

- District leadership demonstrates efforts to define a clear vision of central office and school building administrators as instructional leaders; communication of this vision is inconsistent and/or there is not yet an emphasis on continuous improvement for all.
- The district ensures that schools have plans for continuous improvement; there is limited evidence of support for school leaders to develop and implement plans aligned to specific school needs.
- Some resources, training and coaching are available to develop school and district leaders' ability to improve teacher practice but supports are inconsistent and/or there is limited evidence of alignment to district and school priorities.
- Resources and training are available to build school-level capacity to use student assessment data to inform high-quality instruction but use of data to inform school-level decisions around teacher support is inconsistent.

OPERATIONAL

- District leadership defines and regularly communicates a clear vision of central office and school building administrators as instructional leaders, with an emphasis on a mindset of continuous improvement for all.
- The district provides support for school leaders to develop, implement and monitor school-based plans for continuous improvement aligned to specific school needs.
- A variety of resources, training, and coaching are available to develop school and district leaders' ability to improve teacher practice (through high-quality feedback, coaching, and professional development, etc.); the district attempts to align support to district and school priorities.
- Resources and training are available to build school-level capacity to use student assessment data to inform high-quality instruction, resulting in school leaders' consistent use of data to inform school-level decisions around teacher support and instruction.

EXEMPLARY

- District leadership defines and regularly communicates a clear vision of central office and school building administrators as instructional leaders, with an emphasis on a mindset of continuous improvement for all; most central office and schoollevel administrators self-identify as instructional leaders.
- The district provides support for school leaders to develop, implement and monitor school-based plans for continuous improvement; district policies and practices empower school leaders to prioritize areas of need and drive plan development and monitoring.
- Formal and coherent systems and processes are implemented to develop school and district leaders' ability to improve teacher practice (through high-quality feedback, coaching, and professional development, etc.), based on an analysis of data and aligned to district and school priorities for student achievement goals.
- Resources and training to build school-level capacity to use student assessment data to inform highquality instruction, resulting in leaders' and teachers' consistent use of data to inform instruction through formal systems and protocols.











Provide Student-Centered Supports to Ensure That All Students are Ready to Learn

District leadership supports school communities to remove barriers to learning and enhance opportunities for academic success, social and emotional development, and the health and wellness of all students. The district provides ongoing quidance and support to schools to maintain a positive climate conducive to learning.

PRACTICE 7: Coordinate and monitor supports aligned with students' and families' needs

NOT YET EVIDENT

- The district has limited or no systems for gathering and reporting data on student academic, attendance, and behavioral outcomes to assess student, family and school needs.
- The district provides limited services to meet students' attendance, behavior, and academic needs and/or support is not coordinated and easily accessible to schools and families.
- The district provides limited services to meet students' mental health and health and wellness needs and/or support is not coordinated and easily accessible to schools and families.
- The district does not provide schools with resources and supports to effectively promote positive school culture in all schools.

EMERGING

- The district has a system for gathering and reporting data on student academic, attendance, and behavioral outcomes. The data is not yet disaggregated to assess student, family and school needs or is not accessible to district and school staff.
- There is some evidence that the district provides and coordinates services to meet students' attendance, behavior, and academic needs.
- There is some evidence that the district provides and coordinates services to meet students' mental health and health and wellness needs.
- The district provides schools with some resources and supports to effectively promote positive school culture.
- The district has a plan to support schools to implement evidencebased strategies for family engagement at the school level.

OPERATIONAL

- The district has a system for gathering and reporting data on student academic, attendance, and behavioral outcomes that can be disaggregated in a variety of ways to assess student, family and school needs (e.g., individual student, student group, course, grade level, school). The system is accessible to district and school staff.
- The district provides access to a comprehensive, accessible array of services to meet students' attendance, behavior, and academic needs, to students, families and schools.
- The district provides access to a comprehensive, accessible array of services to meet students' mental health and health and wellness needs to students, families and schools.
- The district provides schools with resources and supports to effectively promote a positive school culture.
- The district provides some support for schools to implement evidence-based strategies for family engagement at the school-level.
- The district implements some districtwide family engagement strategies; but there are not yet systems and structures in place to monitor these strategies.

- The district has a system for gathering and reporting data on student academic, attendance, and behavioral outcomes that can be disaggregated in a variety of ways to assess student, family and school needs (e.g., individual student, student group, course, grade level, school). The system is accessible to, widely utilized by, and continuously improved upon by, district and school staff.
- The district provides access to a comprehensive, accessible array of services to meet students' attendance, behavior and academic needs to students, families and schools; the district prioritizes support for the highest-need students, families, and schools.
- The district provides access to a comprehensive, accessible array of services to meet students' mental health and health and wellness needs to students, families and schools; the district prioritizes support for the highest-need students, families, and schools.
- The district provides schools with resources and supports aligned to school needs to effectively promote a positive school culture, resulting in clear, operational procedures that are integrated into daily practice in all schools through communication, interaction, respect, and high-quality learning environments.
- The district supports schools to implement evidencebased strategies for family engagement at the school level.
- There is evidence of monitoring and evaluation of implementation and impact of district-wide family engagement strategies.









PRACTICE 8: Partner with local businesses, employers, community organizations, and other agencies to meet the needs of the district

NOT YET EVIDENT

- The district has limited or nonexistent partnerships with outside resources and organizations to better meet the needs of the schools.
- The work/purpose of partnerships is not actively defined or managed towards desired outcomes.

EMERGING

- The district has some partnerships with local businesses, employers, community organizations, and other agencies. Partnerships may be fragmented and/or it is not evident how all partnerships contribute to aspects of student learning and overall success.
- There is a clear scope of work for partnerships, but roles and responsibilities and desired outcomes may not be formally defined.

OPERATIONAL

- The district is partnered with local businesses, employers, community organizations, and other agencies for the purpose of increasing aspects of student learning and overall success.
- Partnerships explicitly outline the role of community partners in helping to achieve specific results, including clear roles, scope of work, and desired outcomes.

EXEMPLARY

- The district is partnered with local businesses, employers, community organizations, and other agencies for the purpose of increasing aspects of student learning and overall success; there is a plan to strengthen districtwide partnerships to meet district priorities.
- Partnerships explicitly outline the role of community partners in helping to achieve specific results, including clear roles, scope of work, and desired outcomes; the district assesses partnerships effectiveness and responsiveness to changing needs.









Implement Data-Driven Human Capital Strategies

The district implements and maintains a performance management system that maximizes the effectiveness of district leaders, teachers, and other staff to ensure optimal learning for all students. District leaders, school leaders, teachers, and support staff acquire, enhance, and refine the knowledge, skills and practices necessary to create and support high levels of learning for all students through high-quality, embedded professional learning opportunities.



PRACTICE 9: Recruit and retain fully credentialed, experienced and high-quality teachers

NOT YET EVIDENT

- There is limited or no evidence of how the district recruits a diverse workforce of credentialed, experienced and effective teachers for its highest needs areas.
- District policies and procedures do not account for school needs in staff selection and/or severely limit schools' abilities to select staff.
- The district implements limited or no strategies to improve teacher retention; and/or district-wide retention teacher retention may be low.
- Personnel evaluation practices do not consistently identify strengths and areas for improvement.

EMERGING

- There is evidence that the district attempts to recruit a diverse workforce of credentialed, experienced and effective teachers for its highest needs areas.
- District policies and procedures account for school needs in staff selection, but may not yet support schools to select staff.
- The district is exploring or planning for strategies to improve teacher retention.
- Personnel evaluations strive to identify strengths and areas for improvement, but personnel evaluation and feedback processes may vary.

OPERATIONAL

- The district actively recruits a diverse workforce of credentialed, experienced and effective teachers for its highest needs areas.
- District policies and procedures support schools in identifying needs and selecting staff.
- The district implements strategies to improve teacher retention.
- Personnel evaluations are consistently implemented, result in the identification of strengths and areas for improvement, and inform professional development.

- The district actively recruits and places a diverse workforce of credentialed, experienced and effective teachers in its highest need areas by incentivizing those positions.
- District policies and procedures enable schools to move early and quickly in identifying needs and selecting staff, prioritizing the highest needs schools.
- The district implements strategies to retain credentialed, effective, and experienced teachers in its neediest schools, resulting in strong districtwide teacher retention.
- Personnel evaluations are consistently implemented, result in the identification of strengths and areas for improvement, and inform professional development; teachers report that feedback is supportive.









PRACTICE 10: Support the development, professional learning, and advancement of central office and school leaders and staff in alignment with district and school mission, vision, goals, and priorities

NOT YET EVIDENT

- The district has limited processes to recruit and develop a diverse pool of experienced and effective school leaders.
- The district does not use data to understand staff development needs and ensure staff have access to high-quality professional learning opportunities (e.g., district, school, or partner-led).
- There is limited or no evidence or how district-provided opportunities for professional learning align to district and school goals or the district does not provide opportunities for professional learning.
- The district does not monitor data on the effectiveness of professional learning opportunities.
- The district provides limited or no opportunities for staff's professional progression and career development.

EMERGING

- There is evidence that the district attempts to recruit and internally develop a diverse pool of experienced and effective school leaders.
- The district uses limited data (e.g., anecdotal data) to understand staff development needs and ensure staff have access to high-quality professional learning opportunities (e.g., district, school, or partnerled).
- District-provided opportunities for professional learning do not consistently align to district and school goals.
- Some data are used to monitor the effectiveness of professional learning opportunities, but data may not be consistently connected to student and staff needs.
- The district provides some staff development and progression opportunities, but opportunities are not yet systematic.

OPERATIONAL

- The district actively recruits and internally develops a diverse pool of experienced and effective school leaders.
- The district uses data to understand staff development needs and ensure staff have access to high-quality professional learning opportunities (e.g., district, school, or partner-led).
- District-provided opportunities for professional learning are aligned to district and school goals.
- Data are used to monitor the effectiveness of professional learning opportunities in order to meet the needs of students and staff.
- The district implements staff development and progression pathways to increase teachers' and leaders' demonstrated expertise and capacity.

EXEMPLARY

- The district actively recruits and internally develops a diverse pool of experienced and effective school leaders, prioritizing and incentivizing placement to highest-need schools.
- The district uses data to understand staff development needs and ensure staff have access to high-quality professional learning opportunities (e.g., district, school, or partner-led) that meet their needs and align to school and district priorities.
- District-provided opportunities for professional learning are aligned to district and school goals and differentiated based on staff and school needs.
- Data are used to monitor the effectiveness of professional learning opportunities in order to meet the needs of students and staff, resulting in improved professional and instructional practice.
- The district implements formal staff development and progression pathways to increase teachers' and leaders' demonstrated expertise and capacity, including incentives for helping coach or mentor others.



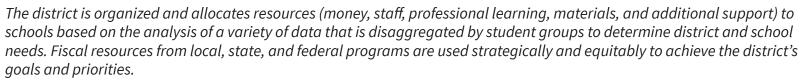








Organize and Allocate Resources and Services Strategically and Equitably





PRACTICE 11: Allocate resources, including money, staff, professional learning, materials, and support to schools based on the analysis of a variety of data

NOT YET EVIDENT

- Resource allocation decisions do not follow a formal, annual process.
- There is limited or no evidence that annual resource allocations to schools align school and student needs.
- There are limited or no policies and procedures for schools to access resources when unforeseen needs arise.

EMERGING

- There is a formal, annual process to make resource allocation decisions, but it is not evident how decisions are informed by disaggregated student data and individual student needs.
- Annual resource allocations to schools sometimes/inconsistently align to school and student needs.
- There are some policies and procedures for schools to access resources, but resources are not consistently accessible when unforeseen needs arise.

OPERATIONAL

- There is a formal, annual process to make resource allocation decisions based on data disaggregated by student groups and individual school needs.
- There is evidence to show that annual resource allocations to schools align with data indicating school and student needs, as well as school improvement and academic plans.
- There are policies and procedures for schools to access resources when unforeseen needs arise.

- There is a formal, annual process to make resource allocation decisions based on data disaggregated by student groups and individual school needs, and the district monitors allocations throughout the year to make mid-course improvements.
- There is evidence to show that annual resource allocations to schools align with data indicating school and student needs, as well as school improvement and academic plans, and allocations prioritize the highest-need schools and student populations.
- Policies and procedures allow schools to quickly and flexibly access resources when unforeseen needs arise.









PRACTICE 12: Coordinate fiscal resources from local, state, and federal programs to achieve the district's goals and priorities

NOT YET EVIDENT

- The district has no centralized plan for allocating and coordinating fiscal resources across programs, departments, and schools.
- The district struggles to spend state and federal funds in a timely and compliant manner.

EMERGING

- The district has a plan for coordinating use of fiscal resources across programs, departments, and schools, but there are gaps in coordination.
- The district occasionally struggles to spend state and federal funds in a timely manner.

OPERATIONAL

- The district has a process to coordinate and align local, state and federal funding streams toward district's goals and priorities and school needs.
- The district always spends state and federal funds in a timely and compliant manner.

EXEMPLARY

- The district has a process to coordinate and align local, state and federal funding streams toward district's goals and priorities and school needs, and equitably distributes funds to meet the biggest school and district needs.
- The district always spends state and federal funds in a timely and compliant manner, and all schools within the district spend state and federal funds in a timely and compliant manner.







