Title I Schoolwide Programs to Support School Reform - CNA

An eligible school operating a schoolwide program shall develop a comprehensive plan that is based on a comprehensive needs assessment of the entire school that takes into account information on the academic achievement of children in relation to the challenging State academic standards, particularly the needs of those children who are failing, or are at-risk of failing, to meet the challenging State academic standards and any other factors as determined by the local education agency.

One of the required components of a schoolwide program essential to effective implementation is conducting a comprehensive needs assessment (CNA). The purpose of a CNA is to examine multiple sources of data to identify the priority needs and direction for the school. This critical process is the pre-work to the development of the district and campus improvement plans and decisions regarding the justification for use of Title I and other funds. The data helps schools monitor and assess the impact of programs, instruction, and other resources related to student achievement by developing a school profile. When conducted thoroughly, the CNA tool provides schools with identified strengths and weaknesses and specifies priorities for addressing student achievement and meeting challenging academic and performance standards. Conducting a CNA is a process, not an event. While there may be specific times during the school year when targeted data analysis occurs, the data collection and analysis process is ongoing to ensure that progress toward the school's objectives, goals, mission and vision are being realized.

Rice CISD's Comprehensive Campus Needs Assessment focuses on:

- demographics;
- student achievement;
- school culture and climate;
- staff quality, recruitment and retention;
- curriculum, instruction and assessment;
- family and community involvement;
- school organization; and
- technology.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment Process

Rice CISD has implemented a 5-Step Process to complete a Campus Needs Assessment.

Step 1: Establishing a Schoolwide Planning Team

Identify Key Stakeholders to be involved, including:

- Leadership
- Teachers
- Paraprofessionals
- School Staff
- Parents (non-district employees)
- Community/Business Representatives
- Students (High School)

Review the purpose and outcomes for conducting the CNA.

- What do we want to accomplish with this process?
- How will we ensure that it's a process, not an event?
- How will we share the purpose and outcomes with those involved?
- What are the short-and long-term timelines?

Step 2: Vision for Reform

A shared vision is an essential component of a district or campus culture, and that culture is what should be addressed for the school to truly reform. Before the needs assessment begins, the school staff should discuss what their reformed school will look like in terms of student success, and how that vision differs from what currently exists. This discussion will lead to the identification of strengths and challenges the school should address to achieve meaningful change, improve student achievement, and attain that vision.

A collective vision reflects the intents and purposes of schoolwide programs and will compute the school's response to some or all of these important questions:

- What is our purpose here?
- What are our expectations for students?
- What are the responsibilities of the adults who work here?
- How important are collaborations and partnerships?
- How are we committed to continuous improvement?

Step 3: Determine which types of data will be collected and analyzed by the committee to develop the school profile.

<u>Student Needs</u>

- How well are students achieving on State assessments, in general, in identified subgroups and individually?
- How does the school identify individual student needs?
- What are the student mobility rates? Dropout rates? Attendance rates?
- What, if any, significant disciplinary problems exist in the school?
- What intervention process is in place to ensure that students' educational needs are met in a timely manner?
- Does the school have indicators of student success that are not academic? If so, what are they, and how are they assessed?
- How do we ensure that certain types of data are kept confidential and FERPA is not violated?

Curriculum and Instruction

- How do staff members express high expectations for student achievement? Is the curriculum aligned with the State's challenging academic content standards? How are high expectations set in subjects for which the State has not established standards? Have teachers participated in a curriculum alignment process?
- What instructional materials are used in school? Are they up-to-date, and do they reflect the State's academic content standards?
- Is there scientifically based research that supports the curriculum and instructional programs being used in the school?
- What assessment instruments, including diagnostic assessments, are routinely used to measure student achievement?
- How are assessment results used?
- Is instructional technology available to all students? Do teachers integrate technology into classrooms?
- Does the school evaluate curriculum and instruction to determine whether they address the needs of all students?

Professional Development

- Are all teachers and instructional paraprofessionals highly qualified?
- Is there a process to determine the professional development needs of teachers?
- What kinds of professional development are offered to teachers? To paraprofessionals? To other staff?
- Is professional development voluntary or mandatory? To what degree does staff participate?
- Is professional development related to classroom instruction?
- How frequently is professional development offered? What follow up activities take place? Is the professional development ongoing and incorporated into the day to day routine of the staff?
- Do teachers have the ability to collaborate as team members?
- Does the daily teacher schedule allow for common planning time across grade levels and content areas?
- How is professional development evaluated?

Family and Community Involvement

- Do teachers routinely communicate with parents (formally and informally) about the academic progress of their children?
- How are parents and the community involved in activities that support student learning?
- Are health and human services available to support students and their families?
- Are translators and written communications available for families who speak languages other than English?
- Are staff and students involved in community activities?
- Does the school or district offer adult education programs?
- How does the community view the school?
- Does the school partner with local businesses to enhance its educational program?
- How is the effectiveness of parent and community involvement strategies evaluated?

School Context and Organization

- Does the school have a vision and mission statement? Are they widely known and understood? Is the vision periodically reviewed to determine if it meets the needs of the school?
- Is the school safe and orderly?
- What disciplinary policies exist? And how are these policies enforced?
- What is the school climate? Are staff and student morale high?
- How is the school managed?
- What role(s) does the principal play? Is he or she viewed primarily as an instructional leader? A business manager? A disciplinarian?
- How is the school budget determined and priorities set?
- Overall how much progress has the school made in the last year? In the last two years?

Step 4: Determine areas of priority and summarize needs.

- What are the strengths and needs of our district/school and its representative groups?
- What evidence supports the strengths and needs?
- What are the priorities?
- What are we learning about our district/school, and what connections are we making?

Step 5: Connect the CNA to the district/campus improvement plan development and review process.

- What are the findings in the CNA?
- How are the findings reflected in summary statements?
- How are the CNA strengths addressed in the district/campus improvement plans as strategies and activities which will be continued and sustained to build on these strengths?
- How are the CNA needs addressed in the district/campus improvement plans through strategies and activities designed to improve student outcomes?
- How do priorities and needs correlate with justifications for federal program expenditures?