



## District Enabling Conditions for Scaling Strategic School Design

The Right People in all Schools...			District Self-Rating and Rationale	
District Enabling Condition for scaling Strategic School Design	Why it matters for Strategic School Design	Common Challenges	Rating (1-4)	Rationale
A strong teacher pipeline for all schools, together with deliberate, early career support.	Allows school leaders to hire teachers to work in teams that match experience and capability to the needs of the job. Also, critical to ensure equitable distribution of highly effective teachers across schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teacher pipeline has a specific need gap relative to design aspirations (e.g., need more high school math teachers for more time in math)</li> <li>▪ Inequitable distribution of teacher experience and effectiveness across schools (e.g., significantly more vacancies and inexperienced teachers in highest needs schools)</li> <li>▪ Most under-performing schools have trouble hiring effective teachers who stay</li> <li>▪ May require changes to hiring and assignment policies</li> </ul>		
Clear and rigorous evidence-based evaluation system for teachers and school leaders that accurately recognizes and supports the retention of the most effective teachers as well as the efficient exit of persistent low-performers.	Relevant data on effectiveness is needed to support a wide range of talent management and professional growth decisions. An effective evaluation system allows school and district leaders to meaningfully differentiate performance, exit underperformers, and recognize high performers, as well as establish a common understanding of effectiveness, identify areas of need, and support a broader professional learning and growth system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evaluation systems aren't aligned with content- and grade-specific college-and-career-ready standards.</li> <li>▪ Evaluation systems don't allow for meaningful differentiation (e.g. high percentage of teachers are effective and/or highly effective).</li> <li>▪ Evaluation data aren't used strategically (e.g., don't inform retention/exit decisions, professional growth structures).</li> <li>▪ Evaluation system changes may need to be embedded in teacher contract negotiations.</li> </ul>		

\*Rating rubric is located at the end of the document



## District Enabling Conditions for Scaling Strategic School Design

The Right People in all Schools...			District Self-Rating and Rationale	
District Enabling Condition for scaling Strategic School Design	Why it matters for Strategic School Design	Common Challenges	Rating (1-4)	Rationale
Teacher and leader compensation models and career paths reward high performers for contribution and increased responsibility.	Supports retention of talent, in particular at high-needs schools. Ensures teacher leadership roles are well-designed and compensated fairly across schools, which supports principals in instituting distributed leadership models in schools that extend the reach of their best teachers. Empowered teacher leaders are critical to school design. If compensation system is organized to fund other things (e.g., steps and lanes), it's not affordable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Compensation/career path model changes may need to be embedded in teacher contract negotiations.</li> <li>▪ Performance compensation structures may not be clearly tied to increased responsibilities/contributions</li> </ul>		
Strong school leader pipeline across all schools, together with deliberate early career support.	Allows the district to ensure that all schools are led by high-capacity leaders who can effectively execute all aspects of strategic school design. When decisions are closer to students, leaders have to be prepared to make them strategically. SSD requires coherence, execution, and continuous improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District's internal and/or external pipeline is weak</li> <li>• District doesn't have a coherent strategy for early career support</li> </ul>		



## District Enabling Conditions for Scaling Strategic School Design

...with effective instructional support			District Self-Rating and Rationale	
District Enabling Conditions for Scaling Strategic School Design	Why it matters for Strategic School Design	Common Challenges	Rating (1-4)	Rationale
<p>All schools have access to rigorous and coherent curricula, aligned to college and career-ready standards, spanning from lesson plans to assessments.</p>	<p>High-quality instructional materials are the foundation of systems supporting effective instruction and professional development. The district, rather than individual schools, is typically in the best position to vet, select, and/or build curriculum and interim/benchmark assessments that are tightly aligned to each other and to relevant state standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Curricular resources in all critical areas are not aligned to rigorous state standards</li> <li>▪ Curricula don't provide lesson plan level resources</li> <li>▪ Assessments systems are not aligned to curriculum</li> <li>▪ Curricular resources are inconsistent across key grade-levels and/or subject areas</li> <li>▪ District does not have clear departmental ownership over curriculum and assessment</li> <li>▪ District departments don't effectively integrate support for curriculum</li> </ul>		
<p>School leaders across all schools demonstrate CCRS understanding, and are employing some management and instructional practices that drive student learning in the context of CCRS.</p>	<p>School leaders must be able to ensure that the design they create is implemented in ways that fundamentally drive improvement in rigorous, CCRS-aligned instruction. This means they need to be able to apply CCRS understanding to evaluate and coach instruction (and instructional coaching) and organize professional learning content across the year, including team time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School leader capacity is inequitable across schools</li> <li>▪ District doesn't have an effective strategy for continually building and strengthening CCRS-expertise and instructional leadership for school leaders</li> </ul>		



## District Enabling Conditions for Scaling Strategic School Design

...with effective instructional support			District Self-Rating and Rationale	
District Enabling Conditions for Scaling Strategic School Design	Why it matters for Strategic School Design	Common Challenges	Rating (1-4)	Rationale
<p>All staff with responsibility for facilitating teacher collaborative planning and observing and coaching teachers have manageable spans of review and have content area expertise related to CCRS and the school's curriculum and assessments.</p>	<p>Ensures high-quality, growth-oriented, job-embedded professional learning for teachers. Teachers need access to high-quality expert support to drive collaborative work, professional growth, and instructional improvements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ District doesn't have clear structure or expectations for experts' roles and responsibilities</li> <li>▪ Distribution of expert support is inequitable across schools</li> <li>▪ Highest needs schools lack effective instructional support, adding to existing pipeline challenge</li> <li>▪ District doesn't have a strategy for building a pipeline of experts and selecting and supporting them (e.g., providing central screening and training)</li> </ul>		
<p>Contracts, calendars, and school size support sufficient time for professional learning--at least 90 minutes per week and eight full days per year for teacher collaboration.</p>	<p>While principals can often leverage the design process to increase time for collaborative planning and other key vehicles for improving teacher effectiveness, they are more likely to achieve transformative results if starting from a sufficient district-supported baseline.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teachers don't have consistent time to collaborate on ongoing basis</li> <li>▪ School leaders don't have flexibility to reassign teachers in order to balance expertise across teams</li> <li>▪ Without district-wide structures to enable teacher teaming across schools, most small schools can't support effective content-specific teacher collaboration, especially for middle and high schools</li> <li>▪ Professional learning time changes may need to be embedded in teacher contract negotiations</li> </ul>		



## District Enabling Conditions for Scaling Strategic School Design

...and sufficient and flexible resources			District Self-Rating and Rationale	
District Enabling Conditions for Scaling Strategic School Design	Why it matters for Strategic School Design	Common Challenges	Rating (1-4)	Rationale
Clear and transparent flexibility to vary school designs—including hiring, staffing, schedules, and resource use—based on student, teacher, and school needs.	School level flexibility is foundational for ensuring that school-level leaders can make critical school design decisions to develop coherent designs based on student and school needs. Available resource flexibilities need to be clearly defined, and the processes through which they are exercised (such as procurement) also need to be designed efficiently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inconsistent understanding within central office and/or within schools around which flexibilities exist</li> <li>• Inefficiency or uncertainty in processes that allow principals to exercise flexibility prevents them from using them</li> <li>• Contractual constraints limit ability to provide key flexibilities for hiring, scheduling, staffing, or extending time</li> <li>• Districts hold "tighter" by limiting flexibility rather than supervising and supporting its use</li> </ul>		
Sufficient resources to address design-related priorities, including a long enough school day (or financial/contractual ability to extend), additional time and/or attention for students who are behind, and room in the budget to spend beyond the minimum staffing standard.	Ensures that schools can reasonably organize against (with trade-offs) design priorities related to their students' needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient funding at some or all schools to address needs of students, due to either revenue, inequitable distribution of resources across schools, high central spending, or structural constraints misaligned with strategy tying up resources (e.g. very high teacher compensation, high rates of SWD identification)</li> </ul>		



## District Enabling Conditions for Scaling Strategic School Design

...and sufficient and flexible resources			District Self-Rating and Rationale	
District Enabling Conditions for Scaling Strategic School Design	Why it matters for Strategic School Design	Common Challenges	Rating (1-4)	Rationale
School size and programming are predictable and enable strategic design priorities.	Helps schools leverage all resources available to create a coherent design that meets the most critical priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Very small school sizes don't enable design priorities (e.g. teacher teaming, flexible grouping) and tie up funding disproportionate to the value of small size</li> <li>•Schools are uncertain if they will maintain their existing programs (e.g. CTE tracks, dual language, etc.) from year-year and learn too late in the game of changes</li> <li>•Program placement results in over-concentration of neediest students at some schools</li> </ul>		
Partnerships are used strategically. District partners with or supports schools in partnering with community or alternative providers where their services are more efficient and/or effective.	Allows schools, and the district more generally, to be cost-efficient and cost-effective in providing key services to students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of centralized infrastructure for key partnerships means some schools are partner rich and others partner poor</li> <li>• Contracts prevent use of partnerships to replace services that are currently provided and/or could be provided by district/schools</li> </ul>		



## District Enabling Conditions for Scaling Strategic School Design

...supported through strong central processes for innovation and continuous improvement			District Self-Rating and Rationale	
District Enabling Conditions for Scaling Strategic School Design	Why it matters for Strategic School Design	Common Challenges	Rating (1-4)	Rationale
School planning process and calendar allow a logical and integrated flow from planning to scheduling to budgeting to hiring and staffing, and includes an effective process for progress monitoring and continuous improvement.	Enables alignment of resource decisions to strategic planning priorities, and continuous improvement over time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Resources are "locked in" before key strategic decisions are made (i.e., schedules and academic strategy are set after budgets and staffing are already locked)</li> <li>▪ No clear continuous improvement process to support goal-setting and progress monitoring</li> <li>▪ Too few easy to access sources for new strategic ideas that might be a better fit for student needs than traditional ways of organizing</li> <li>▪ Too little technical support to help principals reorganize resources to fit their strategy</li> <li>▪ Principals don't have access to the right data at the right time to support decision-making</li> </ul>		
Central costs and service quality are actively managed, and central departments provide integrated support to schools.	Central office plays a critical role in providing efficient, cost effective service to schools in a way that empowers principals to focus on the most critical decision-making, and gives them the right support to make good decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Central departments don't consistently integrate their support for schools causing a proliferation of inconsistent demands on principals' time</li> <li>▪ District doesn't have an effective process for tracking the cost and service quality of all central departments, preventing key feedback loops that enable improvement over time</li> <li>▪ The bulk of CO interactions are compliance vs. service oriented</li> </ul>		
Clear and effective process to hold schools accountable to goals.	Key to ensuring equity and excellence while also empowering decisions as close to students as possible. District must have an effective system for evaluating where schools are and a continuum of clear consequences and rewards for schools that consistently meet, exceed, and fall short of expectations (e.g., additional support, additional autonomy, leadership and staff changes, school closure).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ District hasn't clearly articulated a comprehensive school performance framework with clear and predictable responses</li> <li>▪ District doesn't set the right goals or data points for assessing school progress to motivate and measure desired changes (e.g., assessments aren't aligned, data selected is too narrow, timelines are too long or too short, etc.)</li> </ul>		



## District Enabling Conditions for Scaling Strategic School Design

### Self-Rating Cheat Sheet

A '1' might mean...	A '4' might mean...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The condition does not exist or has significant gaps</li><li>▪ The condition is widely inconsistent across schools</li><li>▪ The condition exists in a way that doesn't provide the desired outcomes</li><li>▪ The condition is not used effectively</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ There is an explicit and effective district structure to support the condition</li><li>▪ The condition exists with consistent high quality across all schools</li><li>▪ The condition results in desired outcomes</li><li>▪ The condition is used effectively</li></ul>