



# School Support Team Manual 2011-2012

## **What is the purpose of the School Support Team?**

Michigan's School Support Teams (SST) provide on-site assistance to schools Identified for Improvement, Corrective Action or Restructuring for reasons of proficiency in the areas of reading, mathematics, or for identified subgroups. SST members are directly involved in facilitating school improvement processes in identified schools. In collaboration with the building School Improvement Team, the SST facilitates the development of strong continuous improvement processes and procedures **including the implementation and monitoring of Instructional Learning Cycles. (ILC)**

The drive for rapid and continuous school improvement places demands on school personnel that require support strategies to ensure their success. Using a School Support Team, including trained school improvement facilitators, is one of these strategies. A crucial member of the School Support Team is a **District Representative** who plays an active role supporting both the building principal and the school's improvement team to make necessary changes to processes and procedures that result in increased student learning. The School Support Team, external to the day-to-day responsibilities expected of school leaders and teachers, provides objective and expert guidance to carry out the process of school change.

School Support Team members will not be found teaching fractions or planning the next parent meeting. Instead, the SST serves as the "guide on the side" to the school's improvement team, responsible for building the team's capacity to engage in a long-term improvement process that is challenging, exhausting, and ultimately, professionally rewarding.

## **What is an Instructional Learning Cycle?**

An Instructional Learning Cycle (ILC) is a collaborative short term process of instructional improvement. ILCs provide opportunities for teachers, along with their colleagues (i.e. other teachers, coaches and /or principals) to reflect on the quality of classroom instruction. ILCs focus the efforts of teacher teams on the implementation of instructional strategies linked to a school-wide instructional priority. Within an ILC, teacher teams focus on a single instructional strategy related to specific content expectations or Common Core Standards. Establishing continuous ILCs signals purposeful and focused instructional improvements. Instructional Learning Cycles are linkable to...

- A school improvement plan:
- An instructional priority; and
- Content expectations or Common Core Standards.

Key features of ILCs include...

- Common pre and post assessments (along with data analysis);
- Purposeful identification and implementation of research-based instructional strategy; and
- Collaborative instructional dialogue and reflection

An instructional dialogue, a key feature of ILCs, is a structured conversation about teaching and learning with the goal of providing feedback to teachers about instruction.

### **What is the composition of the School Support Team?**

The Elementary Secondary Education Act (ESEA) outlines that a Statewide System of Support should “provide technical assistance to the school.” Michigan Department of Education (MDE) requires an ISD/ESA School Improvement Facilitator to facilitate Title I schools Identified for Improvement, Corrective Action or Restructuring. These ISD/ESA SI Facilitators are assigned to the schools by local ISD/ESA in all stages of the Statewide System of Support.

Initially, the School Support Team is comprised of

- **ISD/ESA School Improvement Facilitator**
- **District Representative**

These members form the base of support for MI Excel schools. As MI Excel schools remain within the Statewide System of Support (SSoS) in subsequent years, more members will be added to the SST.

- **Instructional Leadership Coach** (as applicable)
- **Content Coach** (as applicable)
- **MDE Representative** from the Office of Field Services (as applicable)

As the SST grows the need for communication and coordination increases and the role of the ISD/ESA School Improvement Facilitator becomes more important.

### **What are the responsibilities of the School Support Team?**

ESEA states:

- Review and analyze all facets of the school's operation, including the design and operation of the instructional program
- Assist the school in developing recommendations for improving student performance in the school
- Collaborate with parents, school staff and the district in monitoring the plan, that if fully implemented, can reasonably be expected to improve student performance and help the school meet its goals for improvement including adequate early progress
- ~~Evaluate, at least semiannually, the effectiveness of school personnel assigned to the school, including identifying outstanding teachers and principals, and make findings and recommendations to the school, the district and where appropriate, MDE~~  
*Given collective bargaining agreements in Michigan public schools, SSTs will not perform the above responsibility*
- As the school implements the plan, make additional recommendations to the district and MDE concerning additional assistance that is needed by the school or the school support team
- Provide feedback at least twice a year to the LEA and to the SEA

## **Roles and Responsibilities of School Support Team Members**

### **ISD/ESA School Improvement Facilitator**

- Supports the school to implement, monitor and evaluate continuous school improvement with fidelity
- Provides technical assistance to building SI Team around required State and Federal reporting
- Files the required documentation to the SSTAC meetings and actions as required by MDE
- Actively participates in the Quarterly Monitoring Meeting (QMM) to review progress toward agreed upon actions and files MDE required reports
- Collaborates with the district representative to provide technical assistance to the building school improvement team as needed in between the quarterly monitoring meetings
- Additional Requirements during Identified for Improvement Year One
  - Supports the organization of the Survey of Enacted Curriculum (SEC)
  - Provides follow-up support for SEC as necessary
  - Participates on the School Improvement Review Team (if applicable)
  - Co-Facilitates the SIR Visit Debrief with SIR Lead
  - Supports SI Team to share SIR Final Report results with entire staff
  - Attends Data Workshop with SI Team
  - Supports SI Team to revise SI plan to incorporate information gained from SIR, Data Workshop and SEC in the identified area

### **SST District Representative**

- Prepares and presents a presentation with the SI Team to the district School Board to share the components of SSoS, current plans and progress
- Files evidence of each presentation to the school board with the ISD/ESA School Improvement Facilitator
- Supports development and refinement of internal building processes and procedures around School Improvement
- Removes barriers that do not serve the needs of the Mi Excel School including access to school data
- Recruits members for the SSTAC (If the district representative is unable to get participation of all members as described in ESEA, there must be documentation filed with the ISD/ESA representative of the efforts made and the results of those efforts)
- Actively participates in the QMM to review progress toward agreed upon actions and provides SSTAC with written updates of QMM
- Though PA 25 clearly states that building level school improvement is the responsibility of the district, both the District Representative and ISD/ESA SI Facilitator will work collaboratively to provide technical assistance to the building school improvement team as needed in between the quarterly monitoring meetings
- Files minutes of the two annual SSTAC meetings are with the ISD/ESA representative

### **SST MDE Representative (Schools Identified for Corrective Action and Restructuring)**

- Actively participates in QMM
- Advises MI Excel School on Title I Requirements and Regulations
- Provides feedback to MI Excel School on use of Title I funds
- Ensures that Corrective Action requirements are met and embedded into the SI Plan
- Ensures that Restructuring planning and implementation occur as required
- Completes annual report for MDE

### **Instructional Leadership Coach (if applicable)**

- Attends QMM and provides input as necessary
- Supports the implementation of ILC
- Provides insight and knowledge to the SST about on-going building-wide instructional improvement efforts
- Recommends additional supports that would be beneficial in assisting the MI Excel school in improving the quality of building-wide instruction

### **Content Coach (if applicable)**

- Attends QMM and provides input as necessary
- Supports the implementation of ILC
- Provides insight and knowledge to the SST about on-going, content-specific, classroom-based instructional support
- Recommends additional supports that would be beneficial in assisting the MI Excel school in improving the quality of content-specific instruction

### **External Provider (if applicable)**

An External Provider is hired by the district, building or ISD/ESA to provide specific agreed upon services to the MI Excel school. External Providers could be part an on-going district initiative.

- Attends QMM and provides input as necessary
- Supports the implementation of ILC
- Coordinate with the SST and any SSoS component in the building for the purpose of increasing student achievement

### **What is the School Support Team Advisory Council?**

The School Support Team Advisory Council serves as a broader group of stakeholders who meet twice yearly with the School Support Team and the School Improvement Team. In the fall, the meeting serves to inform the SSTAC of the requirements and plans for the upcoming school year. At the summer meeting, the School Support Team and the School Improvement Team report on successes and challenges faced during the school year and outline plans for the upcoming year.

### **Expectations of the School Support Team Advisory Council**

- Meets as a group in August to review the School Data Profile and Analysis, School Process Profile and Analysis, SIP, AYP status, building level budget

and other documentation that would inform its monitoring of the implementation of the SSoS.

- May attend the Quarterly Monitoring Meetings as observers
- Reviews written updates of the Quarterly Monitoring Meetings from the District Representative
- Meets in June to review the school's progress over the past year as evidenced by changes in instructional practice, student achievement, and other indicators identified at the first meeting

### **Composition of School Support Team Advisory Council**

ESEA states that

- Highly qualified or distinguished teachers and principals; *in MI, these should be any Leadership or Instructional Coaches providing services through SSOS*
- Pupil services personnel
- Parents
- Representatives of Institutions of Higher Education
- Representatives of regional educational laboratories or comprehensive regional technical assistance centers; *in Michigan, ISDs and ESAs are considered to be comprehensive regional technical assistance centers and a representative is required to be a member of the School Support Team*
- Representatives of outside consultant groups (external providers)
- Other individuals of the State Education Agency, in consultation with the local education agency, may determine appropriate *MDE requires that a district representative be a member of each School Support Team, in high schools, a student must be on the SSTAC*

### **School Support Team Coordinator Responsibilities**

Under general supervision of the Statewide System of Support (SSoS) Manager, the School Support Team Coordinator will coordinate training, and technical assistance to provide intensive and sustained support to School Support Teams throughout the state.

The SST Coordinator

- Works cooperatively and collaboratively with Michigan Department of Education staff to provide ongoing training, technical assistance to specific School Support Teams
- Provides customer service to ISD/ESA SI Facilitators in identifying categories of needs and scheduling training to address these needs.
- Identifies and schedules needed training including videoconferencing
- Provides on-going video conference training for SST members that will be recorded and archived
- Conducts site visits to Mi Excel Schools or MI Excel ISD/ESA for purposes of monitoring effectiveness of the SST process

## **School Support Team in Schools Identified For Improvement Year One**

### **Meet with Building Principal and SI Chair to**

- Collect relevant data
  - School Improvement Plan,
  - Copy of master schedule with list of teachers
  - School Data Profile and Analysis
  - School Process Profile and Analysis
  - District LEA PC
  - Building Budget
  - Other
- Complete Service Plan
- Complete the SST Contact list and send to MDE SST Coordinator
- Schedule relevant events for the school year
  - Survey of Enacted Curriculum
  - Data Workshop
  - School Improvement Review
  - Introduction of SSoS components to staff

### **School Support Team Advisory Committee Meetings (twice yearly)**

- Schedule SSTAC meetings
- Fall meeting should include: a review the school's Comprehensive Needs Assessment, SIP, AYP status, building level budget and other documentation that would inform its monitoring of the implementation of the SSoS
- Summer meeting should re-cap the events of the year and report on progress

### **Survey of Enacted Curriculum**

- Communicate with the SI Team and staff regarding the requirements of the Survey of Enacted Curriculum
- Arrange for staff training on how to do this survey
- Arrange for completion of survey
- Provide support for staff during the survey if possible
- Support the SI Team to develop next steps as indicated by the results of the Survey of Enacted Curriculum when available.
- This survey should occur in August.

### **Board of Education Presentation (twice yearly)**

- District Representative and School Improvement Team co-plan the presentation
- Share the components of the SSoS that will be implemented in the school, the continuous improvement focus for the current school year, the purposes of Instructional Learning Cycles and report on progress
- These presentations should occur no later than October and July of each year
- Documentation of these presentations should be submitted to the ISD/ESA

### **School Improvement Review Visit and Data Workshop**

- Participate with the SI team in the Data Workshop held by MDE for Mi Excel Schools
- Hold SIR visit debrief of final report with building principal
- Facilitate the revision of the SI Plan as indicated by the data collected in the Survey of Enacted Curriculum, School Improvement Review Final Report and Data Workshop

### **Quarterly Monitoring Meetings**

- Schedule, with the School Improvement Team, the required Quarterly Monitoring Meetings (QMM) as outlined by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE)
- Share the schedule of the QMM with the SSTAC and SST Coordinator
- Support SI Team to create a process and set an agenda for the each QMM
- Attend QMM and Support SI Team to facilitate the QMM
- Complete the Quarterly Monitoring Report (QMR) twice a year and send to the MDE SST Coordinator

### **SI Technical Assistance Meetings (support between QMM)**

- Support the SI Team to put in place processes to improve any challenges identified in the Survey of Enacted Curriculum from Year One
- Provide technical assistance to SI Team
- Advise schools in researched based instructional strategies that are proven to increase student learning
- Support the SI Team to implement the revised SI Plan
- Support the SI Team in implement at least one Instructional Learning Cycle (ILC) in the identified area by the end of the school year

## Identified for Improvement Year Two, Corrective Action and Restructuring

Schools Identified for Improvement Year Two may choose one of the SSos components listed below based on a collaborative analysis of the school's needs as documented in the building SDP/A, SPP/A and SIP. School Identified for Corrective Action and Restructuring may choose any of the MI Excel components listed below based on a review of the school's SDP/A, SPP/A and SIP and that fit the added requirements of Corrective Action and Restructuring guidelines when applicable. This decision should be made by building leadership and the ISD/ESA Representative and must not exceed the Regional Assistance Grant allocation.

- **An Instructional Leadership Coach and Fellowship of Instructional Leaders** to support teams in making building-wide instructional improvements. The focus of the work of the instructional leadership coach and the Fellowship will be on building the capacity of a team of instructional leaders from the building (8 individuals total) to lead the instructional improvement process. The instructional leadership coach would become a part of the SST and work to support the development, implementation of the MI Excel Instructional Learning Cycle, as well as monitoring of student achievement. The building leader along with a team of instructional leaders will participate in a series of on-going professional development training include a four-day summer residential institute at Michigan State University. *The School Process Profile/Analysis and School Data Profile/Analysis must indicate there is a need for this component and it must be incorporated into the current year's SIP.*
- **A Content Coach** to provide sustained, job-embedded training in research-based/evidence-based instruction strategies at the classroom level. This Content Coach would model, coach, engage in data dialogues and plan with classroom teachers responsible for student learning in the AYP focus area(s) and the identified subgroups. All work done by the Content Coach will be aligned with the school improvement work done in classrooms around the targeted content expectations that will be taught and assessed. This work must be connected to the MI Excel Instructional Learning Cycles being monitored by the SST. *The School Process Profile/Analysis and School Data Profile/Analysis must indicate there is a need for this component and it must be incorporated into the current year's SIP.*
- **Professional Development** for staff in the identified instructional strategies in the SIP for the AYP focus area, which should consider the engagement of any identified subgroups and must be sustained over time. Professional Development for staff may also be in the AYP content area or in developing leadership skills as indicated in the SIP. *The School Process Profile/Analysis and School Data Profile/Analysis must indicate there is a need for this component and it must be incorporated into the current year's SIP.*

## **School Support Team in Schools Identified For Improvement Year Two, Corrective Action and Restructuring**

### **School Support Team Advisory Committee Meetings (twice yearly)**

- Schedule SSTAC meetings
- Fall meeting should include: a review the school's Comprehensive Needs Assessment, SIP, AYP status, building level budget and the monitoring of the implementation of the SSoS components from previous years
- Summer meeting should re-cap the events of the year and report on progress

### **Service Plan**

- Meet with SI Team to review the SDP/A, SDP/A and the SIP to determine which Mi Excel component(s) best addresses the most critical area of need for the building
- Complete the Service Plan based on the collaborative analysis of the school's needs as documented in the school's CNA
- This meeting should occur in August or early September

### **Board of Education Presentation (twice yearly)**

- District Representative and School Improvement Team co-plan and present to the School Board
- Share the components of the SSoS that will be implemented in the school, the continuous improvement focus for the current school year, the purposes of Instructional Learning Cycles (ILC) and report on progress
- These presentations should occur no later than October and July of each year
- Documentation of these presentations should be submitted to the ISD/ESA

### **Quarterly Monitoring Meetings**

- Quarterly Monitoring Meetings should be scheduled as early as possible and shared with all necessary stakeholders
- Schools in Corrective Action and Restructuring should provide special consideration to accommodating the schedule of the MDE Representative from the Office of Field Services
- Support SI Team to create a process and set an agenda for the each QMM
- Attend QMM and support SI Team to facilitate the QMM
- Complete the Quarterly Monitoring Report twice a year and submit to MDE SST Coordinator

### **SI Technical Assistance Meetings (support between QMM)**

- Support the SI Team to develop solid continuous improvement practices and procedures including implementing strategies and activities outline in the SI Plan, Corrective Action Plan or Restructuring Plan as indicated
- Meet with teacher teams, as necessary, to develop and implement MI Excel ILC
- Advise schools in researched based instructional strategies that are proven to increase student learning

**NOTE:**

At the end of the school year, Schools Identified for Improvement: Year Two should access MDE's guidance on Corrective Action as defined by the Elementary and Secondary Act and complete the district-led investigation of the options available. If the school's AYP status changes to Corrective Action the school will be ready to incorporate the Corrective Action option into the School Improvement Plan as a strategy with activities that are robust enough to guarantee implementation with fidelity prior to the first day of school. The district representative from the SST is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the chosen Corrective Action option.

At the end of the school year, Schools in Corrective Action should access MDE's guidance on Restructuring: Planning as defined by the Elementary and Secondary Act and complete the district-led investigation of these options. If the school's AYP status changes to Restructuring: Planning the school will be ready to incorporate the planning necessary to study and select a Restructuring option in two years. The school should be ready to incorporate Restructuring: Planning into its School Improvement Plan as a strategy with supporting activities prior to the first day of school. The school's MDE consultant from the Office of Field Services must be involved in four planning meetings with the School Improvement Team and the district representative from the SST to look at the school's data, study the Restructuring options and select the one that best meets the school's needs.

At the end of the school year, Schools in Restructuring: Planning should access MDE's guidance on Restructuring: Implemented as defined by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The school must be ready to implement their chosen Restructuring option on the first day of the new school year. This Restructuring option must be incorporated into the School Improvement Plan as a strategy with activities that are robust enough to guarantee implementation with fidelity. The district representative from the SST is responsible for monitoring this implementation over the next two years.