



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: December 12, 2017
To: Chief School Administrators
Route To: School Principals, School Improvement Staff, Title I Project Directors
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Details on the New Jersey Annual School Planning Process

This memorandum provides an outline of the New Jersey Annual School Planning Process that will be available in January, as well as resources to provide more information in advance of the January release.

As referenced in an announcement distributed through the NJDOE's County Offices of Education on October 31, 2017, the NJDOE will launch the New Jersey Annual School Planning Process, the state's new consolidated Annual School Plan, in January 2018. The new process will be used to prepare for the 2018-19 school year, and it replaces the former Title I Schoolwide Plan and the former School Improvement Plan for Focus and Priority schools.

In January, the following supports will be available:

- Full release of New Jersey's Annual School Planning Process;
- Needs assessment rubric that can be used as a tool to determine areas of focus for schools and districts as they begin the planning process;
- Five training modules built around each step of the process;
- Facilitator guidance for each of the training modules; and
- Opportunities for professional development sessions using the Annual School Planning Process

The five key elements of the Annual School Planning Process include (See Figure 1):

1. **Data Analysis** – Analyze school-level and district-level data from the current school year as well as current state testing data.
2. **Needs Assessment** – Reflect on practices of the previous year and identify areas of strength, as well as areas in need of improvement, and narrow the focus to three or four primary areas of focus for the next school year. Schools may use the needs assessment rubric as a support for understanding areas in need of improvement as a self-reflective tool.
3. **Root Cause Analysis** – Determine possible root causes for each area of focus.
4. **Annual School Plan** – Create, via teams, an Annual School Plan including three to four SMART goals (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound) to be the focus for the entire school year.
5. **Implement and Progress Monitor** – Implement the plan and set checkpoints along the way to monitor progress toward goals. At the end of the school year, the cycle begins again with Data Analysis in Step 1.

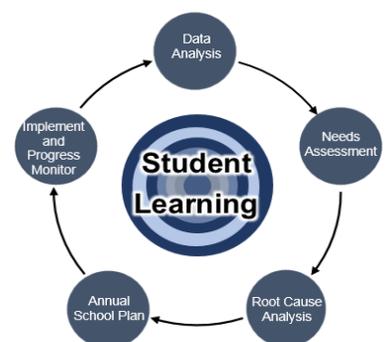


Figure 1: New Jersey Annual School Planning Process

Stakeholder Engagement

All steps in this process should include stakeholder engagement. As part of the process of continuous improvement, schools should always consider the voices of all stakeholders and communicate outcomes and results to all members of the school community. A guide for engaging diverse groups of stakeholders throughout the Annual School Planning Process is [available online](#).

Background

Across New Jersey, we share a common vision that all of our students has access to the high-quality education that they deserve. This is achieved when we see that students have the opportunity to thrive as they advance through each grade, ultimately developing the skills and knowledge needed to choose a successful path following high school. The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is focusing on building upon our many successes and improving its accountability and support systems in the following ways:

- **Clarify** how the accountability system is meant to identify schools and districts in need of support to close achievement gaps, raise overall student performance, and provide all students the education they deserve.
- **Align** all accountability systems (state, local, federal) and goals to provide a cohesive set of student and educator supports from districts and NJDOE program offices, county offices and comprehensive support networks.
- **Simplify** and streamline existing accountability and support systems by reducing burdens for schools and districts whenever possible.

For more information on the steps of the New Jersey Annual School Planning Process, visit the [District Support Portal](#) or [email the Office of Strategic Alignment](#). In January, the Department will be launching the complete planning process and providing additional supports, including training modules.

c: Members, State Board of Education
Kimberley Harrington, Commissioner
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
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