Site Visit Training for Districts, Schools, and Team Members for 2014-2015

Changes to note since your last site visit...

- Electronic submission of Desk Audit items
- Separate questions/interview for Special Education teachers.
- Formalized online system of communicating non-compliance
- Google sites
- Data Appendix
- Additional CTE monitoring

Vision:
Iowa students will become productive citizens in a democratic society, and successful participants in a global community.

Mission:
Our Mission is to champion excellence for all Iowa students through leadership and service.
Goals:
All children will enter school ready to learn.
All PK-12 students will achieve at a high level.
Individuals will pursue postsecondary education in order to drive economic success.

Guiding Principles:
• All students can learn at a high level.
• Students respond best to challenging expectations.
• Safety and respect are essential to student learning.
• Educators need ongoing support and professional development to improve student achievement.
• Improving student performance requires a broad constituency of support.
• A quality education system is essential to a successful democracy, lifelong learning, and a vibrant economy.

Purpose of the Site Visit
The Site Visit Process is set forth in the Code of Iowa 256.11(10) and Iowa Administrative code (Rules) 12.8(4)(a)(2)
• To assess progress with the C-PLAN
• To make recommendations with regard to the visit findings for the purpose of improving educational practices
• To determine that a school or school district is in compliance with the accreditation standards
• To provide a general assessment of educational practices
**Federal Monitoring**

- NCLB Requirements
- Title Programs
- Homeless Programs
- Services for Students with Disabilities

**State Monitoring**

- Chapter 12
- Teacher Quality
- Licensure
- Healthy Kids
- Preschool

**Monitoring for both Federal and State**

- IDEA
- Equity
- Career/Technical Education
Pre-Visit Preparation

- Prepare documents for review
- Determine a schedule
- Invite people to be on interview groups
- Create an Opening Presentation

Document Review

- The Document Review Checklist provides guidance about documents which will be reviewed during the site visit process.
- Items listed on the Document Review Checklist lists are those documents needed to validate state and federal requirements.

- Most documents will be submitted electronically prior to the visit.

https://www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/accreditation-program-approval/school-improvement
Google sites have been prepared for document uploads, or the district/school may work with the consultant if other electronic options are preferred.

Additional documents from state and federal programs might be requested onsite if the team needs additional information. The onsite document review extends the desk audits and includes information from required reporting sources such as C-Plan and BEDS. Quality of documentation can be addressed as a strength or recommendation in the site visit report.

Site Visit Schedule

- Work with School Improvement Consultant to determine time frame
- Create schedule including all required interview groups
- Determine locations for interviews
- Allow time for any remaining document review, travel, and team member conversations
OVERVIEW PRESENTATION

The district/school will prepare a presentation for the visiting team to be shared early in the visit. This is the team’s introduction to the district/school... the anticipatory set.

Using the 7 Themes of Improving Schools as areas of focus, this presentation will provide information about progress toward continuous improvement since the last visit.

INTERVIEWS

Seven Characteristics of Improving Schools

• Vision, Mission, and Goals
• Leadership
• Collaborative Relationships
• Learning Environment
• Curriculum and Instruction
• Professional Development
• Monitoring and Accountability
Strive to have each interview group represent the demographics of the district, including:

- Balanced representation of gender
- Diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds
- Varying student academic abilities/needs
- Diverse family situations

Avoid scheduling individuals for more than one interview without consultation with the site visit team leader.

Limit the number of interviewees who are children of teachers, administrators, school board members, or other district/school employees.

The schedule should include time after each interview for team members’ discussion.

The last day should include a block of time for consensus building and report writing.

The visit will end with an exit interview sharing strengths and suggestions.
Team Orientation

Site Visit Team Information

Working as a Team
- Team members will be assigned to smaller groups to conduct interviews.
- Information gathered through interviews will be the basis for report comments.

INTERVIEWS

Prior to the Interviews:
- Acquire questions for your team’s interviews (paper or electronic)
- Determine assignments for asking questions
- Discuss strategies for taking notes
- Designate a “time keeper”
INTERVIEWS

During Interviews:
• Assure interviewees’ anonymity
• Introduce team members
• Ask questions provided for each group,
• Follow up questions probing for additional
details may be asked as needed
• Listen carefully, taking notes as needed

INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
• Use the questions provided for each
interview group, asking all within the
allotted time
• Occasional probing questions may be
asked if needed for clarification or
examples
• The time keeper may remind the group
of time restraints if responses are lengthy

INTERVIEWS

Team Dialogue Following Interviews:
• Team members discuss “big ideas”
mentioned
• Note specific examples supporting “big
ideas”
• Look for common themes from group to
group
• Note references to data
• Prepare official team notes from each
interview to be given to the team leader
The team will create a draft report organized with the Seven Characteristics of Improving Schools noted earlier.
In most cases, each section will contain strength statements and recommendation statements.
The Data Appendix will be added to the final report.
Non-Compliance issues will be listed in a WEB-BASED format.

The team leader/consultant will edit and write the formal report.
A draft may be sent to team members and will be reviewed internally by DE staff.
The final determination of the accreditation statement will be made by the DE Consultant.
Final report will be sent to the district/school within 4-6 weeks.

QUESTIONS?