



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.

Document Review

- 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.



Seven Characteristics of Improving Schools

- Vision, Mission, and Goals
- Leadership
- Collaborative Relationships
- Learning Environment
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Professional Development
- Monitoring and Accountability

INTERVIEWS



Interview Groups

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.

Schedule

- 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

SITE VISIT REPORT

- 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.

SITE VISIT REPORT

- 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?

Site Visit Training
