

RISC ORGANIZATIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

This tool is for organizational assessment. It is divided into the four components of the RISC Approach to Schooling: Standards-Based Design, Shared Vision, Leadership, and Continuous Improvement. Standards-Based Design is further divided into four sub-components: Standards, Instruction, Assessment, and Recording and Reporting, each of which is further divided into specific traits. As the RISC Approach to Schooling has evolved, we have found that using the phrase *recording and reporting*, in place of the phrase *grading and reporting*, better captures the unique RISC view of the seamless, transparent system of students participating in various assessments, teachers and others recording data about students' performance, and the system then reporting this rich body of information to students, parents, and other stakeholders.

The purpose of this tool is to guide reflection on your current practices aligned to the RISC Approach. Criteria in the tool are based on best practice and current research. To use the tool, simply underline the specific criteria along each continuum that best identify where you are as an organization. To identify the organizational working level for an entire component, identify the indicator in which all criteria for each trait are met. Used on a semi-annual basis, the tool can highlight progress made and assist in the development of objectives, action plans, and key performance indicators (KPIs).

Descriptions of each of the indicators:

Awareness: The organization is interested in pursuing or believes that there is a need for these practices and processes. Members of the organization may have discussed these ideas and may have done some initial research but have not approached the concepts in a formal way as an organization.

Understanding: The organization has begun researching and planning to formally address these practices and processes. The organization desires to increase the capacity of individuals who know how to do these processes and have begun to provide professional development opportunities for stakeholders.

First Implementation: The organization is working purposefully to formalize these practices and processes. The organization has detailed plans in place and has begun implementation, but has not completed sufficient steps to collect data on the success of implementation.

Routine Use: The organization regularly uses these practices and processes as part of routine throughout the organization. Members of the organization willingly and purposefully engage in these practices and processes. The organization has data spanning at least one cycle time showing positive growth.

Refinement: The organization has established cycle times and processes to continuously improve practices. The organization has reviewed and refined the practices and processes over two or more cycle times. The organization has data to demonstrate positive growth trends for 3 or more years.

Replication: The organization possesses the capacity and experience to assist other districts with these practices and processes. The organization has willingly made available to interested organizations examples of current practices and processes.

		Traits	Awareness	Understanding	1st Implementation	Routine Use	Refinement	Replication
		STANDARDS-BASED DESIGN	Overall	Strategic Planning	The organization is aware of and is interested in pursuing the development of district standards and implementation of a standards-based system aligned to the organizations focus areas.	The organization is developing a plan to implement standards-based system (e.g., local standards tied to focus areas, student placement and progress, assessments, reporting tools). Carnegie unit waiver is requested.	Organization policies, resources, and schedules are being aligned to the implementation of the standards-based system. Carnegie unit waiver is implemented with a transition plan for older students.	Organization policies, resources, and schedules are aligned to a standards-based system. Carnegie unit waiver is fully implemented.
Standards	Input		The organization sees value in including stakeholder input to develop local standards and researching a variety of district, state, and national standards for content, format, and best practices.	Organizational activities (e.g., strategic planning, community meetings, standards committees) clearly support the inclusion of teacher, community, parent, student, and business input regarding local standards.	Organizational activities foster student/parent ownership and understanding of standards. Stakeholders can explain the use of standards and identify differences from a traditional system.	Organizational activities advance student ownership, responsibility, and participation in standard-based processes (e.g., personal learning plans [PLPs], student tracking sheets, portfolios, student-led parent conferences).	The organization has implemented formal processes to give parents, community, students, staff, and businesses opportunities for additional input on standards and related processes.	Stakeholder familiarity with the processes allows them to assist other organizations in developing practices for creating stakeholder ownership.

		<p>Development & Deployment</p>	<p>The organization is aware of state standards and grade-level equivalencies, and understands the need to support the development of local standards through professional development.</p>	<p>The organization is actively pursuing the development of local standards that incorporate stakeholder input and are aligned to state standards. Standards clearly indicate what stakeholders believe students need to know and be able to do.</p>	<p>The organization has developed, and made accessible to all stakeholders, local standards in traditional and non-traditional content-area levels. Students are placed in developmentally appropriate content-area levels.</p>	<p>The organization has edited, revised, and aligned standards to internal and external indicators of student success.</p>	<p>The organization's standards and resources are reviewed, edited, and revised at least twice on a regular cycle, and student performance indicates high degree of predictability for success on external assessments.</p>	<p>District standards and resources serve as a benchmark for other organizations.</p>
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Traits		Awareness	Understanding	1st Implementation	Routine Use	Refinement	Replication
Instruction	Standards & Assessments	The organization believes that an established set of local standards should drive instruction.	The organization documents the expectation that standards will drive instruction. All classroom planning, instruction, and assessments are standards-referenced and begin to show standards-based practices aligned to local standards.	The organization implements procedures and policies (e.g., lesson planning, student progress through content-area levels, teacher/principal evaluation tools, recording and reporting procedures) requiring standards-based instruction in all content-area levels.	Standards-based instruction and assessment is systemic and systematic. Decision making regarding instructional resources is based on standards alignment. Existing resources and/or programs are aligned or abandoned.	Standards-based practices and processes are reviewed, edited, and revised at least twice on a regular cycle.	The organization's procedures and policies have served as benchmarks or templates for other organizations.
	Instructional Model	The organization desires the development of a systemic, comprehensive instructional model (e.g., students have increased access to applied learning activities, receive instruction at their developmental level, & progress is determined by performance-based demonstration of standards mastery).	The organization is developing a systemic, comprehensive instructional model. Staff development focuses on standards-based instructional techniques and strategies, allowing stakeholders to compare traditional and standards-based systems.	The organization has implemented a systemic, comprehensive instructional model. Staff development focuses on specific instructional strategies, aligns to current research, and provides opportunities for stakeholder feedback.	The organization's comprehensive instructional model is systemic and systematic. Continued implementation and staff development are provided by leaders from some stakeholder groups, align to stakeholder needs & current research. Plans are implemented for regular refinement.	The organization's comprehensive instructional model is reviewed, edited, and revised at least twice on a regular cycle. Staff development is driven by leaders from many stakeholder groups.	At the request of other organizations, the organization is able to provide staff development to assist in the creation and implementation of a comprehensive instructional model.

		Student Focus	The organization desires to create individualized learning environments and experiences that lead to authentic student engagement (e.g., students are placed at developmental content-area levels, participate in instructional design, establish individual and classroom goals).	The organization creates professional development opportunities that provide strategies tools for staff and students to individualize learning experiences and increase levels of engagement (e.g., PLPs, student self-assessment, formal student feedback processes, analytical assessment development).	The organization has integrated strategies and tools into the comprehensive instructional model allowing staff and students to individualize learning experiences and increase levels of engagement.	The organization's tools and strategies are systemic and systematic. Teachers and students value and benefit from individualized learning experiences & engagement levels show positive growth trends.	The organization's individualization and engagement tools and strategies are reviewed, edited, and revised at least twice on a regular cycle. Organization experiences sustained (3 years) positive growth trends.	The organization makes available and supports other organization choosing to adopt its engagement strategies and tools.
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		Traits	Awareness	Understanding	1st Implementation	Routine Use	Refinement	Replication
Assessment	Development & Deployment		The organization is aware of the need to create standards-based internal assessments aligned to local standards and state assessment expectations and is willing to provide professional development on the use of standards-based assessment types (e.g. skills, analytical, self, peer).	The organization has developed a plan to create and implement internal assessments with supporting procedures and policies to systematize student progress through all content-area levels. The organization is beginning to use standards-based assessments.	The organization has developed at least one assessment type for each content-area level. Systematized procedures and policies are in place to advance students. Principals, teachers, and students demonstrate understanding and use of the assessment processes and procedures.	The organization demonstrates systematic use of internal standards-based assessment types to assess mastery in all content-area levels. Assessment activities begin to involve parents. Data collection begins on inter-rater reliability. Plans and procedures are in place to review and refine assessments.	The organization's assessments are reviewed, edited, and revised at least twice on a regular cycle, and student performance indicates high degree of predictability for success on external assessments. Assessment activities involve parents and community members in formally assessing student performance.	Organizational assessment development and implementation processes serve as a benchmark for others.

		Traits	Awareness	Understanding	1st Implementation	Routine Use	Refinement	Replication
Recording & Reporting	Input	The organization is aware of the need to develop strategies for stakeholders to compare current and standards-based recording and reporting systems. The organization supports the gathering of stakeholder input on standard-based system features.	The organization begins providing stakeholders opportunities to compare current and standards-based recording and reporting system and the gathering of stakeholder input on standards-based system features.	The organization's recording and reporting system processes and products reflect stakeholder input.	Improvements to the system continue to reflect stakeholder input. Stakeholders begin to explain and defend the benefits of the recording and reporting process in a standards-based system.	Improvements to the system are driven by stakeholder input. The majority of stakeholders can explain and defend the benefits of the recording and reporting process in a standards-based system.	Stakeholders advocate for the adoption of standards-based recording and reporting systems at local, state, or national levels.	
	Development & Deployment	The organization is aware of the need to provide professional development to stakeholders on the use and implementation of an electronic recording and reporting system to monitor student progress on individual standards.	The organization initiates the training of stakeholders, providing tools and strategies to access and use student data, and is actively pursuing the adoption or creation of an electronic recording and reporting system.	The organization has begun implementation of an electronic recording and reporting system. Stakeholders begin use of the system and demonstrate increased understanding of the recording and reporting process in a standards-based system.	The organization's recording & reporting system use is systemic and systematic. Staff, students and parents routinely access the system to monitor content-area-level progress. Staff and students use the system for planning class and individual student learning goals, and analysis of individual and organizational data.	The organization's recording and reporting system has been reviewed, edited, and revised at least twice on a regular cycle. The system has been modified to collect and report on data specific to focus-area progress.	The organization's recording and reporting system has been adopted by other organizations.	

Traits		Awareness	Understanding	1st Implementation	Routine Use	Refinement	Replication
SHARED VISION	Input & Communication	The organization is aware of the need to identify essential stakeholder groups and has begun to communicate a need for shared vision focus areas.	All stakeholder groups are aware of formal processes for creating shared vision focus areas and had opportunities for input.	The organization has prioritized and communicated the input into focus areas; local standards reflect stakeholder input.	Representatives from every stakeholder group can articulate and defend the shared vision focus areas.	All stakeholder groups participate in and facilitate refinement of the shared vision focus areas; formal processes have been evaluated and refined at least twice on a regular cycle.	Processes have been established for each stakeholder group to help implement and assist other organizations in creating shared vision focus areas.
	Strategic Planning	The organization is aware of the need for shared vision focus areas, driven by a strategic plan, containing key performance indicators (KPIs) and supporting action plans.	The organization has begun to develop the strategic plan containing KPIs and supporting action plans aligned to the focus areas.	The organization begins implementation of a well-developed strategic plan aligned to the focus areas containing related KPIs and supporting action plans.	The organization has fully implemented and evaluates the strategic plan progress based on KPIs. Evaluation is data driven and ensures alignment to the focus areas; appropriate adjustments are made to action plans.	The organization has an established cycle time to continuously refine the KPIs and related action plans aligned to the focus areas.	The organization assists other organizations in defining and refining action plans and goals tied to their focus areas.
	Performance	The organization is aware of the need to formalize a process to analyze results and achievement tied to the focus areas (e.g., dropout rate, cultural decline, school climate, test scores, teacher attrition rate, parent/student involvement, curriculum relevance, attendance).	The organization begins to identify and analyze data to measure progress on established KPIs and aligned focus areas.	The organization implements action plans and KPIs for the focus-area objectives. Staff begin to use the focus areas in the action planning process (e.g., budget, curriculum, in-service schedule, committee work, school year schedule, class schedule).	The entire organization uses the focus areas and associated KPIs in the action plan process (e.g., budget, in-service schedule, business office, curriculum, school year schedule, maintenance department). Performance on KPIs indicates progress on all focus-area objectives.	The organization applies a formal process to continuously review trend data on focus-area objectives and compares processes, tools, policies, and resource allocation with other organizations for analysis, modifications of action plans.	Formal processes for identification and analysis of KPIs are a benchmark for other organizations.

	Traits	Awareness	Understanding	1st Implementation	Routine Use	Refinement	Replication
LEADERSHIP	Moral Purpose	The organization believes in making the best interests of students and hiring the right people based on its values and beliefs a top priority.	The organization is trustworthy and competent, has positive connections with stakeholders, and exemplifies strong, moral character.	The organization is courageous, confronts the brutal truth, and is willing to reinvent the organization for future opportunities.	The organization models and empowers others to use the lens of moral purpose in a systematic way to pursue organizational objectives.	The organization uses the lens of moral purpose to create a systemic evaluation process to review organizational objectives.	The organization sees no boundaries for helping other organizations prosper.
	Relationships	The organization appreciates the benefits of open and candid dialogue amongst staff.	The organization promotes positive relations among its workers through tools and processes.	The organization has a systematic process to promote positive relationships among all stakeholders that positively impacts student learning and school culture.	The organization's positive relations and recognition of others' achievement allow new ideas and processes to be deployed that lead to breakthrough performances.	The organization demonstrates sustainability even with attrition of key leaders; collegiality and high organizational results continue.	Effective processes and tools are developed to assist other organizations in promoting positive relations.
	Vision	The organization is aware of the need to communicate to all stakeholders the history and development of the current vision.	The organization leads and engages stakeholders in the (re)creation of a vision to positively impact student learning and school culture.	The organization designs, delivers, and communicates stakeholders' shared vision including systemic leadership development, performance-based systems, and continuous improvement.	The organization aligns resources, policies, and procedures to support stakeholders' shared vision, systemic leadership development, performance-based systems, and continuous improvement.	The organization sustains positive performance trends and improved cycle times for achievement in leadership development, performance-based systems, and stakeholders' shared vision.	Organizational procedures are available to assist other organizations in the creation and pursuit of their shared vision.

Change Adept	The organization recognizes its role and responsibility to create healthy working environments through clear expectations, collaboration, effective communication, and promotion of healthy relationships.	The organization accepts responsibility for results and researches new opportunities for becoming a high-performing system. The organization works to increase stakeholder understanding of change theory.	The organization embraces the change process and promotes from its values and beliefs new innovations that inspire lively discussions about high-performing systems.	The organization initiates new ideas that are goal oriented and systemic in nature. Leaders are willing to accept some dissent and ambiguity to improve the organization.	Organizational innovations lead to refinement of tools, policies, processes, and systematic deployment of ongoing improvement strategies to increase results. New paradigms are possible and encouraged.	Results from years of continued systemic improvement that have yielded clear processes are available for other organizations.
Results	The organization recognizes the need to analyze all current data to better understand existing performance levels.	The organization benchmarks internally and externally, analyzing the results to develop plans for continuous improvement.	The organization understands and applies processes for continuous improvement (e.g., PDSA) using the shared vision focus areas as the driving force for improvement.	Internal and external organizational results indicate steady progress in the shared vision focus areas.	Internal and external organizational results indicate positive trends in all focus areas, yielding the greatest results in the organization.	Sustained positive results become a benchmark for other organizations. Internal and external results are world class.

	Traits	Awareness	Understanding	1st Implementation	Routine Use	Refinement	Replication
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	Systemic & Systematic	The organization is aware that continuous improvement processes that are repeatable and provide opportunities for evaluation can lead to increased performance throughout the entire organization (e.g., systematic use of PDSA in all organizational departments).	The organization understands the continuous improvement process, provides training, and recognizes the need to implement the process throughout all facets of the organization (i.e., standards-based design, shared vision, leadership).	The organization implements systemic continuous improvement strategies to increase performance in focus-area KPIs throughout the organization. Processes are becoming automatic or habitual.	The organization has fully implemented systemic continuous improvement strategies resulting in positive progress on focus-area KPIs throughout the organization. Stakeholders find process use efficient and advantageous.	The organization has fully implemented systemic continuous improvement strategies resulting in sustained (3 years) progress on focus-area KPIs throughout the organization.	Organizational and individual PDSAs serve as a benchmark for other organizations.
	Evaluation Criteria	The organization is aware that there are several models that support the evaluation of systemic processes (e.g., Baldrige National Quality Program, Six Sigma, or ISO 9000 criteria).	The organization has given training to key stakeholders, increasing understanding of the basic model criteria (e.g., information analysis and process management).	The organization has begun to use evaluation criteria in strategic planning and daily work.	The organization has implemented evaluation criteria to assess organizational processes.	The organization uses the evaluation criteria to revise and deploy plans to improve organizational processes.	The organization assists others in the revision and deployment of plans based on evaluation criteria.

Cycle Times	The organization is aware of existing cycle times and that improving cycle times increases responsiveness to stakeholder and organizational needs.	The organization begins to compile cycle time data for organizational processes. Cycle times are compared to other successful organizations.	The organization establishes cycle times for key processes aligned to focus-area KPIs.	The organization's cycle times are established for all key processes and are being reduced; there are documented increases in organizational responsiveness and associated performances.	The organization's cycle times are regularly monitored and refined.	The organization has developed procedures that assist other organizations in improving efficiency and results.
Results	The organization is aware of the need to analyze results (e.g., revenue, facilities, education services, stakeholder satisfaction, graduation follow-up) across the organization to better understand current performance.	The organization understands how to compile, benchmark, and communicate results that measure organizational performance.	The organization implements plans to document results aligned to focus-area KPIs, standards-based design, shared vision, and leadership.	The organization has documented positive trend lines in focus-area KPIs, standards-based design, shared vision, and leadership.	Refinements to the strategic plan result in documented 3-year positive trend lines.	Organizational results inspire others to invent new paradigms.

RISC Organizational Self-Assessment Tool Glossary

Analytical Assessment: Tools used to measure application of skills and knowledge by evaluating the parts of the whole. Often these tools are called scoring guides or rubrics.

Benchmark: Measurement according to specified standards in order to compare it with and improve one's own process or product.

Carnegie Unit: The number of hours a student spends in a given class. Carnegie units also are known as credits.

Change Adept: The skills and abilities to navigate and adapt to change for improvement.

Comprehensive Instructional Model: A formal instructional approach along a continuum of experiences from direct skills-based instruction to real-life application of skills and knowledge. This approach includes systematic tools, processes, and planning templates that assist staff with delivery and communication. The associated tools, processes, and templates are input driven, which allows for significant and consistent opportunities for student contributions in the design, delivery, and assessment phases of the Comprehensive Instructional Model.

Content-Area Levels: All content areas and levels that have been established from synthesized stakeholder input. Each area holds a continuum of standards that describe what students will need to know and be able to do to demonstrate mastery of a given content area. Each level is a developmental portion of the standards continuum for a given content area. Sample content areas are mathematics, science, technology, reading, writing, social sciences, service learning, career development, cultural development, and character development.

Continuous Improvement: Formal processes designed to appraise current practice and results to reveal improvements. These processes include systematic and systemic feedback, evaluation, and benchmarking cycles.

Cycle Time: The time required to fulfill commitments or to complete tasks. Time measurements play a major role because of the great importance of responsiveness. "Cycle time" refers to all aspects of time performance. Cycle time improvement might include the time to respond to changing student and stakeholder needs, design time for new programs and processes, achievement time for students to meet content-area levels, or other key measures of time.

Deployment: The extent to which developed tools, plans, processes, and/or approaches are applied. Deployment is evaluated on the basis of the breadth and depth of application of the tools, plans, processes, and/or approaches to relevant work units within the organization. Deployment can occur in multiple stages (e.g., year 1, standards in reading, writing, math, and character development are deployed; year 2, all remaining content areas are deployed).

Development: Strategic designs of tools, plans, processes, and/or products. The designs often include input from stakeholders and use plan, do, study, act (PDSA) cycles to ensure measurement and refinement for maximum benefit of all stakeholders. For example, development cycles occur relative to local standards, internal assessments, and reporting tools.

Evaluation Criteria: An established set of standards and indicators by which organizations measure performance. Examples include the Baldrige National Quality Program, International Organization for Standardization (ISO 9000), and Six Sigma Criteria.

Focus Areas: The identification of three to seven areas determined from synthesized stakeholder input. These focus areas are succinct key elements that drive the shared vision of the organization. Focus areas are communicated and revisited according to established cycle times. Example areas include cultural development, basic skills, school-to-life transition, accountability, character education, and technology.

Input: Contributions to the education system. Examples contributions include what students should know and be able to do, satisfaction with report card formats, and assessment of student performance on local standards. Input may be gathered through various strategies such as community and staff meetings, surveys, and interviews.

Instruction: The collection of strategies, processes, and tools used with students to facilitate learning. Instruction is aligned to standards and modified based on individual student needs, interests, and feedback. Instruction includes a continuum of experiences from direct skills-based instruction to real-life application of skills and knowledge.

Internal Assessments: Organizationwide measurement of student performance on standards in a variety of ways. Internal assessments are used to move students from one content-area level to the next on a developmental report card. A variety of internal assessments are used to provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge and application of skills. These assessment types include skills-based, analytical, self, and peer assessments.

Key Performance Indicator (KPI): A quantifiable measurement, agreed to beforehand, that reflects the critical success factors of an organization. KPIs help an organization define and measure progress toward organizational goals. Once an organization has analyzed its mission, identified all of its stakeholders, and defined its goals, it needs a way to measure progress toward those goals. Key performance indicators are those measurements.

Leadership: The degree to which an organization has the capacity to utilize and develop the strengths and potential of each stakeholder to achieve superior performance relative to the shared vision.

Local Standards: Organizationwide student performance objectives for all content-area levels. Standards are developed based on stakeholder input collected during the shared vision process. They are aligned to or include state standards.

Moral Purpose: Making a positive difference in the lives of stakeholder groups and society as a whole by intense commitment to betterment, paying attention to process and product, treating others fairly, and being morally diligent in decision making.

Organization: A school, school district, nonprofit, or business, inclusive of all staff.

Performance: The manner in which an organization and/or its stakeholders achieve predetermined objectives or key performance indicators (KPIs). Example objectives include positive trends in focus areas, school-to-life transition, predictability of student success on state-level exams, state-level achievement results, and attendance.

Performance Task: Learning activities that are driven by standards and require application of knowledge and skills. They are assessed by specific criteria that mirror the task and the standards. The tasks may range from brief activities to long-term complex projects.

Personal Learning Plan: A student-driven goal-setting process (called plan, do, study, act, or PDSA) that is written and used by students, teachers, and parents. Goals are tied to local standards, internal assessments, and report cards.

Processes: Linked activities with the purpose of producing a program or service for students and/or stakeholders within or outside the organization. Generally, processes involve combinations of people, machines, tools, techniques, materials, and improvements in a defined series of steps or actions. Processes rarely operate in isolation and must be considered in relation to the processes that impact them. In some situations, processes might require adherence to a specific sequence of steps, with documentation (sometimes formal) of procedures and requirements, including well-defined measurements (e.g., administration of internal assessments and personal learning plans).

Recording and Reporting: The processes and tools to document and communicate student progress on standards.

Relationships: Interactions between two or more people. Relationships are developed through positive and satisfying interactions.

Results: Outputs and outcomes achieved by the organization. Results are evaluated on the basis of current performance; performance relative to appropriate comparisons; the rate, breadth, and importance of performance improvements; and the relationship of results measures to key organizational performance requirements.

RISC Approach to Schooling: A research- and standards-based approach that implements local standards within developmental levels with aligned internal assessments and reporting tools. The RISC approach is driven by a shared vision, fostered through leadership development, and sustained by continuous improvement processes.

Shared Vision: A commonly held set of beliefs or goals generated by all stakeholder groups. Shared vision drives all aspects of organizational decision making, measurements, and improvements. A mission statement and focus areas are established from these shared beliefs and goals.

Stakeholder: A person or group within or outside a school system, which can impact or be affected by student success. Stakeholders may include but are not limited to the following people or organizations: students, tribal councils, families, teachers, classified staff, administrators, parents, community members, businesses, colleges, universities, and legislators.

Standards-Based Design: An education system in which students are placed in developmentally appropriate content-area levels and receive instruction along a continuum of experiences from direct skills-based instruction to real-life application of skills and knowledge. Progress is based upon students' demonstration of mastery on internal assessments (not on time or age); report cards reflect progress towards mastery of individual standards and content-area levels.

Strategic Planning: A systematic method used by an organization to anticipate and adapt to expected changes. Strategic plans are aligned to the mission statement, use focus areas as broad goals, identify key objectives and key performance indicators under the focus areas, and have well-developed associated action plans.

Student Focus: Approaches that individualize instruction and enhance student engagement in the learning process and environment. Example student outputs include class goals, personal learning plans, analytical assessments designs, instructor and classroom environment evaluations, and self-assessment scores.

Systemic: Affecting or involving an entire system. Systemic education improvement models include input mechanisms and delivery processes for students, classified and certified staff, parents, community members, businesses, and post-secondary institutions.

Tools: A mechanism that grants a mechanical or mental advantage in completing a task. Tool use in education improvement models enhances development, deployment, evaluation, and refinement of practices and processes. Deployment of tools is systematic and systemic where appropriate.

Transition Plan: Plans that address the transition from one system to another. Transition plans include the identification of which student groups will engage in the current system, with the remainder to engage in future system. These plans may include graduation requirements (time versus performance system), report card formats, transcript documents, and eligibility requirements.

Vision: The desired future state of the organization. The vision describes where the organization is headed, what it intends to be, or how it wishes to be perceived in the future.