

# **The Ultimate Guide to Developing Quality District Strategic and School Renewal Plans**

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# Presentation Objective

This presentation will focus on an evidence-based approach to assist leaders in creating the necessary **structure and culture** in which the District Strategic and School Renewal plan process will be a successful part of a school improvement initiative.

Topics include:

- Quality Strategic Planning Essentials
- What is the Role of District/Building Leaders in the Strategic Planning Process?
- Fundamental School Improvement Strategies
- Common Challenges of Strategic Planning Process
- Power of Collaboration
- Work of Innovation & Support Team, SCDE



# Strategic Plan

## Formal Definition

- A **dynamic** process that formalizes and communicates the school district's mission, vision, values, goals, objectives, and the **actions** needed to achieve those goals and objectives. This process enables internal and external stakeholders to voice and agree on the same priorities and focus on the same path to improvement.



# District Strategic and School Renewal Plans

## Statutory and Regulatory Requirements

- All districts are required to have a District Strategic Plan
- All schools are required to have a School Renewal Plan
- The plans are on a five-year cycle with annual updates
- Submissions are due by April 30<sup>th</sup> each year
- Purpose of the plans is to coordinate and align improvement initiatives

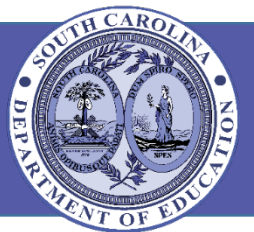
<https://www.ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/state-accountability/district-strategic-and-school-renewal-plans/>



# District Strategic and School Renewal Plans - II

## District Strategic and School Renewal Plan Components

- ✓ Assurances
- ✓ Stakeholder Involvement
- ✓ Comprehensive Needs Assessment
- ✓ Needs Assessment Executive Summary
- ✓ Performance Goals
- ✓ Interim Performance Goals
- ✓ Strategies and Action Plans
- ✓ Evaluation of the Strategies



# District Strategic and School Renewal Plans - III

## Performance Goals

### DISTRICT

- Each district must complete at least one goal for
  - Student Achievement
  - Teacher/Administrator Quality
  - School Climate
  - Gifted and Talented

### SCHOOLS

- Each school must complete at least one goal for
  - Student Achievement
  - Teacher/Administrator Quality
  - School Climate



# Quality Strategic Planning: *Essential Elements*

- Effective school improvement planning models emphasize comprehensive needs assessments, strategic prioritization of needs, and data-driven decision-making through ongoing monitoring.

*Transformations do not take place until the cult*



This Photo

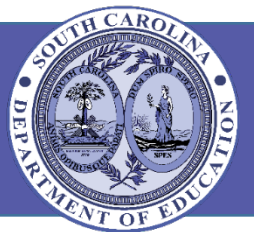




# Quality Strategic Planning: *Essential Elements - II*

- **Culture** - The organization's culture is one of the most important determiners in the successful execution.
  - Building and sustaining an organizational **culture** that facilitates and accelerates change (Collaboration & Distributive Leadership) - **Relationships!**
  - Fostering a sense of personal ***accountability*** for strategy execution and ownership at every level (High Expectations) - **People will only follow you as deeply as they trust you.**

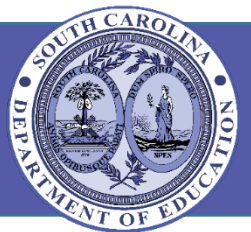
*“Do not expect changes in student outcomes before you have changes in adult practices.”*





# Quality Strategic Planning: *Essential Elements - III*

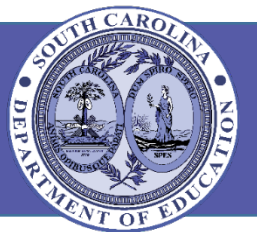
- **Structure/Strategy** - Strategy sets the direction and focus, elaborates plans and the environment for educators to understand the organization's goals.
- Developing a strategic plan is vital to an organization's success. An organization must be able to efficiently execute that strategy to achieve its performance improvement goals.
  - **Needs Assessment** - identify and assess key deficiencies and provide prioritized recommendation to support improvement
  - **Differentiated Intervention** - tiers of technical assistance designed to tailor support to the specific needs of the school, grade level, or teacher.
  - **Focused Improvement** - diagnosing deficiencies, identify clear and effective improvement strategies, implement **evidence-based practices** and **monitoring**



# Examine Educational Factors

The data analysis should include educational factors that matter for student learning:

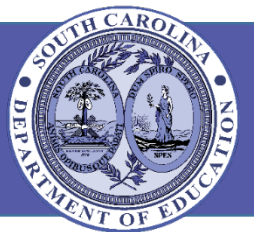
- Aligned curriculum
- Effective instruction
- Strong leadership
- Supports for students and teachers
- A safe and positive climate
- Family and community engagement
- Equitable access to resources



# What is the Role of Leadership?

Research confirms what we know:

- Leaders/Principals influence student achievement
- Leaders/Principals influence teacher & staff decisions
- Leaders/Principals influence policy & program implementation
- Leaders'/Principals' roles have changed, with more responsibilities for instructional oversight layered upon responsibilities for school management



# Thoughts about Leadership

- **Leading is Teaching**

*“If you can’t teach, you can’t lead.”*

- Dr. Jim Mahoney

- **Leaders are Servants**

*“You don’t have to be great to serve, but you have to serve to be a great leader.”* - Jon Gordon

- **Dispositional vs Positional**

*“Leadership is an action, not a position.”*

- Donald McGannon

- **Collective Leadership (Leadership is Shared)**

*“True leaders don’t create more followers. They create more leaders.”* - Tom Peters

- **Leaders develop Cultures**

*“Great leaders succeed because they bring out the greatness in others.”* - Jon Gordon

- **Vision Oriented & Student-Centered**

*“There is nothing more demoralizing than a leader who can’t clearly articulate why we’re doing what we’re doing.”*

- James Kouzes & Barry Posner

- **Leaders are Responsible (Accountability)**

*“The lowest performing teacher in your building sets your standard for what is acceptable.”*

- Rich Hawkins

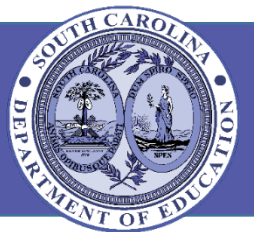


# A primary reason for our lack of success is...



...our addiction  
to excess!

The result of your needs assessment must be a focused plan with a limited number of strategic goals.



Research consistently shows that supporting adult learning is directly and positively linked to enhancing children's achievement.

Drago-Severson, 2009



*"Teachers don't leave schools, they leave leaders."*





# School Improvement Strategies

- School improvement must be viewed as an organizational **strategy**, rather than an exercise in compliance.
- This improvement cycle gives districts a template for focused and intentional actions that lead to continuous improvement.







South Carolina School Improvement Model

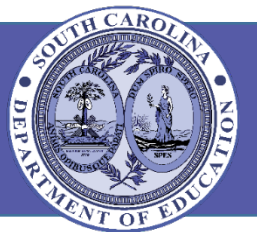




# School Improvement Strategies, cont'd

## Key Questions to Consider

-  Where are we now?
-  Where do we want to be?
-  How will we get from where we are to where we want to be?
-  What are we learning?



# Improvement Cycle – Core Principles

1. A focused plan **aligns** vision, mission, and philosophy.
2. The process is **continuous**, and the plan is a **dynamic** document.
3. The process relies on **quality**, **deep data** interpretations.
4. The process is completed in a **collaborative** and inclusive way.



Purpose is the reason you journey. Passion is the fire that lights your way.



# Improvement Cycle - Core Principles, cont'd

5. The process produces one focused, integrated plan that directs all work and resources.
6. The process expects **substantive changes in student performance and adult practices** as a result of implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the process and plan.
7. An efficient communication approach ensures all stakeholders are consistently informed of progress at each stage.



# Common Challenges of Strategic Planning - I

- Lack of Time
- Insufficient Tools
- Asking Wrong Questions- Are you asking the deep and “tough” questions?
- Jumping to Solutions- Leaders often jump to the task of brainstorming solutions before truly understanding the problems to be solved.
- Ineffective Implementation and Monitoring



# Common Challenges of Strategic Planning - II

## Executive Summary of Needs Assessment Challenges

- Not identifying a need as the basis of the plan
- Failure to make the appropriate correlations
- Failure to analyze data at a deep level

Any discrepancies in the following areas identified by the school and district report cards must be included in the plan:

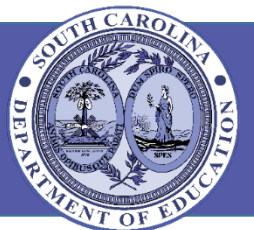
1. Achievement	5. Discipline
2. Achievement by Subgroup	6. Teacher/Administrator Quality
3. Graduation Rate	7. Other Priority Areas
4. Attendance	



# Common Challenges of Strategic Planning - III

## Failure to Create a Strategic Performance Goal

- By 2025-2026, 60% of 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders will score “Meets or Exceeds” on the ELA and Math benchmarks as measured by Spring MAP scores.
- Reduce class size for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades to 18:1 by 2024-2025.
- Provide all teachers with 3 additional professional development opportunities per school year by 2025. (OR) By 2027, 100% of the faculty/staff will receive appropriate schoolwide and area-specific professional development.
- By June of 2027, school report card surveys will show: Parents satisfied with the learning environment will increase 1 percentage point each academic year from 95.9% to 99.9%. (OR ) Teachers satisfied with the learning environment will remain at 100% each academic year.



# Collaboration

In the thousands of cases we've studied, we've yet to encounter a single example of extraordinary achievement that didn't involve the active participation and support of many people.... Leadership is not a solo act; it's a team performance... Collaboration is a social imperative. Without it, people can't get extraordinary things done in organizations.

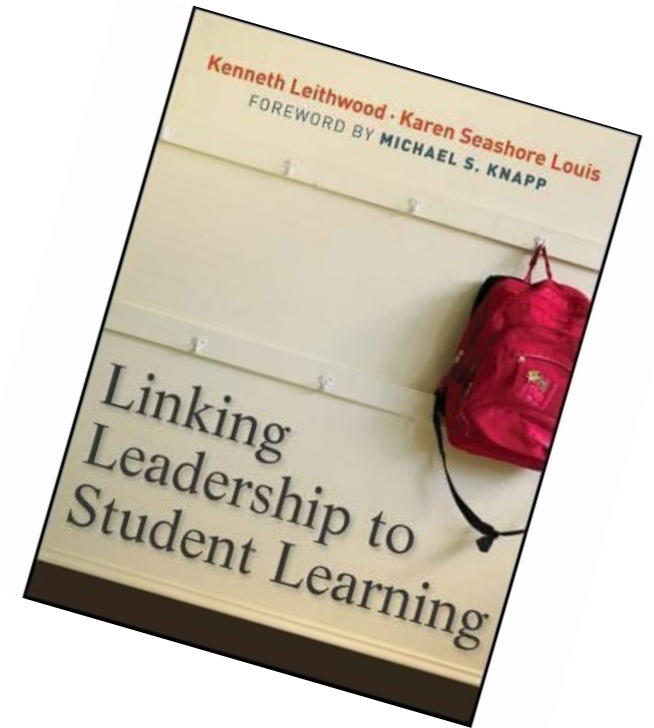
-Kouzes & Posner, 2003



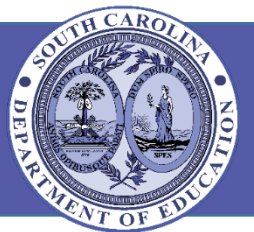


# Leadership Study-Collective Leadership

- Nine states, 43 school districts, 180 schools
- Data from a total of 8,391 teachers and 471 school administrators
- The authors, after five years of research, could not find a single documented case of a school that managed to turn around its student achievement trajectory in the absence of talented leadership.



Leithwood & Seashore Louis (2012)



# Two Overall Findings

1. Collective leadership (collective capacity) has a stronger influence on student learning than any individual source of leadership.
2. Higher-performing schools award greater influence to **teacher teams**



Seashore Louis et. al, 2010



# SCORE

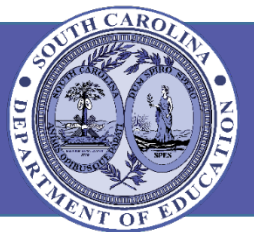
- Support for Consolidating Operations and Resources Efficiently
  - The goal of this work is to create a more effective and efficient system of continuous improvement from the SEA to all districts and schools.
- A shift from compliance to growth by aligning support to districts and schools through
  - A universal framework for continuous improvement
  - A consolidated comprehensive needs assessment
  - A streamlined continuous improvement plan (“One Plan”)



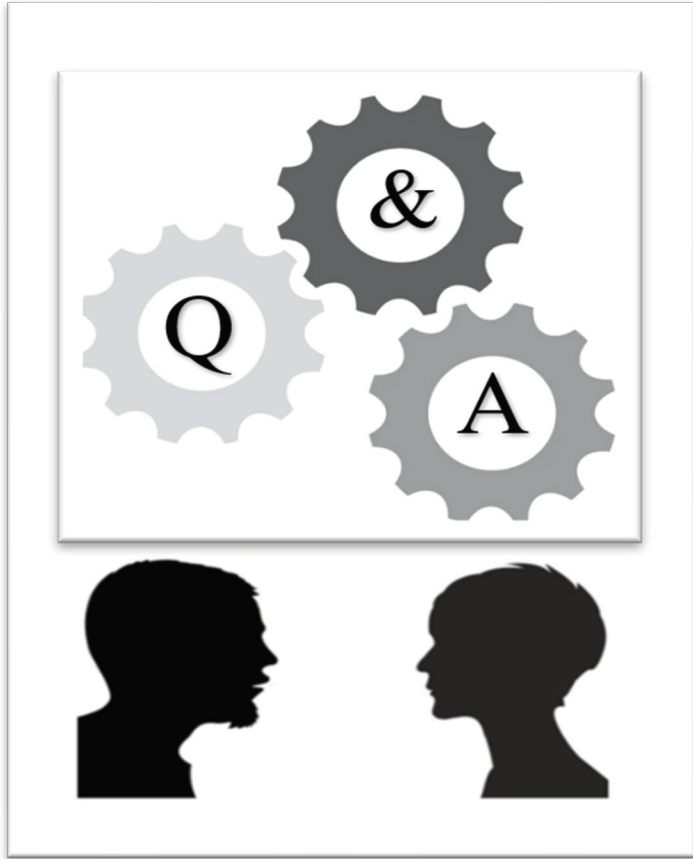
# Innovation & Support Team (SCDE)

## Responsibilities

- Collaborate with districts and schools to design school-based systems that focus on examining the effectiveness of interventions and instructional practices across Title programs;
- District strategic and school renewal planning and submission process; and
- Provide, broker, or facilitate professional learning opportunities, technical assistance, and/or resources for school improvement initiatives.



# Questions



## The Ultimate Guide to Developing Quality District Strategic and School Renewal Plans



# Innovation & Support Team

For further assistance contact the

***Innovation & Support Team***

Office of Federal and State Accountability

South Carolina Department of Education

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