2021

SUPPLEMENTAL RENEWAL GUIDANCE

nacsa

T he decision to renew a charter school is an integral part of an authorizer's work and a powerful strategy for making excellent public schools and educational opportunities available to all students. The decision to renew — or not — is complex work, requiring the balancing of diverse and often competing interests.

The global pandemic created the necessity to completely redesign the schooling experience for students and their families. It also brought even more complexity to authorizing work: how to understand how schools met student and community wellness needs and how to make decisions with missing or incomplete statewide school performance data.

Given the context authorizers find themselves in today, the 2021 NACSA Supplemental Renewal Guidance can help authorizers and schools think through how to adapt renewal decisions to the reality of what schooling has looked like in the U.S. since March 2020.
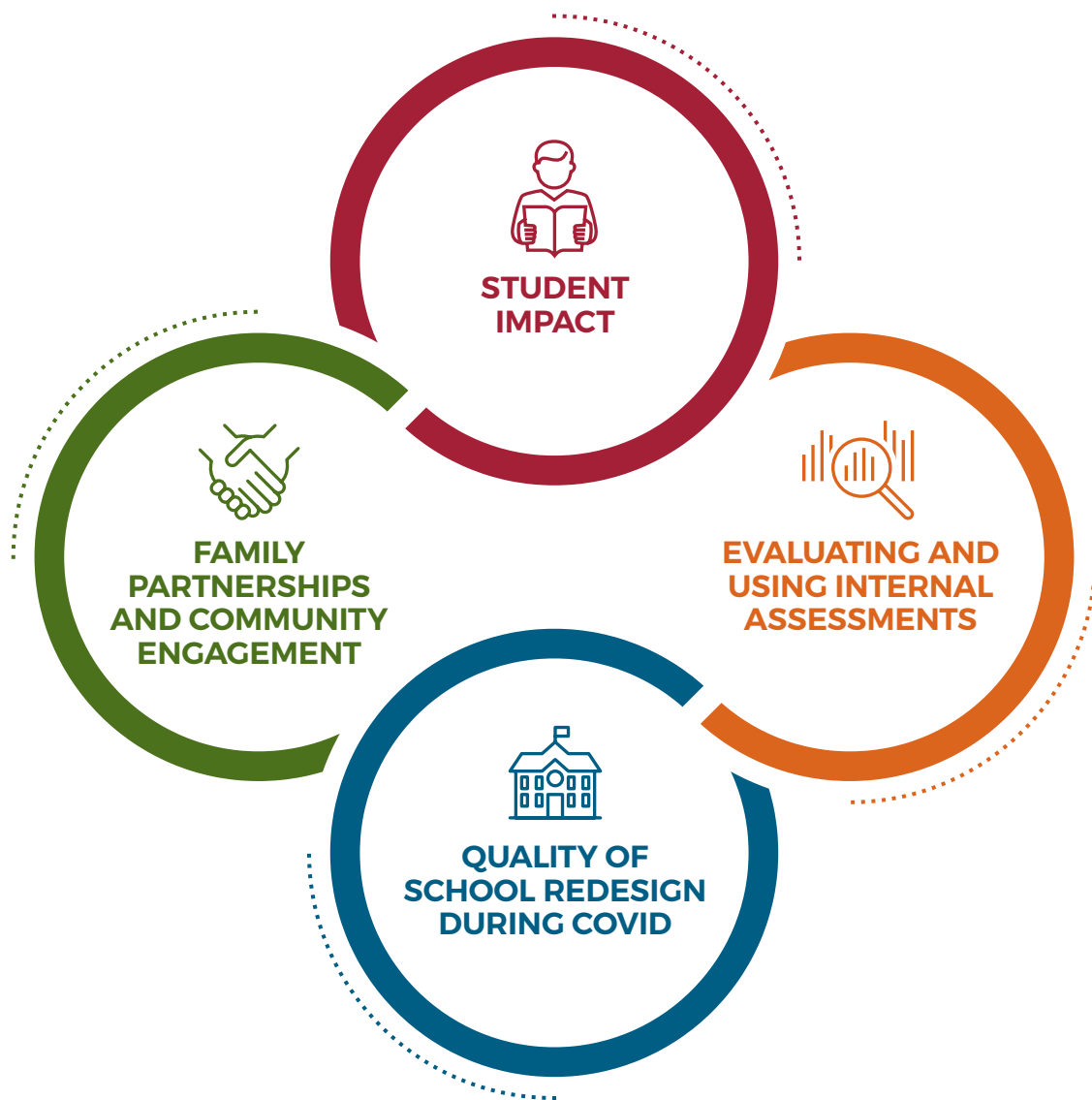
Many of the recommendations bring in key tenets that NACSA believes authorizers must consider: How to center the lived experiences of students, families, and communities in decisions and how to better define and measure quality. It also provides important opportunities for schools to tell their stories on how they are meeting the aspirations and needs of students and communities, especially those that are underserved.

Smart, proactive authorizing can transform public education.

2021 NACSA Supplemental Renewal Guidance is supplemental, intended to complement existing systems and policies. It is not a set of mandates or evaluation criteria to be imposed on schools. Rather, this guidance can help both schools and authorizers consider — together in dialogue — how to capture the extraordinary work that schools undertook to support their students, families, and community. Authorizers and schools should take all or parts of this guidance as they consider their local contexts and work on behalf of students.

FOCUS AREAS FOR EVALUATING SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS DURING THE PANDEMIC

Given this opportunity, authorizers may expand their renewal process and meaningfully engage with school leaders on the ecosystem of qualitative and quantitative information that makes the school a high-quality organization that produces long-term results for students. While every area of a school's functioning has been impacted by the pandemic, NACSA is examining **four focus areas** to determine a school's effectiveness over the course of a charter term that is inclusive of the pandemic years. Schools' responses to each focus area of this guidance should be taken into consideration to effectively triangulate evidence of the school's effectiveness.

STUDENT IMPACT

FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

EVALUATING AND USING INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS

QUALITY OF SCHOOL REDESIGN DURING COVID

STUDENT IMPACT

Typically referred to as "Student Achievement" or "Academic Performance," this focus area serves to examine how the academic and cultural program is meant to produce a positive impact on students, especially during the remote or hybrid time period.

This focus area is intended to evaluate:

- How school leaders cultivate (create and promote) a culture of learning, including the leveraging of families' knowledge of students to maintain and elevate learning in all environments;

- How school leaders create an asset-based, equitable and inclusive environment for all learners with consideration for the success of students with diverse learning abilities, cultural expressions and racial identities;

- The structures implemented to adequately respond to the social-emotional needs of students, staff and families;

- How the mission, vision, and key design elements are expressed within the school experience and driving intended outcomes.

FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Considered a vital part of a school's success (but challenging to measure) is the partnerships between families and communities to the school. Virtual learning has demonstrated the necessity of building strong partnerships with families and communities. Schools that had established strong relationships with these vital stakeholders greatly benefited during the remote transition. We offer a researched-based framework for measuring a school's depth of family partnerships and how schools can leverage these partnerships to make student success sustainable over time.

The purpose of this focus area is to evaluate:

- Knowledge of the school leadership team regarding community assets [relationships with community leaders & community orgs with relevance to their families];

- Shared power between families and staff regarding problem solving and decision making within the school community;

- The leveraging of family expertise to improve student achievement for every student.

EVALUATING AND USING INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS

With the absence of state assessment data in whole or in part, authorizers need to be able to assess whether the internal assessments offered to measure student achievement internally are valid tools to measure the effectiveness of the academic program. This focus area supports the authorizer to measure a school's capacity to engage with both academic and non-academic data sources to measure its own effectiveness.

The purpose of this focus area is to evaluate:

- The capacity of school leaders to make effective and reasonable decisions based on data [data-driven decisions];

- The ability for school leaders and teachers to predict outcomes based on specific practices and for those practices to produce the intended results aligned to the mastery of state standards;

- Interim assessments have been predictive of performance on state assessments (prior to 2019-2020 SY) and measure mastery of state standards skills;

- Collection of data across the school experience to triangulate and explain the current academic outcomes;

- The use of data to leverage the strength of different stakeholders across the school community [teachers, families, students, the board].

QUALITY OF SCHOOL REDESIGN DURING COVID

This focus area is designed to capture how school leaders redesigned the school academically and operationally to maintain continuity of the school's program remotely.

The purpose of this focus area is to evaluate:

- The ability for the school to shift from an in-person organization to a remote organization (preparedness, remote system-building, timeliness of pivot, continuity of operations);

- Soundness of the remote academic program;

- Communication protocols for students, staff, families, board and community organizations;

- COVID-related policy changes to support the continuity of the program and ensure safety.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDANCE

- The purpose of this supplemental guide is to be an enhancement to renewal processes currently in use by authorizers. Many frameworks already measure some of these focus areas, in which case these questions can support gathering additional data.

- The sections included in this guide allow for the authorizers to dig deeper into the schooling experience that supports how schools are achieving academic outcomes for students.

- Quantitative <u>and</u> qualitative data should be provided as often as possible wherever a determination of program effectiveness is being discussed.

- A lens focused on equity, anti-racism, and inclusion was applied in the creation of this guidance and should serve as an integral part of the discussions regarding student outcomes and the effectiveness of the school overall.

- Each section includes the evaluative purpose for that section. While guiding questions have been included, authorizers should take the liberty of asking follow up and additional questions that support them in achieving the purpose of that section.

- This supplemental guidance is meant to move away from a "cookie-cutter" approach to creating optimal learning environments by continuing to respect charter school autonomy— sample responses provided are meant to be a scaffold for authorizers and not the only possible responses that a school may provide to demonstrate its effectiveness.

- Scorecards or meets/not meets evaluations are deliberately not created for this guidance. The purpose of the guidance is for authorizers to get a more nuanced understanding of schools in their portfolio and how those schools maintained, improved or regressed during the pandemic. Responses across all focus areas should be triangulated to demonstrate a cohesive learning environment for all students.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

The guiding questions are not an exhaustive list, so authorizers should include additional follow up questions based on school leader responses in order to achieve the evaluation purpose of this section.

STUDENT IMPACT

Describe how the leadership cultivates a culture of learning.

Sample responses may include:

- Lesson structure to maximize student engagement
- How distractions to learning are prevented and are responded to that minimizes interruption to learning
- How teachers are actively engaged in their own learning and development to deepen content knowledge and effectiveness
- Clarity of expectations for families regarding home learning
- Consistency across teachers on learning outcomes and quality of instructional delivery
- How operations support the learning environment
- Clarity of expectations for all non-teaching staff and how they impact the learning environment
- How finances are leveraged to support a culture of learning
- Alignment of key design elements with the learning culture

What non-academic factors does the school recognize as impacting student achievement?

Sample responses may include:

- Connection between the performance of non-academic staff members and its impact on the learning environment [ops; counseling; behavior teams; finance]
- Emphasis on high attendance for students and teachers including communication protocols for absences
- Consistency and clarity of behavioral expectations and developmentally-appropriate consequences
- How school leadership measures the effectiveness of all staff
- Structures designed to respond to social-emotional needs of staff, families and students
- Alignment between the content of professional development and the school priorities
- Systems and structures that create two-way connection between school and home

Student Impact Guiding Questions, *continued*

How does the school define and currently practice cultural validation for families, students and staff?

Sample responses may include:

- How the key design elements are leveraged to create a welcoming environment for students, staff and families from all backgrounds and identities
- Project-based learning about accurate histories and narratives of cultures represented among staff and families
- Formal structures for teachers and staff that build relationships with families and students to create a culturally affirming, high quality learning experience
- Celebrations of the contributions of traditionally under-resourced cultures (particularly those represented among staff & families)
- Cultural displays in the classroom are connected to the mastery of skills and state standards [not only displayed as artifacts]
- How the school partners with culturally-relevant community organizations

What evidence of cognitive demand can be seen in the instructional program? [use school leader response to track for evidence during classroom observations]

Sample responses may include:

- Teachers building up to higher-order thinking questions [HOT questions]
- How teachers create opportunities for productive struggle in the classroom
- How the instruction is designed to have students do the "heavy lifting"
- Descriptions of a student-led or student-centered approach
- Connection between how students currently perform and indications of students approaching, meeting, or exceeding academic benchmarks

How does the school promote self-efficacy for teachers, students and families?

Sample responses may include:

- Creating opportunities for students & teachers to connect with each other on how they use effort to achieve goals
- Transparency of data (data posted in classrooms, students and families knowing current achievement, target goals and what it will take for individual students to achieve that target goal)
- Teachers making instructional changes to respond to current data in order to achieve target goals
- Differentiated teacher-coaching to support struggling teachers (outside of performance improvement plans)
- Creation of goal plans that include families for each student; students are able to lead (in part or in whole) family-teacher conferences regarding their academic progress

Student Impact Guiding Questions, continued

How are families equipped to engage in academic data related to their child and the school at large?

Sample responses may include:

- How the leadership team and teachers go beyond informing families of academic progress at parent teacher conferences or in report cards
- High frequency of progress reports (ex: weekly or bi-weekly)
- Family academic nights intended to support families' understanding of student data and how to support students at home
- Structure or system by which families can access school-wide data independently

Describe the instructional program for students with IEPs. What evidence does the school have that this program is effective?

Sample responses may include:

- Description of how students are first identified as needing a referral to special education services (Child Find Process)
- Description of how goals are created in partnership with families, teachers, special education coordinator and local entities
- Description of teacher development to provide high-quality instruction to students with IEPs
- School-wide differentiation of services (offering of SETSS, ICT, and/or self-contained, other push-in/pull-out services as appropriate)
- How the implementation of the special education program aligns with the mission and key design elements of the school
- Current performance of special education students and future changes to increase effectiveness. Effectiveness can be measured by a combination of students' annual goal attainment, declassification (where appropriate), and performance on state assessments

Describe the English Language Learner program. What is the philosophy that undergirds the program that was selected? What evidence does the school have that this program is effective?

Sample responses may include:

- Professional development for teachers specifically related to ELL instruction
- A philosophy that honors home language while increasing English Language acquisition (evidence of cultural affirmation)
- A philosophy that demonstrates an understanding of the high intellectual capacity of students learning English and the availability of well-trained teachers and support staff (evidence of teacher efficacy).
- Program is producing absolute performance/growth on assessments, and increased English language acquisition

FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

How has the school engaged in community mapping? Who was involved in that process? How does the data from that mapping exist within the culture of the school? Academic program?

Sample responses may include:

- Virtual home visits to learn build relationships early and learn about both needs and assets of individual families

- Family survey to learn about cultures represented and the community organizations where families receive services or goods in the neighborhood

- A process by which the information is disseminated to teachers as they prepare for the academic year or integrate cultural information into their instructional delivery

How are families engaged in resolving critical school-based challenges?

Sample responses may include:

- Family town halls for family input on critical challenges (ex: attendance, response to IA data; bullying or other critical school challenges, etc...)

- Family surveys to get feedback from families (ex: curriculum, reopening school, schedule changes, school-based policies, etc...)

- A description of how family priorities shaped the ultimate decision made by school leadership or the board **[For schools that were required to reopen by law, ask the school leader to share the communication plan for staff and families.]**

What workshops has the school held to support families (either a need that families have or family-led workshops to elevate their assets?)

Sample responses may include:

- School leaders share a year-long calendar of family-led events and/or workshops that align with the current needs of families (immigration, housing, financial literacy, etc...)

Are family communication preferences taken into consideration when it comes to how they want to engage?

Sample responses may include:

- All school communications, including in-person or virtual meetings, are done in the families' preferred language(s)

- Translators are available for tandem translation at school meetings; school signage and website are available in English and preferred languages

- Families have flexible options for teacher meetings to take place on school grounds, in a community space, or virtually

- Families and their children are not penalized for inability to attend school events or meetings

Family Partnerships and Community Engagement Guiding Questions, continued

Have families been given the opportunity to give feedback on whether they feel adequately engaged?

- School leaders describe a "land, air, sea" approach to communication with families and collecting feedback—robo calls, online or paper surveys, teacher collected feedback, messages to families for input via email and or google classroom

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What community organizations has the school partnered with to support the academic program, SEL, mental health, or to meet physical needs (housing, food insecurity, etc…) of the school community?

- School leaders can name at least one organization for each category within the neighborhood or an organization that has experience working with a similar demographic locally/nationally

  - *Does the school have plans to continue these community partnerships? Why or why not?*

- School leaders have a method for tracking the success or evaluating the impact of the organizations and make decisions of continuing the partnerships based on the outcomes; families play a role in that decision

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Is the school currently maintaining partnerships with civic organizations and local leadership? Are families engaged in those relationships?

Sample responses may include:

- School has at least one relationship with a local civic organization or leader who has met with families and/or attended a school visit

- Local organization or leadership has provided some benefit to the school community [ex: local grant]

- The leadership has a strategic plan that includes increasing the capacity of civic engagement of families/students or civic engagement is one of the key design elements of the school and there is evidence available to demonstrate participation

EVALUATING AND USING INTERNAL ASSESSMENTS

Does the school currently use an interim assessment tool?

Sample responses may include:

- The interim assessment can either created internally or is an outsourced assessment tool
- The interim assessment must be aligned with state standards or Common Core standards
- The interim assessment may be a computer-based, adaptive assessment predictive of performance on the state assessment

What decisions did the school make regarding implementation of IA's during remote learning?

Sample responses may include:

- The school implemented the same IA tool as during the in-person context because the tool was standards aligned and predictive of state assessment performance
- The school implemented a new assessment tool in order to achieve standards alignment and could make reasonable predictions of state assessment performance [despite not administering the state assessment or having incomplete data]

Ask the school leader to do a brief walk through of the school's current interim assessment data.

- The walk through should include grade-by-grade data [not student-level data and not just a whole-school number] with non-testing grades included [if applicable]

What decisions has the school leadership team made in response to: [select based on where the school is currently performing]

- **Maintaining high achievement**
  - School leader response demonstrates continuity of practices in the remote setting that would reasonably produce similar past achievement
- **Growth in achievement**
  - School leader response demonstrates practices that would improve upon the in-person program and would reasonably produce higher achievement
- **Low achievement or regression**
  - School leader response demonstrates a root-cause analysis for the low achievement and an action-plan that would reasonably address the challenge

Evaluating and Using Internal Assessments Guiding Questions, continued

What early indicators of success have these data-driven decisions produced?

Sample responses may include:

- Higher engagement in the remote setting (increased assignment submission and/or higher attendance)

- Continued high achievement or growth on IA's

- Alignment between achievement on formative assessments (ex: quizzes, exit tickets, unit tests, etc...), IAs and (if available) nationally-normed assessments (ex: Measure Up, NWEA-Map, etc...). Summative assessments (state assessments) may not be available or data may be incomplete

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How does the school currently assess organizational health?

Sample responses may include:

- Measure of staff and student attendance

- Attrition during the year and year over year

- Referrals from families for enrollment

- Staff referrals for open positions

- Family surveys to evaluate satisfaction

- Staff survey to evaluate morale (yearly at minimum)

- Exit interviews for families and staff

- Staff performance reviews
  - **What plans does the school currently have in place to respond to the organizational health data?**

- School leaders describe an action plan(s) that is directly aligned to the school's specific data

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How does the school collect data from families regarding the academic program or school culture?

Sample responses may include:

- Family surveys

- Conversations with teachers

- Family town halls

- Virtual feedback dropbox

- Virtual home visits
  - **What decisions have been impacted by the data collected?**
  - **What was the data, and what decision was made?**
  - **When will the team collect data again?**

- School leaders describe decisions that align directly to the feedback given by families and demonstrate the capacity to collect feedback with some level of regularity rather than one-off

Evaluating and Using Internal Assessments Additional Data Points, continued

Describe the school's current data cycle [collection, analysis, decision-making]

Sample responses may include:

- School leaders describe a timeline that demonstrates a short window for the data cycle between the assessment, the analysis of the data, and implementation of action plans and decision making

  - **How often do teams review data?**

- School leaders describe a culture of data review. Teams review data weekly (at minimum) and after each interim assessment cycle [about every 6 weeks] and/or after each unit

  - **Who is responsible for collecting and sharing data?**

- Schools may have a Data Manager/Director; the principal, the teachers (to families and students). Teachers should be able to access and interpret their classroom data

With whom is school-based data shared [Teachers? Students? Families? Board?] With what frequency?

Sample responses may include:

- School leaders share data with all stakeholders as the data becomes available. If stakeholders have independent access to data, this is evidence of a truly data-transparent school culture. The Academic/Education committee on the board should be reviewing data monthly and not only engaging in conversations regarding programmatic inputs

What data does the school collect to assess the effectiveness of their community partnerships?

Sample responses may include:

- Family satisfaction and/or feedback regarding the services provided

- Increased student outcomes (ex: attendance, engagement, academic outcomes, lower instances of disruptive behavior, project-based outcomes/deliverables, etc...)

- Goals for the partnership have been met by the community organization

  - **What decisions has the school made in response to this data?**

- School leaders choose to maintain, amend or discontinue the partnership. If the partnership is discontinued, school leaders engage families before finalizing the decision and have an alternative community organization that more effectively meets the needs of the school. School leaders demonstrate transparency in sharing data regarding the effectiveness with the community organization, school staff and families

Evaluating and Using Internal Assessments Additional Data Points, continued

Besides academic data, what data does the school currently collect to measure the effectiveness of the program? How does that data impact the academic program?

Sample responses may include:

- Data related to social-emotional wellness of the staff and students
- Engagement of families within the decision-making process
- Enrollment & retention of all students and subgroups
- Alignment of finances toward achieving academic outcomes
- Evidence of teacher and student efficacy
- Evidence of organizational health

ADDITIONAL DATA POINTS

[Include follow up questions based on school leader responses]

How do teachers use data to influence instructional delivery? [Ask for specific examples]

Sample responses may include:

- Inclusion of common misconceptions and how to address them within the lesson
- Real-time data tracking during & post lesson to inform small group instruction, differentiation and homework
- Exit ticket analysis with implementation of pivots for the next lesson

QUALITY OF SCHOOL REDESIGN DURING COVID

Describe the pivot from in-person to remote learning in March 2020. What did the school keep and change in the academic program for the 20-21 school year?

Sample responses may include:

- School leaders are able to provide a comprehensive response about how operations, finances, and board governance were optimized in the remote setting

- School leaders implemented a plan that was operational by mid-April that accounted for expectations for the remote-learning program clearly communicated to staff, families and students that was inclusive of policies regarding attendance, classroom expectations, and completion of student work

- School leaders implemented strategies to achieve connectedness with staff, families and students to increase social-emotional wellness

- School leaders reallocated resources to provide technology support [distribution of laptops and wi-fi devices]

- School leaders disseminated community-specific resources (ex: information regarding housing for families that experienced housing insecurity or where and how to access mental health services, etc...)

- School leaders' efforts demonstrate success in providing equal access to the educational program for all students (english language learners, students with special needs, students who are economically disadvantaged, students who moved during the pandemic)

How did the school keep track of student attendance and engagement throughout the learning experience?

Sample responses may include:

- School leaders describe a cogent plan that located all of their students by end of March 2020

- School leaders implemented attendance tracking that provided daily attendance information for all students

- Attendance policy is inclusive of students who did not have immediate access to wi-fi (phone calls to families; mail-in student work)- the school made reasonable efforts to provide technology access to these students

- School leaders describe the communication and follow up for any and all students who were absent within a day of the absence

- School leaders can provide quantitative data about the average daily attendance throughout the remote-learning period

- School leaders provided families with progress reports or more frequently communicated student progress during the remote-learning period

Quality of School Redesign During COVID Guiding Questions, continued

How did the school maintain or improve operations during the remote period?

Sample responses may include:

- Operations/support staff utilized to provide support on attendance, tech support, communication with families and staff etc...

- Operations/support Staff utilized to provide social-emotional support to families and students (ex: virtual workshops; one on one check-ins with families and students; e-resources, etc...)

- Implementation of remote systems to efficiently conduct meetings, meet financial obligations of the school, maintain state and local compliance. Some systems may include Zoom, Google Suite, Bill.com, Concur, Spendwise, Microsoft Teams, etc... (schools may have other systems that support running the school remotely)

- School leaders describe operations that could be sustained long-term if necessary

- Implementation of higher technology security for students and staff accessing work remotely

- Use of dual-verification or secured processes related to school purchases and bank account management

- Implementation of above systems were fully operational remotely by April 30, 2020

What new information did you learn about the school community as a result of the school redesign? How did that information get demonstrated into the school's program?

Sample responses may include:

- Increased understanding of prior access to technology across student population

- Increased understanding of home or food insecurity

- Increased understanding of cultural norms

- School leaders describe how the school provided support to families and staff through community organizations, funders, or other entity

- School leaders either maintained or launched culturally-based celebrations, anti-racism workshops, programs and/or curricula

How did the school get input from families regarding the quality of the academic program?

Sample responses may include:

- Virtual home visits

- Virtual town halls

- Family surveys

- School leaders implemented some sort of two-way communication system prior to making decisions that would impact the student learning experience (ex: class schedule, decisions about in-person or remote learning, new expectations or policies, etc...)

Quality of School Redesign During COVID Guiding Questions, continued

To what extent did the school engage in remote learning from March-June 2020? What changes did the school implement for the 20-21 school year?

Sample responses may include:

- March 2020-June 2020: Combination of asynchronous or synchronous learning with the ability to measure student engagement in both asynchronous and synchronous programs or 100% synchronous or asynchronous

- By March 30th, mandated services (ex: Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Counseling, etc...) for students with IEPs were conducted remotely

- By April 30th 2020, at least 95% of students had access to a device and wi-fi connectivity to engage in and have equitable access to the school's academic program with 100% of students having access by school June 30th

- August 2020-June 2021: Synchronous learning for as many students as possible (90% or more) with asynchronous components providing an equitable learning experience for students with the ability for teachers to measure student growth for both synchronous and asynchronous programs

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Did the school engage in any amount of in-person learning for the 20-21 school year? How was the decision made to remain remote or to offer a hybrid option? *(For schools that were required to reopen by law, ask the school leader to share the communication plan for staff and families.)*

Sample responses may include:

- (If yes) School leaders based in-person learning decision on:
  - Lower transmission rates in their location
  - Ability to implement COVID-safe protocols at school with fidelity
  - Family feedback and/or family need
  - The ability to provide an equitable learning experience for students who remained remote

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What new policies has the school adopted as a result of the pandemic? Will those policies remain in effect when in-person learning resumes?

Sample responses may include:

- Student discipline code
  - Updates to include technology use and access to inappropriate sites while on a school device at home
  - Responses to behavior exhibited at home, but during the remote learning period
  - New attendance policy for remote learning

- Staff-related policies
  - Implementation of EFMLA [expired DEC 31 2020]
  - Updates to PTO use (if applicable)
  - Implementation of Employee Assistance Program or other staff wellness programs
  - Adjustments to contract renewal (if applicable)

Quality of School Redesign During COVID Guiding Questions, continued

- Board Governance
  - Implementation of virtual meeting protocols that uphold Open Meeting Law requirements [if permitted by state]
  - Implementation of safe meeting protocols [if virtual meetings are not permitted]
- School leaders also share how policy changes were communicated to stakeholders and feedback collected

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What social-emotional supports did the school provide to staff, families and students during the pandemic? Which of these supports will continue post pandemic?

Sample responses may include:

- Partnership with social-emotional expert or organization to implement program for students, staff and families
- Wellness check-ins for families, students and staff
- Wellness program (ex: mental health days; virtual physical activity; implementation of Employee Assistance Program; wellness workshops, etc...)
- Partnership with local mental health services for families, students and/or staff
- Implementation or continuation of community circle or morning meeting for the purpose of relationship-building that is non-academic

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How did the school measure student progress [socially, emotionally] during the remote period? How will those measures shift or remain the same?

Sample responses may include:

- School leaders have a system by which they have collected qualitative or quantitative measurement of the submission of and quality of student work
- Protocols to address behaviors such as increased apathy or lack of connectedness to school community; increased classroom disruption etc...
- School leaders use attendance and engagement in learning as indicators for social-emotional intervention as well as academic intervention

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What programmatic changes is the school considering for the 21-22 school year in light of the remote/hybrid environment?

Sample responses may include:

- School leaders provide changes that align with data collected and improvement for any area that was deficient in their previous responses

GLOSSARY AND CLASSROOM LOOK FORS

COMMUNITY MAPPING

(Sometimes called **asset mapping**) is about involving the residents [families within the context of a school] in identifying the assets of their neighborhood, looking at opportunities and creating a picture of what it is like to live there. Community mapping is used as a system-building process in order to align resources and policies in relation to specific system goals, strategies, and expected outcomes. [The Community Mapping Toolkit, p 4]; [National Center on Secondary Education and Transition]

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

The process of using familiar cultural information and processes to scaffold learning. Emphasizes communal orientation. Focused on relationship, cognitive scaffolding, and critical social awareness. Should be used to support rigorous cognitive development and not only as a tool to reduce behavior problems or motivate students.

An educator's ability to recognize students' cultural displays of learning and meaning making and respond positively and constructively with teaching moves that use cultural knowledge as a scaffold to connect what the student knows to new concepts and content in order to promote effective information processing. All the while, the educator understands the importance of being in a relationship and having a social-emotional connection to the student in order to create a safe space for learning. [Hammond, 2013]

PRODUCTIVE STRUGGLE

When the learner has developed the necessary strategies for working through something difficult. [Hammond, 2013]. This may look like students discussing a challenging problem and how they may solve it. Effective productive struggle is not about students arriving at the correct answer, but rather that they have developed a schema to attempt solving the problem with little intervention from the instructor.

CULTURAL AFFIRMATION AND VALIDATION

(Affirmation): Acknowledging the personhood of each student, appreciating all aspects of them, especially those cultural-specific traits that have been negated by the dominant culture. Validation is the explicit acknowledgment to students that the educator is aware of the inequalities that impact their lives. The relationship between affirmation and validation breeds an unshakable belief that marginalized students not only can but will improve their school achievement. [Hammond, 2013]

COGNITIVE DEMAND

The extent to which students have opportunities to grapple with and make sense of important disciplinary ideas and their use. Students learn best when they are challenged in ways that provide room and support for their growth, with task difficulty ranging from moderate to demanding. The level of challenge should be conducive to what has been called "productive struggle." [Teaching for Robust Understanding Framework, 2016]

SELF EFFICACY

One's internal belief and self-confidence that one has the power and skills to shape the direction of one's learning experience. [Hammond, 2013]. Students value effort and understand the relationship between their effort and their ability to achieve.

TEACHER EFFICACY

A teacher's belief or confidence in their ability to promote students' learning [Hoy, 2000]. The belief that if a teacher tries really hard, they can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated student [Armor et al. 1976, in Henson, 2001, in Protheroe 2008]. A teacher will make deliberate decisions about their practice in an effort to reach all students; such teachers tend to have stronger academic and socio-emotional results.

ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

The measure of an organization's integrity— the ability for the organization to meet or exceed expectations regarding performance, quality and durability over time. The organization's ability to function effectively, to cope with change appropriately, and to grow from within which results in high performance. A healthy organization addresses challenges through active engagement, improved productivity, and better performance. [Lencioni, 2012].

Indications of strong organizational health include high staff morale, high staff and student retention, high attendance among staff and students, consistent and timely communication to stakeholders on high-stakes decisions, a sense of confidence among the staff and families that the leadership team is capable and competent and a sense of community trust among stakeholders.

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