



# Charter School Support Initiative Playbook

Published August 2020  
Updated December 2022  
Updated August 2023

## Table of Contents

### CSSI: The Overview

- ❖ Purpose & Background
- ❖ Program Calendar Cycle
- ❖ Stakeholder Roles
- ❖ The CSSI Team
- ❖ The Visit Cycle
- ❖ Norms and Commitments
- ❖ Cost and Payment

### CSSI: The Details

- ❖ Evaluation Criteria
- ❖ Before the CSSI Visit: Preparation
- ❖ During the Visit: Data Collection
- ❖ During the Visit: Prioritization Protocol
- ❖ After the Visit: Reporting Structures
- ❖ After the Visit: Sharing Out
- ❖ CSSI Stakeholder Detailed Responsibilities

### CSSI Documents

- ❖ CSSI Visit Webinar
- ❖ Visit Schedule Template
- ❖ Evaluation Criteria
- ❖ Interview Forms
- ❖ Classroom Visit Form
- ❖ Document Review
- ❖ Team Member Agreements
- ❖ Team Lead Documents

## CSSI School Visits: The Overview

### Purpose

The Charter School Support Initiative (CSSI) mirrors the Colorado Title I School Support evaluation process and CDE's School Quality rubric. Colorado Charter Schools Program (CCSP) subgrantees must participate in a school review during their second year of operation. The intended purpose of the CSSI review is to provide the school with meaningful feedback and evidence for continuous improvement. The Colorado Department of Education's (CDE) Schools of Choice (SOC) Unit is committed to ensuring charter school subgrantees are given every possible advantage through expert training, professional learning communities, and ongoing feedback. The CSSI visit is the culmination of this effort. This playbook provides step-by-step guidance for the implementation of successful CSSI visits. Stakeholders, including school leaders, governing board members, CSSI team members, and Colorado Department of Education staff, will find this an invaluable tool in the preparation and process of each CSSI visit.

### Background:

All Colorado charter schools awarded the Colorado Charter School Program (CCSP) Grant will participate in a Charter School Support Initiative (CSSI) review during the second year of the school's operation. CSSI visits typically occur during the charter school's second year of operations. The CSSI team provides a 3-day diagnostic school review that results in an objective and criterion-based body of evidence that school leaders and governing boards can use to drive continuous systemic improvement within the school's unique model and mission.

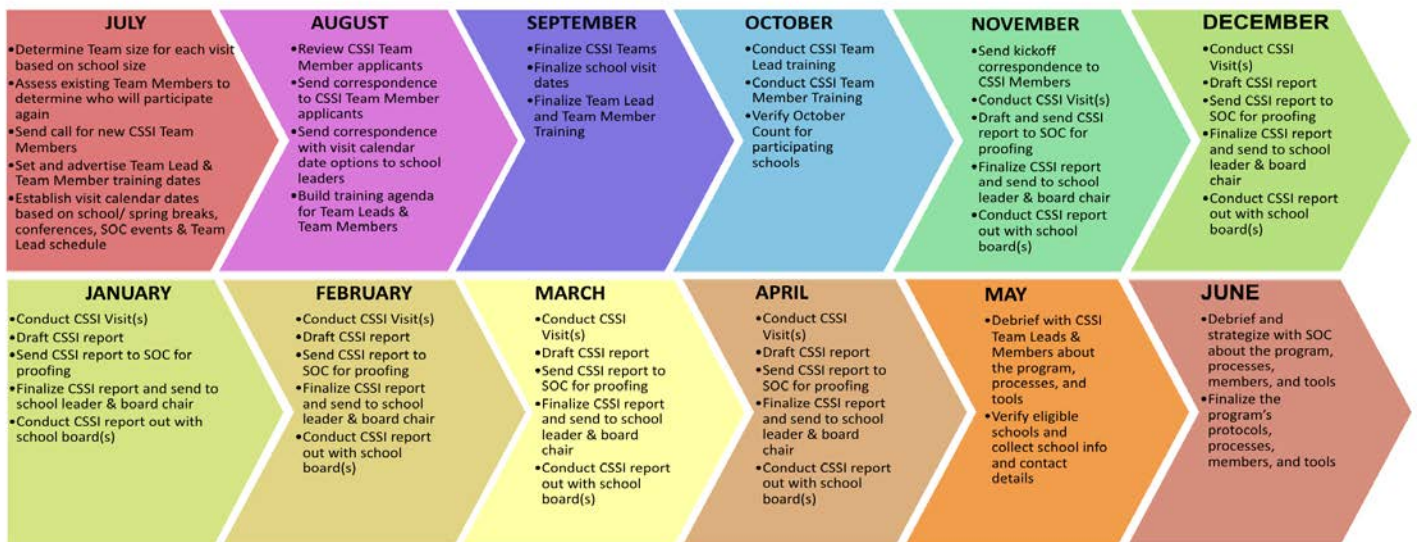
The CSSI team comprises a diverse group of highly qualified and talented Colorado-based educational professionals with experience teaching and leading high-performing schools, serving on governing boards, conducting school quality and diagnostic reviews, and consulting in various aspects of school management. A CSSI team of 4-7 members spends three days on campus.

The Colorado Department of Education's (CDE) Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement is the primary instrument used to evaluate teaching, learning, and leading. The Colorado Four Domains of Rapid School Improvement is a research-proven framework to facilitate rapid improvement in schools by creating domains and practices that apply across a state education agency, district, and school system. The four domains are Leadership for Rapid Improvement, Talent Management, Instructional

Transformation, and Culture and Climate Shift. On the last day, the CSSI team formulates findings on the visit criteria and works through a root-cause analysis protocol to prioritize targeted key levers for continuous improvement.

The CSSI team lead presents an overview of the team’s findings to school leadership at the end of the last day of the visit. The CSSI team lead provides the school with two formal reports approximately three to four weeks after the visit: CSSI Detailed Report and CSSI Executive Summary Report. The CSSI Detailed Report is the entire rubric scored with evidence. The CSSI Executive Summary Report provides the school with a landscape of how it performed and detailed recommendations for school improvement. These two reports can be coupled with student outcomes and environmental data to build a precise and effective school improvement plan.

### Program Calendar Cycle



### Stakeholder Roles & Responsibilities

Brief Overview of Roles	
<b>School</b>	The school budgets for, plans, creates a classroom observation and interview schedule, and hosts the CSSI visit. The CSSI team lead will provide school leaders with all the information needed to do so by the CSSI team lead. During the site visit, the school is expected to conduct routine operations as much as possible while the team is on-site. After the site visit, the school will receive a body of evidence upon which to develop and improve its program. Ultimately, the charter governing board and school leadership will determine if and how to use the body of evidence provided by the CSSI team.

<b>Colorado Department of Education</b>	<p>CDE manages and monitors the CCSP grant and CSSI programs. While the CSSI team is independent of CDE (i.e., not employees), CDE Schools of Choice (SOC) assists in selecting the CSSI Lead Reviewer, team leads, and team members. The CSSI team speaks openly with CDE before, during, and after the visit. A CDE team member is available for on-site visits to review team member questions or concerns that may arise unrelated to the CSSI visit. They are also available for any questions or concerns for school leaders regarding the review.</p> <p>The SOC team reviews all CSSI reports before they are given to the school; however, it is important to note that CDE does not play a role in data analysis, scoring rubrics, or determining feedback. They review CSSI reports for professionalism and quality without influencing the findings.</p> <p>Additionally, CDE manages communication between the CSSI team and the school's authorizer should any concerns arise during the visit (e.g., any statutory concerns). The school is also responsible for relaying feedback, for quality control and improvement efforts, via a follow-up survey.</p>
<b>CSSI Lead Reviewer</b>	<p>The designated CSSI Lead Reviewer is the lead consultant that works with CDE SOC to facilitate the annual CSSI Calendar Cycle, consult on practices and procedures, and train CSSI team members and team leads.</p>
<b>CSSI team lead</b>	<p>CSSI team leads are assigned to and lead individual school visits. They build teams and work with school leaders to schedule and prepare for the visit. Additionally, CSSI team leads facilitate visits, write reports, and conduct a share-out of findings with the governing board/school leadership.</p>
<b>CSSI team Members</b>	<p>CSSI members serve as objective but charter-friendly data collectors and analyzers. They participate in the visit and complete their assigned rubric area with key evidence to support scoring.</p>

### Who is the CSSI Team?

The CSSI collaborative has access to highly knowledgeable, experienced, and talented educators and professionals across Colorado that have worked in and with charter schools. Some team members are independent consultants, while others work full-time positions within schools, districts, and Charter Management Organizations. CSSI team leads build a team for each visit based on the school's mission and model, team member expertise, and team member availability. The goal is to create a well-balanced team that offers experience in the school model. Each team member brings knowledge, experience, and skill to key review areas such as school finance, governance, school leadership, curriculum and instruction, and tiers of support. CSSI team members are recruited through existing members, and CDE calls for reviewers. Applicants must meet the following criteria.

<b>Background and Requirements</b>	
<b>Team Member</b>	<p>Depth of knowledge and understanding in the reviewed area(s) as evidenced through experience, education, and licensure and certification.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 5 years or more of experience in the reviewed area(s)</li> <li>● At least two years of this experience is in Colorado.</li> <li>● Direct charter school experience and knowledge</li> <li>● Brings essential experience in specific Colorado charter models such as College Prep, Montessori, Core Knowledge, and Classical education.</li> <li>● Proven track record of success and achievement as evidenced through data, resume, recommendations, etc.</li> <li>● Strong oral and written communication skills</li> <li>● Previous experience with school reviews preferred</li> </ul>
<b>Team Lead</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At least 3 years of experience in school administration and leadership</li> <li>● At least 1 year of success being a CSSI team member</li> <li>● Exceptional oral and written communication skills</li> <li>● Strong Emotional Intelligence: self-awareness, social-awareness, self-regulation and relationship management</li> </ul>
<b>Lead Reviewer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At least 2 years of success as a CSSI team lead</li> <li>● Team member, lead, and/or CDE recommendation</li> </ul>

<b>CSSI Visit Cycle</b>	
<b>Scheduling</b> <i>Late July/Early August</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CSSI team lead contacts the school leader to schedule the 3-day visit</li> </ul>
<b>Before the Visit</b> <i>Starting 8 weeks before the scheduled visit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CSSI team lead and the school leader work together to plan and prepare for the visit such as creating a detailed schedule and collecting essential school documents for review.</li> </ul>
<b>During the Visit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Day 1: CSSI Team Data Collection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Stakeholder Interviews</li> <li>○ Classroom Visits</li> <li>○ Document Review</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Day 2: CSSI Team Data Collection</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Stakeholder Interviews</li> <li>○ Classroom Visits</li> <li>○ Document Review</li> <li>● Day 3: CSSI Team Comes to Findings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CSSI team completes all interviews and observations.</li> <li>○ CSSI team conducts a prioritization protocol and comes to findings by identifying key levers for school improvement.</li> <li>○ CSSI team lead provides an overview of findings and recommendations to the school leader</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>After the Visit</b> 3-4 weeks after the visit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CSSI team lead provides the school with two formal documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CSSI Detailed Report <i>*Full rubric of the CDE Standards for Continuous Improvement scored with evidence.</i></li> <li>○ CSSI Executive Summary Report <i>*Synthesis of performance and detailed recommendations for school improvement</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>● CSSI Share Out: CSSI team lead processes findings with the school leader and governing board</li> </ul>

## Visit Norms and Commitments

The CSSI team guarantees these visit norms and commitments. In addition to staying tethered to these norms, CSSI team members will sign annual team member agreements.

- Mission and Model Neutrality: The CSSI team lead will always attempt to create diverse teams and identify team members with specialized experience in the school's specific model. Regardless of experience or personal pedagogy, all CSSI team members are committed to neutrality. The CSSI team strives to provide findings and meaningful feedback to each school's unique mission and model.
- Criteria Aligned and Rooted in Data: All data collection and findings are aligned to the review criteria and rooted in carefully triangulated data. Team members work diligently to ensure staff feelings, personal values, and information outliers do not impact trend identification and findings.
- Protect Personal Anonymity: The CSSI team maintains anonymity for all stakeholders; members do not reveal specific information about individuals collected through interviews or classroom visits. This norm also means that the



CSSI team is compassionate about being overheard on-site; team dialogues and discussions are always private and protected.

- Use One Voice: CSSI team members do not provide individual staff members feedback throughout the visit or report trends at any time during the visit. The CSSI team does not provide feedback until data is triangulated and findings are prioritized.
- Non-Judgmental Stance: CSSI team members maintain a non-judgmental stance throughout the visit. Team members stay curious and approach all interactions with asset-based thinking and generosity.

CLICK HERE: [CSSI Team Member Agreement](#)

## Cost and Payment

Schools must include the cost of the CSSI visit in their implementation year 2 CCSP budget at the time of application to the grant. The CSSI team will provide the school with individual invoices and W-9s at the time of the visit. The school will send payment directly to CSSI team members within 30 days of the visit and provide 1099 forms at the end of the calendar year. The school will submit for reimbursement to the grant similarly to other grant reimbursement requests. The budget line-item amount can be determined using the table below based on the number of students the school anticipates enrolling in their last year of the grant. The cost includes visit preparation, three (3) days on-site, the CSSI Detailed Report, the CSSI Executive Summary Report, and a share-out meeting with the charter governing board.

Visit and Report Cost		
Student Population	# of Team Members	Total Cost
Under 100	4	\$11,220
101-350	5	\$13,420
351-600	6	\$15,620
601-850	7	\$17,820
851+	8	\$20,020



CSSI Team Payment	
Team Lead	\$4290
Team Member	\$2200
Team Member w/ Board Report	\$2530

CLICK HERE: [CSSI Team Member Invoices](#)

## CSSI School Visits: The Details

### Review Criteria

The Colorado Department of Education's (CDE) Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement is the primary instrument used to evaluate teaching, learning and leading. The Colorado Four Domains of Rapid School Improvement is a research-proven framework to facilitate rapid improvement in schools by creating domains and practices that apply across a state education agency, district, and school system. The four domains are Leadership for Rapid Improvement, Talent Management, Instructional Transformation, and Culture and Climate Shift. The framework does not intend to provide an exhaustive list of activities within each practice. Instead, it offers examples, considerations, and practical applications of what it takes to lead systemic efforts to achieve rapid school improvement successfully.

**Domain 1: Leadership for Rapid Improvement.** School leadership focuses strongly on instruction, implements a mission-driven cycle of continuous improvement, and ensures the school functions as an equitable and agile learning organization.

**Domain 2: Talent Development.** School leadership sustains a diverse and high-quality professional staff through inclusive and equitable talent development structures and a commitment to continuous improvement.

**Domain 3: Instructional Transformation.** The school implements a curriculum that is aligned to Colorado Academic Standards, provides evidenced-based instruction that engages students cognitively, uses multiple assessments and analysis cycles to measure student progress toward mastery of grade-level expectations continuously, and implements a comprehensive system of tiered academic and behavioral support to enable students to master grade-level expectations.

**Domain 4: Culture and Climate Shift.** The school establishes and sustains a mission-driven, inclusive, and highly effective culture and climate that promotes belonging and shared ownership.

Because the CSSI visit is customized for charter schools, it includes a diagnostic review of organizational effectiveness. The primary instruments for evaluating organizational effectiveness are Domain 5: Strong Board Governance and Domain 6: Strong Fiscal Management from the CDE's 10 Standards for Continuous Improvement. These standards cover statute regulations and best practices for charter governance and finance.

**Domain 5: Strong Board Governance.** The school board demonstrates strong leadership through its procedure to promote the school's mission, strategic planning, current knowledge of legislative issues, policy development, commitment to professional development, provision of resources, oversight/support of administrator, ability to build effective committees, and establishing networked community relationships.

**Domain 6: Sound Fiscal Management.** The school board demonstrates strong fiscal management, and the school's practices demonstrate current and future financial health.

CLICK HERE: [Domains 1-6 Rubrics](#)

## Rating System

To provide detailed school-level information, the CSSI team evaluates the degree to which sub-indicators exist and the level of implementation. The rating system is explained below. The CSSI team provides synthesized and high-level evidence to support the score of each sub-indicator.

<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Exemplary:</b> Exemplar implementation throughout the school (above and beyond proficiency)
<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Proficient:</b> Developed and generally implemented throughout the school
<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Developing:</b> Partial development and/or partially implemented
<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Below Standard:</b> Initial development and/or minimal implementation

## Before the Visit: Preparation

### Before the Visit: Preparation

The assigned CSSI team lead initiates contact with school leadership in late July/early August, to schedule the visit. Preparing for the CSSI visit is a partnership between school leadership and the CSSI team lead. Approximately eight weeks before the visit, the CSSI team lead sends the school leader three key documents that detail preparation steps. Detailed responsibilities for each stakeholder are provided at the end of the playbook.

- Letter to the Leader: This provides each of the steps the leader will need to take to prepare for the visit, such as communication with their stakeholders, scheduling interviews, preparing space, and collecting documents for review.
- 3-Day Interview Schedule Template/Example: The school leader schedules stakeholder interviews and then provides the draft to the CSSI team lead, who uses the school's master classroom schedule to schedule instructional observations for the team.
- Document Review Checklist: This provides a checklist of all documents the school will need to collect and share with the CSSI team. The school is encouraged to share the documents digitally but may elect to share paper artifacts when necessary.

CLICK HERE: [Letter to the Leader](#)

CLICK HERE: [3-Day School Visit Schedule](#)

CLICK HERE: [Document Review Checklist](#)

## During the Visit: Data Collection

The CSSI team collects three data sources: stakeholder interviews, classroom observations, and document review. Review team members triangulate information across these sources, seeking to identify trends. Review members are earnest about ensuring that the collected data aligns with the review criteria.

### Stakeholder Interviews

A variety of stakeholders are interviewed during the school quality visit; the CSSI team aims to interview all leaders, teachers, support staff, business personnel, and board members, as well as a collection of students and parents. Review team members use standardized interview questions aligned with the visit criteria (i.e., Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement and Standard 9: Strong Board Government & Standard 10: Strong Fiscal Management). CSSI team members must take digital notes during stakeholder interviews and save them for 90 days after the visit. The team member uses Google Forms to collect interview data.

#### Interview Norms:

- Interviews are 30 minutes for all stakeholders except leaders; we ask school leaders and instructional leaders for 60 minutes
- Stick to the script as much as possible but probe as necessary
- Remind the interviewee of the purpose of the visit and confidentiality (see framing script in Google Drive folder with interview scripts)
- Ask for specific examples (e.g., “give me an example of how you used a formative assessment this quarter to drive your instruction”)
- Stay neutral and be aware of your body language
- Know when you have your answer and move on (i.e., there may not be an answer)
- Don’t give feedback or affirm/not-affirm questions or answers of the interviewee
- Don’t react or go down a “rabbit hole” with an interviewee that is disgruntled and wants to veer off the script
- Be aware of the interviewee's emotion and respond accordingly

CLICK HERE: [Interview Forms](#)

## Classroom Visits

The CSSI team will use the Classroom Visit Tool (CVT) Google Form to score and record evidence for instructional observations. The CSSI team observes all teachers for at least one 20-minute observation. The CVT encompasses a range of visible indicators rooted in Domain 3: Instructional Transformation and Domain 4: Culture and Climate Shift.

Before the visit, the CSSI team lead will use the school's interview schedule and class/bell schedule to schedule instructional observations for team members assigned to standards 1-8. The team lead will ensure that all core teachers are observed (as well as specials teachers when feasible) with these parameters:

- Observations are 25-30 minutes long.
- If a teacher teaches more than one grade level or content, the team will attempt to observe them in each area they teach.
- Observations will span the beginning, middle, and end of the lesson cycle.

All team members conduct classroom visits. Team members are encouraged to note as much concrete evidence on the observational tool as possible to justify the score given. It is helpful to note which parts of the indicator were present and effective and which were not.

### Classroom Visit Norms:

- Do not engage with the teacher.
- Don't be intrusive; be a fly on the wall during teacher-directed learning.
- Ask students questions about their learning and check for understanding only during partner or independent practice (unless otherwise requested by the school)
- Look at student output and work and determine their progress towards mastery (unless otherwise requested by the school)
- Pay attention to what is on the wall and used by students, and what materials and scaffolds they have.
- Keep a neutral and friendly face.

CLICK HERE: [Domain 3 & 4 Classroom Visit Tool](#)

## Document Review

The CSSI team lead will provide the school leader with a Document Review Checklist before the visit. The checklist is organized by domain or standard. Team members will determine which documents are relevant to their assigned standards and review them closely. Documents are valuable for triangulating evidence gathered from the other two sources. Schools are asked to share these documents in a digital format such as Google Drive or thumb drives as much as possible; however, schools can select to provide the CSSI team with hard copies of documents in a binder. It is most effective when schools organize the requested documents by standard and provide a direct link to the document within the Document Review Checklist.

CLICK HERE: [Document Review Checklist](#)

## During the Visit: Summarizing Findings & Prioritizing Next Steps

The CSSI team will finish data collection on day three and then spend time together coming to preliminary findings and prioritizing targeted areas for school improvement. This is a tight timeline; team members must synthesize their data quickly and efficiently and work together urgently. Team members are encouraged to begin scoring their rubrics the evening before. The CSSI Team Lead schedules approximately two hours for the team to engage in a prioritization protocol.

The CSSI visit prioritization protocol is designed for the following outcomes:

- CSSI team will come to preliminary findings on review criteria.
- CSSI team will identify the right key levers and recommendations for targeted school improvement.
- CSSI team will prepare to communicate preliminary findings to the school leader.

### Prioritization Protocol

#### **Step 1: Prioritization of Key Levers**

After reading through the summary of findings, the CSSI team works through these questions:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What are the most pressing priority performance challenges? How are these challenges connected?</li> <li>● What are the areas of root cause? Don't stop until you get to the final root! <i>*Stay rooted in the criteria; refer to the team's findings.</i></li> <li>● Which root cause areas should they address urgently and why?</li> <li>● What 1-3 key levers/improvement strategies would best address these prioritized areas and why? What is most likely to result in dramatic change?</li> </ul>
<b>Step 2: Prepare for Share-Out</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prepare a verbal overview and notes for presentation of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Strengths</li> <li>○ Landscape Report</li> <li>○ Summary of Findings</li> <li>○ Key Levers for Improvement and Recommendations</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Preliminary Reporting

Day 3 concludes with a 60-minute feedback session with the CSSI team and the school leadership team. The CSSI team will share an overview of outcomes from the visit.

### Day 3 Feedback Session Process Steps

#### **Step 1** Report Strengths to Leverage in the School Improvement Process

- Prompt leadership to share celebrations and reflections

#### **Step 2** Display Landscape Report and Summary of Findings

- Prompt leaders to track their thinking with post-it notes on the posters: What does not surprise you? What surprises you? What do you wonder?
- The CSSI team lead will facilitate a discussion

#### **Step 3:** Share-out of key levers and recommendations for school improvement

- Provide leaders with opportunities to process, reflect, inquire and express concerns

CLICK HERE: [Prioritization Protocol](#)



## After the Visit: Reporting Structures

The school will receive two formal reports 3-4 weeks of the visit:

- The CSSI Visit Detailed Report: All rubrics scored with evidence (i.e., Four Domains of Rapid School Improvement, Domain 5 Strong Governance, Domain 6 Sound Fiscal Management).
- The CSSI Visit Executive Summary
  - An overview of the CSSI process
  - School strengths and team commendations
  - A summary of performance on the CSSI Detailed Report
  - Detailed findings and recommendations for key levers and next steps in the school improvement process.

CLICK HERE: [CSSI Executive Summary Report Template](#)

### CSSI Detailed Report (Rubric) Guide for Team Members

Scoring

Using data triangulation, the CSSI team member evaluates the degree to which the descriptor of each **sub-indicator** exists and the level of implementation. Team members must select a *whole number* 1-4 for each sub-indicator.

#### *Four Domains Rubric: Screen Shot of Scoring*

<i>Indicator 1.1 Score</i>				<b>#DIV/0!</b>
Below Standard 1	Developing 2	Proficient 3	Exemplary 4 <i>In addition to "Proficient"</i>	Score
<b>Vision/Mission</b> - No mission or vision exists, or little to no stakeholders know the vision/mission.	<b>Vision/Mission</b> - The vision and mission is vague and/or does not set an aspirational goal. Less than half of stakeholders know or believe in the vision/mission.	<b>Vision/Mission</b> - The school has an overarching vision that communicates the ultimate goal. The vision is aspirational, focused on student achievement. The mission explains how the school will achieve the vision and ultimate goal.	<b>Vision/Mission</b> - The community is involved in the vision and mission setting. All staff know and believe in the vision and mission and understand their role in the work.	

#### *Standards 9 and 10: Screen Shot of Scoring*

Indicator Rating		(4) Exemplary	(3) Proficient	(2) Developing	(1) Below Standard	(NA) Not Applicable	Comments
9.a.1. Implementation of Vision and Mission.	The board provides oversight to ensure a consistent implementation of the vision and mission throughout the school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9.a.2. Communication of Vision and Mission.	The board provides oversight to ensure the vision and mission are communicated publicly to stakeholders and the community through inclusion in all publications and conversations promoting the school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9.a.3. Founding Documents.	The board adheres to approved bylaws and Articles of Incorporation in carrying out the school's vision and mission.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Evidence

Provide 3-4 pieces of evidence to support each score:

- 4: 3 (+) evidence
- 3: 2 (+) evidence and 1 (-) evidence
- 2: 1 (+) evidence and 2 (-) evidence
- 1: 3 (-) evidence

*Four Domains Rubric:*

The team member provides 3-4 pieces of evidence for the score in the drop-down menus by selecting “Data,” “Data Validation,” and “Data Validation.” The drop-down menus are already pre-populated with evidence statements. **They can be utilized or customized by the team member.**

Proficient 3	Exemplary 4 <i>In addition to “Proficient”</i>	Score
<p><b>Vision/Mission</b> - The school has an overarching vision that communicates the ultimate goal. The vision is aspirational, focused on student achievement. The mission explains how the school will achieve the vision and ultimate goal.</p>	<p><b>Vision/Mission</b> - The community is involved in the vision and mission setting. All staff know and believe in the vision and mission and understand their role in the work.</p>	
<p>The vision is rooted in student achievement and clearly communicates the ultimate or aspirational goal of the school</p> <p>The majority of stakeholders (i.e- board members-staff-students-parents) can articulate the vision and mission</p> <p>The majority of stakeholders report being invested in the vision/mission and believing in it</p> <p>The mission clearly communicates how the school will attain its vision and aspirational goal</p>		

**Standards 9 and 10:**

Focus on providing evidence that “proves” the given score. Follow this criterion:

- Show the evidence instead of telling (i.e., don’t just repeat the sub-indicator language)
- Indicate the source and triangulate when applicable while protecting anonymity.
- Provide specific examples while protecting the anonymity of grade level, content, teacher, etc.
- Attempt to minimize re-using evidence
- Ensure alignment to indicator language

Example:

9.a.4. Board Member Roles. Board member and officer roles and expectations are clearly defined and implemented.

“Most Board members clearly articulated their roles and responsibilities in interviews; a document review revealed that the Board does not have a standardized document that indicates the roles and responsibilities of each position. Additionally, interviews revealed that there is no mechanism for new Board members to receive explicit guidance and training on the responsibilities of their unique role on the Board.” (1: Below Standard)

Four  
Domains-  
Summary  
Page

- Write a claim for the domain at the top of the sheet
- Write claims for each indicator throughout the sheet
  - The school *is* (green or blue)
  - The school *is beginning* (yellow)
  - The school *is not yet* (red).

### Domain 3 Instructional Transformation

The school does not yet implement a curriculum that is aligned to Colorado Academic Standards, provides evidenced-based instruction that engages students cognitively, uses multiple assessments and analysis cycles to continuously measure student progress toward mastery of grade-level expectations, and implements a comprehensive system of tiered academic and behavioral support to enable students to master grade-level expectations.

#### Domain 1 Score

1.43

Indicator	Score	Summary of Findings
<b>3.1 Vision for Instruction</b>	1.25	Teachers do not yet plan instruction based on a curriculum that is aligned to Colorado Academic Standards and grade-level expectations and effectively deliver it using evidenced-based instructional strategies to raise student achievement.
Standards/Curriculum	2	
Lesson Planning	1	
Intellectual Preparation	1	
Instructional Practices	1	
Equity	1	

Provide 3-4 pieces of evidence to support each indicator claim:

- 4: 3 (+) evidence
- 3: 2 (+) evidence and 1 (-) evidence
- 2: 1 (+) evidence and 2 (-) evidence
- 1: 3 (-) evidence

Example:

Teachers **do not yet** plan and effectively deliver instruction based on Colorado Academic Standards and grade-level expectations:

- The school has not provided and trained teachers in comprehensive curricular materials in all content areas; interviews revealed that teachers spend significant time researching, locating, integrating, and creating curricular and instructional materials. Teacher interviews revealed that the curriculum (what students learn and when) is teacher dependent.
- Document review and stakeholder interviews indicated that teachers are aware of Colorado State Academic Standards; however, teachers and leaders do not analyze and unpack the standards and expectations for their content areas and courses. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment are not standards-based.
- Teacher interviews, artifact review, and instructional observations revealed that the school has not yet established high-quality practices for lesson planning. The only common elements all teachers share are writing learning goals and bell work. There is a common misconception among staff that the agenda and student materials are the lesson plan. A high-quality lesson plan includes an objective, an aligned demonstration of learning, clear mastery requirements for the objective and demonstration of learning, teacher modeling or what-to-do directions, strategies for engagement, techniques for checking for understanding, and aspects of differentiation.
- Instructional observations revealed a need to focus on improving best-first instruction:
  - \*Most teachers are working towards writing effective learning goals,
  - \*Very few teachers communicate expectations for mastery-level performance using tools such as exemplars/models/rubrics/checklists/think-aloud
  - \*Very few teachers continually monitor students' progress toward mastery and adjust instruction and content based on multiple checks for understanding and formative assessment,
  - \*Very few teachers provide students with regular/specific/timely/descriptive feedback to help them improve their performance
- Instructional observations revealed minimal scaffolding and differentiation for students with special needs, advanced needs, and cultural and linguistic needs in best-first instruction.

## CSSI Executive Summary Writing Guide for Report Writers

<i>Component</i>	<i>Expectations</i>
Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide numbers of stakeholder interviews and classroom observations</li> </ul>
Strengths to Leverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide 1-2 specific commendations for each standard assessed.</li> <li>● Noted strengths should be rubric aligned and cite the sub-indicator (e.g., “90% of observed classrooms had precise, grade level aligned objectives and students could articulate the learning goal <b>3.1 Instructional Practices</b>”)</li> <li>● Link how the strengths can be used in school improvement when meaningful.</li> </ul>
Landscape Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Average the score for each indicator and color code Landscape Report</li> <li>● Scale               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Blue 3.5-4.</li> <li>○ Green 2.5-3.4</li> <li>○ Yellow 1.4-2.5</li> <li>○ Red 1-1.4</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Summary of Findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Table of scores for each domain</li> <li>● Claims and evidence statements from the “summary pages” of each domain/standard</li> </ul>
Detailed Findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide explicit claims and compelling arguments (i.e., Why will the key lever result in student gains? How does it address a root cause, tie it back to the priority performance challenges)</li> <li>● Provide evidence and examples to support claims; source all evidence</li> <li>● Provide specific recommendations and next steps; provide leadership teams with a step-by-step process for school improvement planning</li> <li>● Provide research and resources to support critical levers and implementation when possible</li> </ul>
Style and Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintain a positive tone</li> <li>● Be aware of your Economy of Language: Be concise and strategic with language</li> <li>● Pay Attention to Organization: Detailed Findings &amp; Key Levers section:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Introduction                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Strengths</li> <li>■ Big Claim</li> <li>■ List subtopics</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Subtopics:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Topic Sentence</li> <li>■ Evidence and Examples</li> <li>■ Recommendations and next steps</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Conclusion/Concluding Statement</li> <li>○ Include transitions between subtopics</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Usage Rules:</li> </ul>

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Don't make font or other changes to the template</li> <li>○ Write strengths, findings and claims in present tense (e.g., school leadership is not yet using data to drive decision making, for example, ...)</li> <li>○ Source evidence in the past tense (e.g., teachers reported, document review indicated, classroom observations revealed...)</li> <li>○ i.e., "that is..."</li> <li>○ e.g., "for example..."</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

## After the Visit: Sharing Out

Ultimately, the disclosure of findings is at the behest of the charter school's governing board. Reports are provided and shared in either a BoD meeting or a meeting with the school leader and the BoD President/Chair.

### Share Out Protocol

48 Hours Before the Meeting	<p>The CSSI team lead sends the final PDF CSSI Detailed Report and CSSI Executive Summary Report to the school leader and BoD approximately 48 hours before the visit. This provides enough time for digesting the findings without letting too much time for questions or concerns to go unanswered.</p> <p>The CSSI team lead provides the school leader and BoD with an annotation activity, asking them to read the CSSI Executive Summary Report while noting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Celebrations</li> <li>● Questions/Concerns</li> <li>● Recommendations that feel right</li> <li>● Resources they would need to implement the recommendation</li> </ul>
During the Meeting 30-60 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introductions</li> <li>● CSSI team lead provides framing of the visit and thanks the school for their gracious preparation</li> <li>● Standards 1-8 Annotation Share Out</li> <li>● Standards 9-10 Annotation Share Out</li> <li>● Closing</li> </ul>
After the Meeting	<p>The CSSI Visit is closed out. The CSSI team will communicate that school leadership can reach out with any questions or concerns.</p>

## After the Visit: Feedback and Improvement

The Schools of Choice Unit at CDE will follow up with schools, evaluators, and the Lead Reviewer after each CSSI review to solicit any feedback or areas of improvement. The input will inform the continuous improvement of the program.

- [CSSI Review: Post Review School Survey](#)
- [CSSI Review: Post Review Lead Reviewer Survey](#)
- [CSSI Review: Post Review Reviewer Survey](#)

## After the Visit: Reporting Structures

### CSSI Stakeholder Detailed Responsibilities

School Leadership	
<b>Before the Visit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch the <a href="#">CSSI webinar</a>.</li> <li>• Review the evaluation criteria: <a href="#">Six Domains of Rapid School Improvement</a>.</li> <li>• Engage with the CSSI team lead via email to schedule the visit. CSSI team lead will reach out in late July or early August.</li> <li>• Use the <a href="#">Letter to the Leader</a> and <a href="#">CSSI Schedule Template</a> to create a stakeholder interview schedule approximately 7-8 weeks before the visit.</li> <li>• Provide the CSSI team lead with a detailed class schedule that includes room numbers, grade levels, content areas, and teacher names.</li> <li>• Provide the CSSI team lead with the most recent School Performance Framework and current Unified Improvement Plan.</li> <li>• Create and implement a clear and effective communication plan to school stakeholders regarding the CSSI team visit (communicate the purpose and the details).</li> <li>• Collect and organize requested documents on the <a href="#">Document Review Checklist</a>, and share them with the CSSI team members on or by the first day of the visit.</li> <li>• Engage in a preparation phone call with the CSSI team lead approximately three weeks before the visit.</li> </ul>



<b>During the Visit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Business as usual.</li> <li>● Encourage staff to attend interviews on time.</li> <li>● Encourage staff to stick to classroom/class schedules as much as possible.</li> <li>● The CSSI team may need to request the school leader's availability for troubleshooting should the need arise during the visit.</li> <li>● Engage in the day three findings feedback session with a positive and open mindset that is both “students first” and “improvement driven.”</li> </ul>
<b>After the Visit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Receive and read final reports 3-4 weeks after the visit.</li> <li>● Participate in the Share-Out meeting with full BoD or the president/chair 3-4 weeks after the visit.</li> <li>● Process <a href="#">CSSI invoices</a> and send payment to team members within 30 days.</li> <li>● Send team members 1099 forms at the end of the year.</li> </ul>
<b>CSSI Team Lead</b>	
<b>Before the Visit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lead communication with the school, including setting a shared purpose for the CSSI visit and building a relationship with school leadership. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Communication #1: Get Acquainted and Schedule the Visit (July/August) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Introduce yourself to the school leader.</li> <li>■ Provide links to the <a href="#">CSSI webinar and playbook</a>.</li> <li>■ Schedule the three-day visit.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Communication #2: Provide a Detailed Step by Step Process for Preparation (approximately eight weeks before the visit) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <a href="#">Letter to the Leader</a>.</li> <li>■ <a href="#">Interview Schedule Template</a> (provide a clear deadline for the draft).</li> <li>■ <a href="#">Document Review Checklist</a>.</li> <li>■ Request school class schedule(s).</li> <li>■ Schedule preparation phone call approximately three weeks out from the visit.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Communication #3: Get Ready Preparation Phone Call (approximately three weeks before the visit) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Check in on stakeholder communication; coaching on thorough and clear communication throughout the visit process results in a more centered and positive experience while on campus- for both the team and school officials.</li> <li>■ Review the draft interview schedule and make final adjustments.</li> <li>■ Review team needs: conference space, school map, and internet access.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Answer any lingering questions or concerns held by leadership.</li> <li>■ The next steps after the visit: they will receive preliminary feedback the day after and formal reports within 3-4 weeks.</li> <li>■ Schedule BoD Share-Out.</li> <li>■ Request UIP and SPF.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Prepare for Visit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use the school's class schedule to create a classroom visit schedule for the review; ensure all teachers are observed at least once. <i>*The CSSI team does not share the classroom visit schedule with school officials.</i></li> <li>○ Create a final CSSI visit schedule, assigning interviews and classroom visits to team members.</li> <li>○ Provide team members with a step-by-step process and necessary tools to prepare for the visit at least 72 hours before the visit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Link the folder with all CSSI documents.</li> <li>■ Links/attach pertinent school documents such as the school website, SPF, and UIP.</li> <li>■ Attach CSSI Visit Schedule.</li> <li>■ Provide an explanation and overview of the school and its model.</li> <li>■ Assign standards to team members.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>During the Visit</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Collect team member agreements, W-9s, and invoices from team members and submit them to the school.</li> <li>○ Attend all portions of the visit and stay for the scheduled day; some visits may also include commutes of up to 60 minutes or overnight travel.</li> <li>○ Set team norms.</li> <li>○ Data Collection and Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <a href="#">Stakeholder Interviews</a>: Use Google forms.</li> <li>■ <a href="#">Classroom Visits</a>: Complete a CVT for each assigned visit.</li> <li>■ <a href="#">Document Review</a>: Review all documents relevant to assigned standard(s) and take notes.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Serve as school leadership liaison.</li> <li>● Facilitate data collection, sharing, and triangulation.</li> <li>● Problem-solving and troubleshooting for anything that arises and calls in CDE when needed.</li> <li>● Facilitate <a href="#">prioritization protocol</a> on day three and ensure note-taking is effective, edited, and sent to school leaders.</li> <li>● Facilitate day three oral share-out of findings with school leadership and provide them with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Landscape Report.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Summary of Findings.</li> <li>○ Notes on Recommendations.</li> </ul>
<b>After the Visit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Gather, edit, and align the <a href="#">6 Domain Rubrics</a>. This is all 6 rubrics scored with evidence.</li> <li>● Write <a href="#">CSSI Executive Summary Report</a>; follow the writing guidelines CSSI Executive Summary Writing Guide.</li> <li>● Submit reports to CDE for copy editing no more than 14 days after the visit.</li> <li>● The CSSI team lead will provide the school leader and the Board of Directors with the final reports within 3-4 weeks.</li> <li>● Share-Out: Deliver in-person or remote (depending on location) findings to the school's entire BoD during a governance meeting or the school leader/BoD president.</li> </ul>
<b>CSSI Team Members</b>	
<b>Before the Visit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Read all communication and preliminary documents provided by the team lead; this may include the school's website, SPF, and UIP.</li> <li>● Review team member agreement.</li> </ul>
<b>During the Visit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sign <a href="#">team member agreement</a>, complete W-9, and fill out <a href="#">invoice</a>.</li> <li>● Attend all portions of the visit and stay for the scheduled day; some visits may also include commutes of up to 60 minutes or overnight travel.</li> <li>● Data Collection and Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <a href="#">Stakeholder Interviews</a>: Use interview scripts and take digital notes.</li> <li>■ <a href="#">Classroom Visits</a>: Complete a CVT for each assigned visit.</li> <li>■ <a href="#">Document Review</a>: Review all documents relevant to assigned standard(s) and take notes.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <a href="#">Prioritization</a>: Team members synthesize the data they collected throughout the visit and share it with the team effectively; all team members contribute to the prioritization process and help the team land on the right key levers for targeted school improvement.</li> </ul>
<b>After the Visit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Team members complete and send their assigned domains/standard(s) within 24 hours of the visit.</li> </ul>
<b>CSSI Lead Reviewer</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintains and shares the CSSI "Master Visit and Teams Schedule" with CDE and other team leads.</li> </ul>	

- Works with CDE SOC to select team members.
- Assigns visits to team leads.
- Trains and supports other CSSI team leads while also serving as one.
- Develops and provides annual CSSI training to team members.
- Drives programming and continuous improvement in partnership with CDE SOC

### **The CDE Schools of Choice Unit**

- Ensures the program is updated and that all processes and documents are in place within a reasonable timeline.
- Solicits and recruits review team members (may be done in collaboration with Team Lead). And provides names to the CSSI Lead Reviewer for feedback on balancing teams and selecting new members.
- Communicates with all subgrantees during each year of the grant to ensure schools are aware of and have budgeted for CSSI review.
- Manages all CSSI-related documents (e.g., information webinar, team member agreements, resumes, CSSI playbook, and tools).
- Ensures a staff person is on-site for each school review to 1) serve as a liaison to the state for any questions from the review team and 2) solicit any feedback or concerns from the school leader/team and report to the appropriate audience.
- Supports annual CSSI training.
- Review submitted CSSI reports for clarity, tone, and formatting/grammatical errors.
- Attends the visit Share-Out meetings with the CSSI team lead.