

School Learning Goals and Standards

ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING TOOL

Purpose:

This tool can be used (a) in assessing the quality of key aspects of our school and/or (b) as a guide when planning changes in those aspects of our school.

The tool is designed to meet our needs for developing an assessment which will be accurate, well understood, and well used by our school community. Below is an explanation of each column of the tool, with suggestions and questions to help you use it.

Definitions:

- **Criteria.** Do these criteria make sense to the various members of our school community? Do they understand them? Do they understand the research base supporting them, where applicable? Do they understand the law and policy supporting them, where applicable? Are there additional criteria which are important to the members of our school community? (Blank rows have been left for you.) Are the criteria specific enough, or do you want to break them down into a further level of detail?
- **Rating.** Devise our own rating scale for assessing our school against the criteria. Would a 3-point, 4-point or 5-point scale be most useful to you? Devise a rubric for placing our school on the scale. Take into account both depth (when our school does this, how good is the quality in relation to that particular criterion) and breadth (does it happen with no/some/most/all classrooms, or students, or teachers, for example). What terms are likely to be most accurately understood, lead to dispassionate discussion and judgment, reduce defensiveness, while not sugar-coating or minimizing problems?
- **Confidence.** How confident are you about the accuracy of our rating? This might relate to the extent to which you have been able to do direct observation of the relevant evidence, to apply objective methods of assessing that evidence, or to engage in thorough and thoughtful discussion of the evidence, and to the extent that the judgment is shared across the school community (and, where applicable, by outside expert opinion). Devise a scale, and rubric, for assigning a number to the degree of confidence.
- **Evidence.** What is the evidence that supports our rating, and our degree of confidence in the rating? What sources were used?
- **Comments/Recommendations.** As you wish -- for example, for further explaining our rating or degree of confidence; or for identifying additional evidence that would help you develop a more informed rating.

ASSESSMENT & PLANNING TOOL: SCHOOL LEARNING GOALS AND STANDARDS

| Criteria | Rating (1-5) | Confidence (1-5) | Sources/Evidence | Comments/Recommendations |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| A. Existence | | | | |
| The school has a vision of what all students should learn, that has been set out in a statement of learning goals or standards that are applicable to all students in the school. | | | | |
| B. Content | | | | |
| The School's Learning Goals Should... | | | | |
| 1. ...Focus on Authentic Achievement The skills and knowledge are defined in ways that involve students' ability to (a) construct knowledge; (b) through disciplined inquiry, using the knowledge base and established tools of inquiry of the various academic disciplines; (c) in addressing real-world matters. | | | | |
| 2. ...Be Challenging and Rigorous They call for a high level of those skills and knowledge, appropriate to children's age. | | | | |
| 3. ...Be Comprehensive They have the breadth and depth include the full range of skills and knowledge the school community believes is central to being an educated and capable human being. | | | | |
| 4. ...Be Applicable Within and across each subject area, both subject knowledge and the skills needed to apply and expand on that knowledge. | | | | |

| Criteria | Rating (1-5) | Confidence (1-5) | Sources/Evidence | Comments/Recommendations |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| <p>5. ...Meet state/district standards</p> <p>Incorporate the state's/district's content and performance standards - In terms of both the content and the rigor of the school's learning goals, any student who is proficient in terms of the school's learning goals or standards can thereby also count on being proficient on the state standards.</p> | | | | |
| <p>6. ...Be Specific</p> <p>They (a) have a distinct meaning, (b) are specific enough to be assessed, and (c) are specific enough to sustain a coherent program focus.</p> | | | | |
| <p>7. ...Be Flexible</p> <p>They are flexible enough to allow and encourage (a) innovative teaching and (b) further development of the school's mission through debate, discussion, and experimentation within the framework.</p> | | | | |
| <p>8. ...Be Clear</p> <p>They are understandable by parents and the public in general.</p> | | | | |
| <p>9. ...Be Inclusive</p> <p>They are not defined too narrowly in ways that inadvertently discriminate (for example on the basis of disability) against alternate ways of developing and utilizing the underlying skills and knowledge.</p> | | | | |