Expanded Learning Time (ELT)
Site Visit Protocol

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Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Table of Contents

Overview

Purpose of ELT Site Visits

In conducting site visits, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) is carrying out its oversight responsibilities with respect to the authorizing legislation for Expanded Learning Time (ELT) implementation grants as outlined in the state budget (line item 7061- 9412). Site visits are among the means by which ESE documents each ELT school's performance and progress over time, corroborating and augmenting the information reported each year in the school's reapplication within the context of the ELT Performance Agreement process.

ESE conducts two types of site visits at ELT schools: a full site visit and a check-in meeting. Full site visits will typically be completed in one and one-half days, but may be modified due to the size, location, or specific conditions of a particular school. They will be conducted according to this protocol, which articulates guidelines for document review, classroom observations, and stakeholder focus groups and other interviews. Observational findings made during a full site visit will be documented in a site visit report. Check-in meetings will be shorter in duration (typically, a half-day) and more informal in nature. ESE will endeavor to conduct either a full site visit or a check-in visit annually at most ELT schools, but reserves the right to make fewer or more visits as appropriate.

This protocol draws on *Expanded Learning Time Expectations for Implementation*[1] (Expectations), a document that was co-developed by Massachusetts 2020 and ESE to guide ELT implementation. The ELT expectations and accompanying indicators expand upon the three areas of school redesign outlined for ELT schools by the legislature, which requires the addition of at least 300 more hours per year to a school's schedule in order to:

- provide students with more core instructional opportunity in mathematics, literacy, science, and other core subjects to support student achievement;
- integrate enrichment and applied learning opportunities into the school day; and
- provide educators with increased opportunity for collaborative time and professional development.

Site visits and subsequent site visit reports are intended to gather and document evidence about the school's performance and implementation of ELT for grant accountability purposes and to provide observational findings and information to districts and schools to help improve instruction and operations.

Additional site visits may be scheduled as needed by ESE. The length and type of site visit and required elements will ultimately be determined by ESE. ESE will provide adequate notice to all schools of any scheduled visits.

Please note, this protocol is a guide to the typical site visits conducted by ESE, and not the check-in meetings.

Check-in Visits

As mentioned above, ESE will not conduct a full site visit at all ELT schools each year. For schools that do not receive a full site visit, ESE may conduct half-day check-in meeting designed to gather some observational and qualitative evidence regarding the school's implementation of its ELT redesign. Typically, one or two ESE staff members will conduct each check-in meeting. The meeting will be

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[1] The Expectations for Implementation can be found on ESE's website at:
http://www.doe.mass.edu/redesign/elt/ExpectationsIndicators.pdf

arranged with the principal at least one week in advance. A limited number of documents (such as an updated school schedule or updates on progress toward meeting Performance Agreement objectives) may be requested prior to the meeting.

These check-in meetings will usually consist of three main activities, though the activities may be modified depending on the particular circumstances of the school:

1. A focus group interview with the school's principal, ELT coordinator or staff member(s) most involved in the implementation of the ELT school redesign, and members of the school's Instructional Leadership Team (ILT).
2. A focus group interview with teachers who are not members of the ILT.
3. Informal classroom observations.

The ESE staff member(s) participating in the check-in meeting will send a brief memorandum containing general observations from the meeting to the ELT school, typically within one or two weeks after the meeting.

ELT Site Visit Components

Pre-Visit Planning and Preparation

Schools receiving ELT site visits will be notified of their selection in the beginning of the school year in which the site visit will take place. ESE will send notification letters to the district superintendent, school principal, and district ELT coordinator. By late fall, the school confirms the proposed visit dates or proposes alternate dates for the site visit.

ESE assumes that the school principal will act as the coordinator of and liaison for the site visit; however, the principal has the option of designating another school-based person to take on this role. ESE works with the school's coordinator to ensure that key documents are provided. Appendix A lists the documents to be submitted by the school to ESE before the site visit as well as the documents to be made available to the team on site. ESE collects and compiles submitted information as well as any other pertinent documents and distributes it to each site visit team member prior to the site visit. In addition, prior to the site visit the school gathers the documents also identified in Appendix A for use by the team during the site visit.

Site Visit Team Members

All site visit teams are led by an ESE staff member. The team leader facilitates the activities for the day and coordinates the efforts of additional team members who may be other ESE staff members, external consultants, practitioners from other ELT schools and/or districts, or other volunteers from the field of education. All team members are subject to a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check.

On-Site Visit

On-site, team members conduct focus groups, interviews, observe classrooms, conduct a document review, and meet to form preliminary findings and ratings. Areas of inquiry are guided by the ELT Expectations for Implementation. Classroom observations are guided by the school leader's oral and written description of teaching and learning at the school and an ESE observation form.

Creation of Findings and Ratings

The site visit team is charged with gathering evidence and data that capture the school's progress toward meeting its ELT Performance Agreement goals and the indicators set out in the ELT Expectations for Implementation. In the afternoon of the visit's final day, the team reflects on the evidence and data collected and develops preliminary findings. These findings will be used to rate the school on its performance relative to the Expectations for Implementation All findings and ratings will be contained in the written report.

End of Visit Report-Out

At the conclusion of the visit, a limited report-out of the team's initial findings is delivered by the team leader. School leaders may invite additional staff to attend the report-out. Statements made during the report-out are not intended to provide technical assistance. The findings are based upon the evidence collected throughout the visit and are preliminary and not all of the Expectations will be addressed. During the site visit report writing process the team leader will conduct additional analysis of available evidence. **Please note:** Findings reported on site are subject to change after the site visit team returns to the ESE and more thoroughly reviews the compiled evidence, as well as any additional evidence requested by the site visit leader.

Site Visit Report

After the visit, ESE prepares a written report that includes the team's findings and the evidence to support those findings. Site visit team members review the report to ensure that it is factually accurate

and reflects the collective findings of the team on the day of the visit. The team leader incorporates any corrections and suggestions for improvement offered by the team and issues a draft report to the school. The school then has the opportunity to report factual inaccuracies, if any, to ESE. Corrections that are factual in nature are incorporated into a final report, which is issued to the school. If the school chooses, a response to the site visit report may be submitted in writing to ESE. The site visit report and any written response become part of the documentation that ESE will use in making future funding determinations.

Findings, Observations, and Ratings

The ELT Expectations for Implementation are presented in eight (8) areas of accountability:
  I.   ELT design is driven by focused schoowide priorities,
  II. Data is used to drive continuous improvement and strengthen instruction,
  III. Additional time for academics is used for core instruction and differentiated support,
  IV. Additional time for enrichment is used to deepen student engagement in learning,
  V.   Additional time for teacher collaboration is used to strengthen instruction and improve achievement,
  VI. Additional time is used to enhance school culture,
  VII .School leadership is focused and collaborative, and,
  VIII. District leadership supports ELT.

These expectations, aligned with the Conditions for School Effectiveness[2], guide the gathering and analysis of evidence obtained during the site visit. While on site, the site visit team will gather evidence and create findings that represent the school's performance for each of the Expectations.

Findings are statements that describe the school's performance in terms of the Expectations. Findings synthesize the site visit team's analyses of evidence collected from multiple sources prior to and during (and in rare instances after) the visit. As mentioned previously, at the conclusion of the visit, a limited report-out will be delivered by the team leader structured around the three most easily and consistently observable of the ELT Expectations for Implementation: Expectation I – ELT design is driven by focused schoolwide priorities; Expectation VI – Additional time is used to enhance school culture; and Expectation VII – School leadership is focused and collaborative. During the site visit report writing process, the team leader will conduct additional analysis of available evidence in collaboration with the principal author of the report if the team leader does not write the report.

In order to communicate clearly, ESE uses a **rating** scale to summarize an ELT school's performance against the Expectations. Ratings will capture school performance at the time of the site visit. Each Expectation, I through VIII, will be accompanied by a finding as well as a rating in the final report. The scale used to assign ratings is as follows:

Rating	Description
Exemplary	The school fully and consistently meets the expectation and is a potential exemplar in this area.
Meets Expectation	The school generally meets the expectation with no more than minor concern(s) noted.
Some Improvement Needed	The school meets some aspects of the expectation but not others with no more than moderate concern(s) noted.
Major Improvement Needed	The school falls far below the expectation and/or significant concern(s) are noted.

While the site visit team will generate initial findings for all Expectations during team work time, and will present a sub-set of those findings during the report-out, ratings will be communicated in the written report only.

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[2] *The Conditions for School Effectiveness* (CSEs) articulate what schools need to have in place in order to educate their students well. These conditions, voted into regulation by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in 2010, can be used as benchmarks against which schools can gauge their practice in key areas. The CSEs can be found at ESE's website at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/apa/ucd/CSE.pdf.

Preparing for the Site Visit

Each year, the ESE visits ELT schools as part of its grant oversight responsibilities. There are many actions that the school, ESE, and site visitors should take to effectively prepare for the site visit.

ESE Preparation

ESE determines the range of dates for possible site visits, taking into consideration school vacation weeks, MCAS testing weeks, and the size and location of the school. ESE sends out a letter in July or August to each school leader with a proposed date for the visit. If the suggested date is not feasible, ESE will work with the school to find a mutually convenient alternate date for the visit.

The team leader is generally responsible for all communication with the school, including scheduling, requesting pre-visit documents from the school, determining a schedule for the visit (in consultation with the school leader or designee), assembling pre-visit materials for the visitors, assigning visitors to the team, leading the visit, and writing or assigning the writing of the resulting site visit report.

Site Visit Team Member Preparation

Prior to an ELT school site visit, ESE will provide team members with an information packet containing relevant materials such as the school's ELT reapplication documents, ELT Performance Agreement, student performance data, and other materials submitted by the school prior to the site visit (See Appendix A). Each team member is expected to become familiar with these materials, review all site visit protocols, rubrics and observation tools and note takers, discern data trends, and formulate questions to ask or topics to discuss during the site visit. Subsequently, the team will participate in an orientation session via conference call with ESE staff members to discuss this protocol, review the details of the ELT site visit, and answer any questions that team members may have regarding the data and documents regarding the school. During the conference call, the team will review the school's ELT Performance Agreement and identify specific goals, objectives, and measures for analysis. During the site visit, the team will collect evidence of the school's progress toward the specific goals, objectives, and measures, and this progress will be documented in the site visit report prepared after the site visit.

School Preparation

Schools should prepare for the site visit prior to the arrival of the site visit team. We ask that schools work quickly after receiving the scheduling letter/email from the ESE to confirm the site visit date and designate the school's primary point of contact with the ESE. For additional guidance on site visit preparation, please refer to the section entitled, "School Preparation: Principal or Designee Responsibilities."

Site Visit Structure

ESE Team Meeting

The team leader will welcome the team, review the site visit schedule, establish the purpose, context, norms, and goals of the visit, and answer questions from team members. The team leader will review the *Code of Conduct* (See Appendix D) and ELT Expectations for Implementation.

Introductions and Orientation with school leader(s)

The first meeting of the first day of the site visit, the school leader(s) will orient the site visit team to the school and alerts the team to any absent teachers and/or special events occurring during the school day. The site visit team will review and confirm the expected instructional practices with school leader(s). Additionally, the team will elicit from the school leader(s) a verbal description of the school's behavioral expectations and examples of accommodations (Special Education, ELL, and WIDA) that the team should expect to see in classrooms. The school leader's description of instructional expectations, along with the document outlining the school's expectations, will be used to evaluate observed classrooms during the visit.

Focus group interviews

A number of focus groups must be scheduled for the days of the site visit. It is the school's responsibility to gather a representative group from each category through an open invitation and to inform each participant of the time and place of the meeting. ESE expects that each participant will have complete freedom to speak regarding his/her knowledge of and experience at the school with no limits or repercussions. The team member facilitating the interview will introduce himself/herself and the accompanying team members, and describe the purpose of the visit. A minimum of two (2) pre-assigned team members will be responsible for taking notes and if appropriate, asking follow-up questions. Please refer to Focus Group Descriptions in Appendix B.

Classroom observations

The classroom observations will be guided by the school leader's written and oral description of teaching and learning at the school and criteria found on the classroom observation tool provided by ESE to team members. Collectively, the site visit team will visit as many classrooms as possible during the day of the visit. Observations should last a minimum of 20 minutes and will not disrupt classroom activities, but observers are asked to circulate quietly to view students working where feasible and should take cues from the teachers and students as to where to sit, as well as whether it is appropriate to talk with students. Only one team member at a time should observe a classroom. Visitors will collect lesson materials if available.

Document review

The school will place all requested on-site documents in the site visit team's designated meeting room. Throughout the visit, site visit team members who are not scheduled to participate in focus groups, interviews, or classroom observations at a specific time will review curriculum documents, school handbooks, collaborative planning time records/agendas, enrichment class descriptions, and other requested documents. The team may request that a school administrator orient team members to the documents.

Team organization and reflection

The team leader will bring the team together, thank the site visit team members for their participation, set goals for the afternoon work time, remind the team of the Code of Conduct, and outline the next steps for reviewing the draft site visit report. The team leader will remind site visit team members of the norms for work time, including refraining from personal opinion and grounding comments in evidence, observations, and data. The team leader will guide the team through a debrief of the visit structured by the ELT Expectations for Implementation. Site visit team members may gather additional evidence and data to fill in evidentiary gaps through follow-up conversations with key school staff or targeted observations. The team will create initial preliminary findings and ratings for all Expectations, preparing three (3) of the eight (8) Expectations to be shared with school leadership. The team leader prepares for the school leadership debrief/report-out.

School report out/debrief

The team leader will thank school leadership for hosting the team and will outline the next steps for reviewing the resulting site visit report. The team leader will share the team's initial findings for three (3) of the eight (8) Expectations: ELT design is driven by focused schoolwide priorities, additional time is used to enhance school culture, and school leadership is focused and collaborative.

Site visit report

A site visit team member will be assigned by the team leader to draft the site visit report. Data collected during the visit will be carefully reviewed by the assigned author with input from the team leader, and findings and ratings are finalized. The other team members review the draft report to ensure that it is factually accurate and reflects the collective findings of the team on the day of the visit. The author will then incorporate the team's corrections and suggestions for improvement. Within six weeks, ESE will send the school a site visit report which will include final findings and ratings for each of the eight Expectations for Implementation. School leadership will review the report for factual corrections. The team leader will incorporate factual corrections and issue the final report to the school leader and district superintendent. School leadership may prepare a response to the site visit report that must be submitted in writing to ESE within seven (7) days of receipt of the final report. Any written response submitted by the school/district becomes part of the site visit report which, in turn, becomes a permanent part of the school's record.

Site Visit Schedule

The following table shows a *sample* schedule that includes all key components of the site visit. The site visit team leader will use the scheduling information submitted by the school to create a similar schedule that meets the needs of the school and the site visit team. The team leader, while responsible for ensuring that all key components are covered, will make every effort to be flexible in planning prior to and on the days of the site visit.

Site visit team members may meet with members of the school community not listed below, as necessary. The team leader will remain in contact with school leaders during the day, providing updates on the team's schedule and whether additional meetings, classroom observations, or follow-up sessions are needed.

Time	Team member A *Team leader*	Team member B	Team member C	Team member D	Team member E
Day 1 (1/2 day)					
11:45 -12:30	Team meeting and orientation to the process				
12:15-12:30	School leaders provide orientation to site visit team				
12:30-1:30	Meet with school administration		Classroom observations	Classroom observations	Classroom observations
1:30-2:30	Meet with district Administration*		Classroom observations	Classroom observations	Observe collaborative planning time
2:30-3:30	Classroom observations	Classroom observations	Meet with enrichment providers		Classroom observations
3:30-4:30	Initial team discussion/Team work time				
Day 2 (full day)					
7:15-7:30	Arrival and brief team meeting				
7:30-8:30	Classroom observations	Classroom observations	Family focus group		
8:30-9:30	Meet with special education staff/administrator/ELL coordinator		Document review	Classroom observations	Classroom observations
9:30-10:30	Meet with non-ILT teachers		Classroom observations	Classroom observations	Classroom observations
10:30-11:30	Classroom observations	Classroom observations	Meet with Instructional Leadership Team		
11:30-12:30	Meet with students				Classroom observations
12:30-1:00	Team discussion and lunch				
1:00-3:45	Team work time, additional fact-finding, and classroom observations				
3:45-4:00	Presentation of initial findings on select Expectations to school leaders				
*For districts with more than one ELT school, this focus group may be scheduled at another time to accommodate schedules of district personnel and eliminate duplication of effort.					

ELT Expectations for Implementation

The following ELT expectations and the accompanying indicators provide a framework for the team's collection of evidence during the site visit and for the findings and ratings that will be incorporated into the site visit report.

Expectation I. ELT design is driven by school-wide priorities. The school's ELT design (schedule, staff, instructional approaches, assessment systems, budget) is driven by no more than three schoolwide priorities, including one schoolwide instructional focus. These priorities drive instructional improvement and the use of time. Progress is monitored and evaluated by both the school and district using clear, measurable goals.

Indicators:
1. Schoolwide priorities are narrowly focused, with no more than 3 priorities and aligned with the school's overall educator evaluation goals where possible.
2. The full staff has participated in the determining schoolwide priorities, based on multiple sources of data and student needs.
3. Priorities include an instructional focus that cuts across all content areas, provides a foundation for long-term academic success, and is implemented through common schoolwide strategies, protocols, and/or practices.
4. Priorities are observable at the school and classroom level and can be articulated by stakeholders including students, teachers, partners, school and district administrators, and families.
5. Clear and measurable goals, driven by schoolwide priorities and articulated in a Performance Agreement, are developed collaboratively with staff.
6. Resources – including time, people, and funding – are allocated strategically to support school-wide priorities.

Expectation II. Data is used to drive continuous improvement and strengthen instruction. The design and implementation of ELT is based on a data-driven assessment of student needs to establish focused schoolwide priorities. The school provides the time, structure and training for all staff to participate in frequent data cycles throughout the year.

Indicators:
1. ELA and math benchmark/interim assessments are administered schoolwide regularly (e.g. 4-6 times each year), with timely and careful analysis of results after each assessment by teachers and administrators.
2. Benchmark/interim assessments are aligned to instructional content and current MA Curriculum Frameworks.
3. Benchmark/interim assessment reports are delivered to teachers in a timely manner and provide clear data that are easily understood.
4. Instructional staff analyzes assessment data to identify promising practices and areas for improvement, and to determine enrichment, intervention, and acceleration needs.
5. Student progress in intervention and acceleration is monitored and analyzed regularly (e.g. at least 4-6 times each year); this data is used to strategically group students and adjust content.
6. Achievement data and specific improvement goals are publicly posted in classrooms and hallways, showcased for the community, and updated quarterly.
7. Student data and resource allocation are reviewed periodically throughout the school year to inform ELT design and budget for the following year.

Expectation III. Additional time for academics is used for core instruction and differentiated support. The school allocates additional time to rigorous core instruction in ways that reflect student needs and are aligned to the current MA Curriculum Frameworks. The school also ensures that all student schedules include academic interventions or acceleration, based on student need.

Indicators:

1. The school schedule provides sufficient instructional time for all students in English language arts, math, science, and social studies.
2. Instruction is designed to move students beyond the basics to master 21st century skills (e.g., communication, problem-solving, teamwork, use of technology) across all content areas.
3. Curriculum, instruction and assessments are aligned to current MA Curriculum Frameworks with ambitious growth targets.
4. A small set of common, research-based and/or practice-proven instructional strategies aligned to the instructional focus are implemented across all content areas and observable in all classrooms.
5. Students are actively engaged in high-quality lessons with consistent routines and practices that maximize learning time.
6. Instructors deliver high-quality instruction and well-planned content during intervention and acceleration time.
7. Scheduled intervention time is greatest for students who require the most support.
8. Intervention and acceleration time is led by adults with relevant content expertise and/or training.

Expectation IV. Additional time for enrichment is used to deepen student engagement in learning. The school uses additional time to provide enrichment opportunities for all students which are aligned to the current MA Curriculum Frameworks and support schoolwide priorities. Courses are based on student interests and choice, with opportunities for mastery.

Indicators:

1. High-quality enrichment programming is integrated into the day and year to expose students to new skills and interests, deepening engagement in learning and contributing to a positive school climate.
2. Enrichment is aligned to the current MA Curriculum Frameworks and supports schoolwide priorities, building cohesion with academics to enhance student learning and outcomes.
3. Enrichment offerings are informed by student interests and choice.
4. Enrichment offers sequential opportunities for students to build mastery (e.g., Karate 1, then Karate 2).
5. Student progress is monitored and assessed at least 2x/year using rubrics, written feedback and/or other methods.
6. Schoolwide expectations and norms are consistent across academic and enrichment courses.
7. Administrative support is in place to support the assignment and integration of enrichment providers (both partners and teachers) to ensure alignment with the school's priorities, culture, and operations.
8. Enrichment activities culminate in performances, presentations, and demonstrations of learning that increase family and community engagement in the school.

Expectation V. Additional time for teacher collaboration is used to strengthen instruction and improve achievement. The school uses additional time to build professional learning and collaboration focused on strengthening data-informed instruction, aligned with the current MA Curriculum Frameworks and schoolwide priorities.

Indicators:

1. Regularly scheduled opportunities for professional learning include collaborative planning meetings, instructional coaching, and observations (weekly), and professional development sessions (at least monthly).
2. Principal and Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) structure and monitor professional learning to ensuring effective use of this time (e.g., agendas, notes, norms, protocols).
3. Principal and other administrators, coaches, specialists, interventionists, and partners actively participate in and support collaborative planning meetings alongside teachers.
4. Intervention/acceleration and enrichment instructors meet regularly with core academic teachers to discuss student progress and align instructional content (when core teachers do not lead these courses).
5. Principal and ILT set professional development content and schedule based on learning needs of teachers, and implement a system to monitor the impact of professional development.
6. School-based professional development in identified common instructional practices includes modeling, demonstrations, and peer observations, with opportunities for meaningful feedback.
7. Observations with feedback by coaches and/or peers take place at least monthly, and more frequently for new or struggling teachers.
8. Teachers value and are actively engaged in all professional learning activities including collaborative planning, professional development, instructional coaching, and peer observations.

Expectation VI. Additional time is used to enhance school culture. The school leverages time to build a culture of high academic and behavioral expectations for all students, and a culture of professionalism for all adults.

Indicators:

1. School schedules time to celebrate success, recognize achievement and reinforce positive behavior.
2. Following the lead of the principal and ILT, staff members communicate high expectations through meaningful and consistent rules, consequences, language and practices.
3. Students and staff take pride in and ownership of the school (e.g., classrooms, hallways, and common spaces are clean; school pride is reflected through posters, chants, spirit wear, etc.; adults and student treat each other respectfully).
4. School implements a school-wide system to incentivize and reward positive behavior.
5. Systems and safety nets are in place to help all students overcome barriers to learning (e.g., small group learning, advisory, counseling, health and mental health support, etc.).
6. School monitors and shares with stakeholders data on culture such as attendance, behavior, and other climate indicators.
7. School engages families in building a positive school culture through frequent communication and events.

Expectation VII. School leadership is focused and collaborative. The principal and leadership team are fully committed to using additional time to accelerate student achievement and eliminate opportunity gaps. They engage all stakeholders in the process of ELT design and implementation in support of schoolwide priorities.

Indicators:

1. A representative ILT that includes the principal, teachers, coaches and other key staff meets at least bi-weekly to guide instructional improvement and the implementation of ELT.
2. Principal and ILT create opportunities to engage staff, students, families, partners, and the community in ELT design, implementation, and continuous improvement.

3. Principal and ILT support schoolwide priorities - especially the instructional focus - through classroom visits, coaching, modeling, and professional development sessions.
4. Principal and ILT lead implementation of schoolwide protocols for data review/analysis, and help determine student placements for intervention, acceleration, and enrichment courses.
5. The principal is an instructional leader, visiting all classrooms at least once/week to collect, analyze, and use data to inform decision making.
6. There is a system in place for two-way communication and feedback between principal and stakeholders.
7. Principal engages staff in investigating alternative uses of existing resources to address schoolwide priorities.
8. Principal and ILT monitor progress around priorities and towards ELT Performance Agreement goals and shares them with staff, students and families regularly (e.g. at least 3x/year).

Expectation VIII. District Leadership Supports ELT. The district actively supports all ELT schools in meeting the ELT Expectations for Implementation. It provides leadership, oversight, supervision, strategic planning and creative problem solving to ensure schools can meet rigorous achievement goals and sustain ELT**.**

Indicators:

1. The district – through a designated point person - works directly with ELT schools to provide guidance, leadership and decision-making support around ELT design and implementation (schedule, staff, curriculum, instruction, assessment systems, resource allocation)
2. District actively monitors ELT implementation using the school's ELT Performance Agreement goals and the ELT Expectations & Indicators.
3. Superintendent is seen as an active supporter of ELT and views it as a catalyst for school and district improvement.
4. Expansion of ELT has been considered as an element in the development of the district's long-term strategic plan.
5. Lessons learned from ELT schools are intentionally shared across the district and replicated when appropriate.
6. District communicates to the wider community how the implementation of ELT is linked to growth in student learning and progress towards district and school achievement goals.

Performance Agreement Goals, Objectives, and Measures

In addition to the ELT Expectations and Indicators, the site visit team will review the school's progress relative to its specific ELT Performance Agreement goals, objectives, and measures that the team had identified for the team's review prior to the site visit. Specifically, the team will review the school's self-reported information regarding its progress and collect evidence from interviews, document reviews, and/or classroom observations to verify the school's self-reported information. The team's findings with respect to the specific ELT Performance Agreement goals, objectives, and measures will be incorporated into the site visit report.

Sample Interview Topics

The following are examples of topics that are likely to be the subject of questions posed by site visit team members in individual and focus group interviews. The team will review the ELT Expectations and corresponding indicators before developing interview questions pertaining to these topics. The team will also develop specific questions based upon the team's review of documents before the visit, the ELT Performance Agreement goals, objectives, and measures selected for team review, and the evidence gathered during the day.

A. District Administration Topics
- Schoolwide priorities
- Use of assessment data
- Schoolwide instructional strategies
- Use and assessment of enrichment activities
- Professional learning and development
- Behavioral expectations and school culture
- Instructional leadership
- Resource allocation
- District role in ELT design and implementation
- Specific ELT Performance Agreement goals, objectives, and measures as appropriate

B. School Leadership (School Administration and Instructional Leadership Team) Topics
- Schoolwide priorities
- Use of assessment data
- Schoolwide instructional strategies
- Use and assessment of enrichment activities
- Professional learning and development
- Behavioral expectations and school culture
- Instructional leadership
- Evaluation methodologies
- Resource allocation
- District role in ELT design and implementation
- Specific ELT Performance Agreement goals, objectives, and measures as appropriate

C. Teacher Topics
- Schoolwide priorities
- Use of assessment data
- Schoolwide instructional strategies
- Curriculum implementation and review
- Use of student safety nets
- Use and assessment of enrichment activities
- Professional learning and development

- Evaluation methodologies
- Behavioral expectations and school culture
- Instructional leadership
- Resource allocation
- Specific ELT Performance Agreement goals, objectives, and tasks as appropriate

D. <u>Special Education and ELL Staff Topics</u>
- Schoolwide priorities
- Use of assessment data
- Schoolwide instructional strategies
- Intervention strategies
- Use and assessment of enrichment activities
- Professional learning and development
- Behavioral expectations and school culture
- Instructional leadership
- District role in ELT design and implementation
- Specific ELT Performance Agreement goals, objectives, and measures as appropriate

E. <u>Enrichment Providers Topics</u>
- Schoolwide priorities
- Use and assessment of enrichment activities
- Professional learning and development
- Behavioral expectations and school culture
- Enrichment programming and evaluation

F. <u>Student Topics</u>
- Enrichment activities
- Behavioral expectations and school culture
- Academic expectations

G. <u>Family/Guardian Topics</u>
- Schoolwide priorities
- Enrichment activities
- Behavioral expectations and school culture
- Family engagement

H. <u>School Site Council Topics</u>
- Schoolwide priorities
- Use of assessment data
- Schoolwide instructional strategies
- Use and assessment of enrichment activities
- District role in ELT design and implementation
- Specific ELT Performance Agreement goals, objectives, and measures as appropriate

Developing Report Findings and Ratings Using High-Quality Evidence

Report findings require high-quality evidence, as discussed below.

Findings: Findings are summary statements within each section of the site visit report that synthesize the team's analyses of evidence collected from multiple sources prior to and during the site visit.

Ratings: Ratings summarize a school's performance against the ELT Expectations for Implementation and capture the school performance at the time of the site visit.

High-quality evidence: Each finding must be supported by sufficient evidence collected and, when appropriate, corroborated from multiple sources, including but not limited to observations, documents, data, and information derived from interviews and focus groups. In conducting the site visit and writing the site visit report, the team must ensure that the evidence collected and analyzed by the team is of high quality. High-quality evidence is both sufficient in quantity to support the finding and appropriate in nature. The team must use its professional judgment to determine the sufficiency of the evidence collected. In assessing the appropriateness of the evidence, the team must ensure that the evidence is relevant, valid, and reliable:
- Relevant evidence is logically related and important to the matter or issue under consideration.
- Valid evidence is a meaningful or reasonable basis for measuring what is being evaluated.
- Reliable evidence is verifiable and consistent.

Although information obtained from team interviews with school participants is an essential component of the evidence base used by the team, the team should keep in mind that interview and focus group information can in some cases be unreliable if not corroborated by other types of evidence, such as direct observations, meeting minutes, and curriculum documents. For instance, similar focus group questions can be asked of each group and information can be verified from documentation and/or additional interviews.

Triangulation, which means corroboration of evidence from a variety of sources, is one method of testing the reliability of evidence. For example, if the teacher focus group tells the team that a particular behavior management program is in use at the school, the team should seek corroboration of this statement through documents, direct observations, and interviews with other stakeholders. If the team finds a written policy requiring use of this technique, observes many teachers using this technique in the classrooms, in the hallways, and at recess, and learns through interviews with other stakeholders that this technique is used, the team may reasonably conclude that the behavior management program is in place.

ELT Site Visit Work Flow and Timelines

Responsible Party	Before the Visit	Approximate Timeline
ESE	Sends scheduling letter to schools.	Beginning of school year
School	Confirms proposed date for site visit, or determines an alternate date with ESE.	October
ESE	Sends pre-visit document request letter to the school.	Six weeks before site visit
School	Submits pre-visit documents listed in Appendix A to ESE.	Three weeks before site visit
ESE	Provides site visit materials to team members.	One to two weeks before site visit
School	Makes arrangements for families, school site council members, district personnel, external partners, teachers, and students to participate in focus group interviews during site visit; arranges for a secure space for the site visit team to meet.	Ongoing during the month before site visit
School	Finalizes, with ESE, the schedule for site visit.	One week prior to visit
School	Gathers or provides access to the on-site documents listed in Appendix A for the site visit team.	Ongoing
Responsible Party	**Days of the Visit**	**Approximate Timeline**
Site visit team	Conducts focus group interviews, classroom observations, document review, and team work time.	One and one-half days
Site visit team	Presents the initial findings on select Expectations to school leaders.	End of visit
Responsible Party	**After the Visit**	**Approximate Timeline**
ESE	Creates a draft site visit report with evidence-based findings.	Two weeks after visit
ESE	Sends the draft site visit report to site visit team members for review; site visit team members review report to ensure that it is factually accurate and reflects the collective findings of the team. ESE's team leader incorporates corrections and suggestions for improvement.	Three weeks after visit
ESE	Sends the final draft report to the school leader for factual corrections.	Five to six weeks after visit
School	Reviews the report for factual corrections and submits requests for corrections to ESE's team leader; team leader makes any factual corrections necessary.	Within one week of receiving draft report
ESE	Issues the final site visit report for the school and sends copies to school leader and district superintendent.	Six to seven weeks after visit
School	If appropriate, prepares a written response to the site visit report that becomes part of the school's record.	Seven to ten business days after final report is received

ELT Site Visit Preparation

School Preparation: Principal or Designee Responsibilities

A. Review this protocol and orient district and school community members to the purpose of the site visit, their respective roles during the site visit, and the components of the site visit. The site visit team expects all classrooms in the school to be available for observation.

B. Work quickly upon receipt of the scheduling letter from ESE to confirm a date for the site visit.

C. Review the document preparation list and begin to gather the information the site visit team needs before the visit and while on-site.

D. Identify a secure place that can serve as a meeting room for the team throughout the site visit.

E. Make lunch menus available for the site visit team. Please note that the school is NOT responsible for providing the team with lunch.

F. Three weeks before the visit (a specific deadline will be included in a pre-visit letter sent to the school by ESE), send the pre-visit documents listed in Appendix A to ESE. These documents will be used to build the preparation binders for the site visit team members and to help the facilitator organize for the visit.

G. Work with the school community and ESE to determine the schedule for the day. The day will generally follow the sample schedule found next, as modified to meet the particular needs of a school. The schedule must be finalized with ESE at least one week prior to the visit.

H. Schedule focus groups of teachers, district administrators, school leaders, School Site Council members (if applicable), special education and English language learner (ELL) staff, and enrichment providers, students, and parents.

I. Assemble and organize the on-site documents as listed in Appendix A.

Appendix A
Required School Documents

Three weeks before the site visit, the school is required to provide the following documents to ESE. If there are other documents not included in the following list that the school would like to make available to the site visit team, the school may include them. Note that ESE prefers to receive the documents electronically.

Documents Provided to ESE Before the Site Visit
1. Directions to the school, including telephone number and any parking instructions.
2. A master class schedule for the day of the visit that clearly indicates the subjects taught and times, teachers, and room assignments for all classes.
3. The school's ELT Performance Agreement and updates on the school's progress toward meeting each measure outlined in the school's ELT Performance Agreement.
4. Written notification of any significant changes to the ELT school design as presented in the school report section of the ELT reapplication.
5. An organization chart with titles, names and reporting structures.
6. A staff roster that includes the names of administrators and teachers (including enrichment providers), administrative role or teaching assignment (including grade and subject), ELT opt-in Level (e.g. full, ½, NA), number of years at the school, and number of years of teaching and/or administrative experience (if readily available). See template provided in Appendix C.
7. A short (one page is sufficient) description of current instructional practices. This document should answer the question, "What should site visit team members expect to see in their classroom observations?"
8. School improvement plan.
9. Professional development plans, calendars, and agendas.
10. Student handbook.
11. Any other documentation that helps to convey an accurate representation of the school to the site visit team. For example, the school could provide summaries and analyses of non-MCAS external or internal assessment data or any information the school has aggregated that provides a picture of student achievement.

The school is required to make the following documents available to the site visit team either in the team's meeting space or in a readily accessible form. There is no need to make more than one copy of each document available with the exception of the school map and the interview lists.

Documents Provided On Site
1. A school map, with corresponding teacher room assignments or marked with teacher names (one copy for each team member).
2. Interview lists with participant names and roles, if possible.
3. School curricular documents.
4. Enrichment curricular documents and/or description of enrichment programs.
5. Description of professional development offerings, including those funded through the grant   and/or described in the reapplication.
6. Copies of staff meeting and collaborative planning time meeting agendas/minutes.
7.   Teachers should have available copies of handouts and lesson plans to distribute to site visit team members who observe their classrooms, but they should not create any materials solely for this purpose.
8. Any other documents that the school would like to make available to the team.

Appendix B
Focus Group Descriptions

A number of focus groups must be scheduled for the days of the site visit. It is the school's responsibility to gather a representative group from each category through an open invitation and to inform each participant of the time and place of the meeting. ESE expects that each participant will be given complete freedom to speak regarding his/her knowledge of and experience at the school, with no limits or repercussions.

Focus Groups	Description	Time Needed
School Administration	Administrators who are directly and primarily responsible for the academic programming, operation of the school, and oversight of ELT redesign should attend this meeting.	1 hour
Special Education/ELL Staff/Admin.	Personnel responsible for the administration of special education and ELL programs in the school may be asked to meet with site visit team, separate from the school administration. Special education and/or ELL teaching staff should be included in teacher focus group meetings.	1 hour
Instructional Leadership Team	This group includes teachers, department heads, instructional coaches, or otherwise have significant input into the school's educational program (such as curriculum development) should be present at this meeting. To avoid redundancy, the principal should not attend this meeting.	1 hour
Teachers not on the Instructional Leadership Team	Depending on the size of the school, the visit will include one or more teacher focus groups. All teachers should be offered the opportunity to participate. Each focus group should contain a representative sample of teachers in terms of their experience, years at the school, subject, and/or grade level. Teacher focus groups should not have more than ten participants. Those who are lead teachers or otherwise have significant input in the school's educational program (such as curriculum development) should not be present at this meeting, as they will be included in the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) focus group. Administrators may not be present at this meeting. The team will make the effort to speak with as many staff members as possible.	1 hour
Students	Student focus groups should include only students in grade 4 and above. The focus group should include five (5) to eight (8) students representing a variety of ages, grade levels, and time spent at the school. The school should choose students from varying academic performance categories. Each student may bring piece of academic work or an enrichment project to share with the site visit team members but should not plan to make a formal presentation of the work.	30 minutes
Families / Guardians	This group should include five (5) to seven (8) parents or guardians whose children represent a variety of grades, years spent at the school, and academic ability levels.	30-60 minutes
Enrichment Providers	This group should include administrative and/or direct service providers from external agencies or school-based personnel charged with providing enrichment opportunities for students within the school.	30-60 minutes

School Site Council (if applicable)	Depending on the involvement of the School Site Council in policy decisions on ELT implementation, members may be interviewed. To avoid redundancy, members who participate in other focus groups (such as the principal) should not attend this meeting.	1 hour
District Administration	District administrators who are directly involved in the planning for, coordination of, and support for the ELT Expectations for Implementation should attend this meeting. This must include the ELT coordinator (if applicable) and a representative from the superintendent's office. This interview may also be conducted separately from the site visit.	1 hour

Appendix C
Staff Roster Template

Please use the following template, or one with comparable information of your own creation, to complete a staff roster for the site visit, including all teachers and administrators. This information will be used only to provide context about the profile of the school's teachers and administrators. Individuals will not be identified by name in the site visit report.

Name	Teaching assignment (include grade and subject) or administrative role	Total yrs. teaching, including current yr.	Years at this school, including current yr.	ELT Opt-In Level (e.g. full, ½, NA)

Appendix D[3]
Site Visit Code of Conduct

Carry out work with integrity	Act with the best interests of students and staff in mind
- School personnel may be apprehensive, so treat all those you meet with courtesy and sensitivity, and try to minimize stress. - Try to allay anxiety by displaying respect, valuing opinions, and showing an interest in what every individual says. - Focus your attention and questions on topics that will reveal how well students are learning. - Assure confidentiality. - Approach the review of a school with a clear understanding of that school's particular mission and educational philosophy.	- Do not put students or staff in a position where they may have conflicting loyalties. - Emphasize that students come first and are at the center of the review. - Wherever possible, work to others' convenience. - Under no circumstances criticize the work of a teacher, or anyone else involved with the school during the course of an observation period or focus group. - Observation comments regarding individual teachers are not shared outside the team.

Be objective, base findings on evidence.	Exercise Professionalism
- Findings must be robust, fully supported by evidence, defensible, and must inform the guiding questions. - Findings must be reliable in that others would make the same judgment based on the same evidence. - Findings must be based on evidence gathered in the context of the school, not in comparison to personal preference or opinion. - An individual's perception can be evidence, especially if supported by others' observations. - Be prepared to ask questions to establish whether a view is based on opinion or evidence. This applies to team members' judgments as well. - Discussion with staff and team members is part of the process to create a fair and secure evidence base from which findings are developed.	- Refrain from using your cell phone during classroom observations, focus groups, and team time. Site visitors may use the lunch break to use cell phones and check email. - Arrive to the school early/on-time and closely follow the schedule for the day. - Site visit attire must be business casual. Refrain from wearing jeans or any other casual-wear. - Out of respect to the speaker, do not engage in side conversations while another team member or school staff is speaking. - Present concrete evidence to support findings and be respectful to others' evidence-based perspectives. - Allow participant voice to dominate during focus groups. Besides asking follow-up questions, do not offer personal opinions or respond directly to participant responses.

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[3] These guidelines for conduct are based, in part, on the British Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) Code of Conduct.