

# A PUBLIC MEETING FOR CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

## INTRODUCTION

KRS 158.649 requires "the school-based decision making council, or the principal if there is not a council, with the involvement of parents, faculty, and staff shall set the school's targets for eliminating any achievement gap and submit them to the superintendent for consideration. The superintendent and the school-based decision making council, or the principal if there is not a council, shall agree on the targets before they are submitted to the local board of education for adoption."

Additionally, "the school council, or the principal if a school council does not exist, with the involvement of parents, faculty, and staff, shall review the data and revise the school improvement plan to include the targets, strategies, activities, and a time schedule calculated to eliminate the achievement gap among various groups of students to the extent it may exist.

The plan shall include but not be limited to activities designed to address the following areas:

- (a) Curriculum alignment within the school and with schools that send or receive the school's students;
- (b) Evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work;
- (c) Professional development to address the goals of the plan; (d) Parental communication and involvement;
- (e) Attendance improvement and dropout prevention; and
- (f) Technical assistance that will be accessed."

**The principal then has the responsibility to convene a public meeting to discuss the plan and receive input from parents, family, and staff.** The public meeting should be an open dialogue, creating an atmosphere of discussion among school community members, not simply a reporting of the School-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Council's plan.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide direction and support materials to principals and their councils as they convene their public meeting on the issue of reducing achievement gaps at their school.

Please see Appendix A for additional information about KRS 158.649.

\* This refers to the school improvement plan, often referred to as the CSIP (Comprehensive School Improvement Plan).

## CHECKLIST FOR CONDUCTING AN OPEN MEETING

- € Notify the school community of the upcoming meeting (consult your bylaws for more specific instructions).
- € Post a Public Meeting Notice in prominent location within the building at least 24 hours in advance. If your school has a marquee, display the meeting information there or on the front door of the building. (See Appendix B.)
- € E-mail a Public Meeting Notice for media notification to **shawna.stenton@jefferson.kyschools.us** at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.
- € Send a letter home inviting parents to the public meeting. (See Appendix C.)
- € Announce the open meeting in the school newsletter, school newspaper, or other appropriate school publications.
- € Draft a meeting agenda. (See Appendix B.)
- € Provide a draft of school's plan for reducing the achievement gaps to open meeting participants.
- € Provide data information for review and discussion.
- € Develop a meeting format (e.g., large group discussion, small breakout groups, panel discussion).
- € Provide family and school community members the opportunity to discuss the plan.

## PLANNING

Here are a few helpful hints to consider when planning your open meeting.

- I. Introduction
  - Welcome your guests, and give a brief explanation of the task for the meeting.
  - Introduce council members and any additional key players for the open meeting.
- II. Defining the Achievement Gaps
  - Define the achievement gap according to the law: An achievement gap is a substantive performance difference on each of the tested areas by grade level of the state assessment program between the various groups of students, including the following:
    - Male and female students
    - Students with and without disabilities
    - Students with and without English proficiency
    - Minority and nonminority students
    - Students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals and those who are not eligible for free and reduced-price meals

The Department of Education (KDE) shall provide each school data on its students' performance on the state assessment program. The data shall include, but not be limited to, information on performance levels of all students tested and information on the performance of students disaggregated by race, sex, disability, English proficiency, and participation in the federal free and reduced-price meal program. The information from the department shall include an equity analysis that shall identify the substantive differences among the various groups of students. KDE provides schools with delivery targets for gap groups, which are recommended to be included as goals in their CSIPs. Focus schools are required to include gap goals in their CSIPs. These goals, based on the delivery targets, would serve as the targets set to eliminate achievement gaps referenced in KRS 158.649.

- III. Review of Our Data
  - Give a brief explanation of how test scores are given by subject areas and disaggregated by the categories shown above.
  - Using handouts from the school report card when looking at the data explain gaps by categories and subject area at your school. A careful look at these handouts should show where gaps are the largest in particular areas.
  - Give a brief explanation of how the SBDM Council and the school staff began developing a preliminary plan based on identification of the gaps.
  - Share the plan, and ask for input or endorsement, section by section of the plan.
  - Be sure that your plan is marked "DRAFT."

#### IV. Public Discussion of the Plan

- Discuss the plan, and be sure to include the biennial targets, strategies, activities, and a time schedule. The activities should include the following areas:
  - Curriculum alignment with the school and with the schools that send or receive the school's students
  - Evaluation and assessment strategies to continually monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work
  - Professional development for staff to address the goals of the plan
  - Parental communication and involvement
  - Attendance improvement and dropout prevention
  - Technical assistance that will be accessed

#### V. How We Follow Up

- Publicize in the school newsletter, newspaper, etc.
- Review at the next regularly scheduled SBDM Council meeting.

**Achievement gaps -- Data on student performance -- Policy for reviewing academic reviewing academic performance -- Student achievement targets -- Reporting requirements -- Review and revision of improvement plan.**

- (1) "Achievement gap" means a substantive performance difference on each of the tested areas by grade level of the state assessment program between the various subgroups of students as described in the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-95, or its successor, including male and female students, students with and without disabilities, students with and without English proficiency, minority and nonminority students, and students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch and those who are not eligible for free and reduced lunch.
- (2) By October 1 of each year, the Department of Education shall provide each school council, or the principal if a school council does not exist, data on its students' performance as shown by the state assessment program described in KRS 158.6453. The data shall include, but not be limited to, information on performance levels of all students tested, and information on the performance of students disaggregated by race, gender, disability, English proficiency, and participation in the federal free and reduced price lunch program, and any other subgroups as described in the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-95, or its successor. The information from the department shall include an equity analysis that shall identify the substantive differences among the various groups of students identified in subsection (1) of this section. Beginning with the 2012-2013 school year, the reporting requirement in this subsection shall be no later than seventy-five (75) days following the first day the assessment can be administered.
- (3) Each local board of education upon the recommendation of the local district superintendent shall adopt a policy for reviewing the academic performance on the state assessments required under KRS 158.6453 for various groups of students, including major racial groups, gender, disability, free and reduced price school lunch eligibility, and limited English proficiency. The local board policy shall be consistent with Kentucky Board of Education administrative regulations. Upon agreement of the school-based decision making council, or the principal if there is not a council, and the superintendent, the local board shall establish an annual target for each school for reducing identified gaps in achievement as set out in subsection (4) of this section.
- (4) By February 1 of each year, the school-based decision making council, or the principal if there is not a council, with the involvement of parents, faculty, and staff shall set the school's targets for eliminating any achievement gap and submit them to the superintendent for consideration. The superintendent and the school-based decision making council, or the principal if there is not a council, shall agree on the targets before they are submitted to the local board of education for adoption.
- (5) By January 1 of each year, the school council, or the principal if a school council does not exist, with the involvement of parents, faculty, and staff, shall review the data and revise the school improvement plan to include the targets, strategies, activities, and a time schedule calculated to eliminate the achievement gap among various groups of students to the extent it may exist.

The plan shall include but not be limited to activities designed to address the following areas:

- (a) Curriculum alignment within the school and with schools that send or receive the school's students;
  - (b) Evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work;
  - (c) Professional development to address the goals of the plan; (d) Parental communication and involvement;
  - (e) Attendance improvement and dropout prevention; and
  - (f) Technical assistance that will be accessed.
- (6) The principal shall convene a public meeting at the school to present and discuss the plan prior to submitting it to the superintendent and the local board of education for review, in the public meeting required under KRS 160.340.
- (7) Based on the disaggregated assessment results, the local board shall determine if each school achieved its targets for each group of students. Only data for a group of students including ten (10) or more students shall be considered.
- (8) Notwithstanding KRS 160.345(8) and 158.070(8), if a local board determines that a school has not met its target to reduce the identified gap in student achievement for a group of students, the local board shall require the council, or the principal if no council exists, to submit its revisions to the school improvement plan describing the use of professional development funds and funds allocated for continuing education to reduce the school's achievement gap for review and approval by the superintendent. The plan shall address how the school will meet the academic needs of the students in the various groups identified in subsection (1) of this section.
- (9) The superintendent shall report to the local school board and the commissioner of education if a school fails to meet its targets in any academic content area to reduce the gap in student achievement for any student group for two (2) consecutive years. The school's improvement plan shall be subject to review and approval by the Kentucky Department of Education and the school shall submit an annual status report. The Department of Education may provide assistance as defined in KRS 160.346 to schools as it deems necessary to assist the school in meeting its goals.
- (10) The school-based decision making council, or the principal if there is not a council, shall no longer be required to seek approval of the plan under subsections (8) and (9) of this section when it meets its target for reducing the gap in student achievement for the various groups of students identified in subsection (1) of this section.

**Effective:** April 10, 2017

**History:** Amended 2017 Ky. Acts ch. 156, sec. 7, effective April 10, 2017. -- Amended 2014 Ky. Acts ch. 14, sec. 5, effective July 15, 2014. -- Amended 2010 Ky. Acts ch. 146, sec. 3, effective April 13, 2010. -- Amended 2009 Ky. Acts ch. 101, sec. 7, effective March 25, 2009. -- Created 2002 Ky. Acts ch. 302, sec. 1, effective July 15, 2002.

APPENDIX B: MEDIA ADVISORY

Media Advisory

Special-Called SBDM Meeting

A Special-Called Meeting of the School-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Council at

\_\_\_\_\_ will be held on \_\_\_\_\_.

(School Name)

(Date)

The meeting will be held at \_\_\_\_\_ in (the) \_\_\_\_\_.

(Time)

(Location)

AGENDA

- I. Introduction/Welcome
- II. Defining the Achievement Gaps
- III. Review of Our Data
- IV. Public Discussion of the Plan
- V. How We Follow Up

All interested parties are invited to attend.

For more information, contact \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

Post this notice at least 24 hours in advance of the special-called meeting in a prominent place in the building.

Notify SBDM Council members in writing (mail, hand-deliver, or fax).

E-mail a copy of this form to [shawna.stenton@jefferson.kyschools.us](mailto:shawna.stenton@jefferson.kyschools.us) no later than 24 hours prior to the meeting.

## APPENDIX C: SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents,

Every two years, School-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Councils set targets for reducing achievement gaps in their schools. It is time once again for councils to evaluate and set new goals based on their school's most recent test scores and adjust their school plan to close those gaps. We will be holding a public meeting at [sample school] on [date] at [time] to review and discuss the plan for reducing those gaps.

We at [sample school] recognize that increasing our total school scores is important, and it's imperative that we increase the test scores of each student within the school. The plan that we will discuss on the [date] will help us focus on that issue.

We hope that you will be able to attend. We look forward to seeing you and hearing your ideas. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Principal

Sample School