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D-CNA

DIAGNOSTIC COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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Purpose

To assess the current state of a school district's systems, culture, instruction, and people. The assessment will result in prioritized actions for district leaders, including tools and resources they need for successful change implementation. This process is rooted in change management theory and aims to provide a holistic, cross-organizational view of district performance and efficiency.

Outcomes for System Leaders

- Holistic View: Leaders gain a comprehensive understanding of the district's strengths and gaps in systems, culture, instruction, and people.
- Prioritized Actions: Clear, data-driven priorities for addressing critical areas.
- Clarified Roles and Responsibilities: Team purpose and foci clarity for divisions, units, and people.
- Change Management Guidance: Practical tools for managing change efficiently and sustainably across the organization.
- Resource Identification: Insight into the resources and tools needed to drive improvement.

Change Management Strategy

The D-CNA process is grounded in change management theory and establishes the groundwork for a rigorous theory of action. Our approaches include:

1. Stakeholder Engagement: Engaging leaders, staff, and community members early and often to ensure buy-in and address resistance to change.
2. Cross-Organizational Alignment: Breaking down silos by linking systems, culture, instruction, and people to create a holistic understanding of how different segments impact one another.
3. Strategic Messaging: Invitational and motivating messaging about the vision and need for change.
4. Prioritization of Actions: Helping leaders focus on high-impact, scalable actions that promote sustainable change across departments.
5. Capacity Building: Offering targeted recommendations for leadership development, resource management, and instructional improvement to enhance capacity across all levels.

90-Day Timeline

Reporting performance can include details such as indicators identified, data collected and SDG-related activities accomplished. Clear and concrete performance goals make it easier to generate relevant, consistent and comparable data over time, in formats that your audience can understand and appreciate.

Phase	Activities	Duration
Phase 1: Preparation & Data Collection	Kick-off meeting with district leaders to clarify goals, gather preliminary data, and set expectations. Surveys and requests for data inputs are distributed.	Week 1 - Week 2
Phase 2: Qualitative & Quantitative Data Collection	Collect qualitative data via surveys, focus groups, and interviews; gather quantitative data from district reports, financials, academic performance, and HR systems.	Week 3 - Week 4
Phase 3: Analysis of Data Inputs	Analyze data using the SCIP framework to assess the current state of district systems, culture, instruction, and people. This includes benchmarking, trend analysis, and equity reviews.	Week 5 - Week 7
Phase 4: Initial Findings & Prioritization	Present initial findings to district leaders, focusing on key priorities in each SCIP area. Obtain feedback to refine the final report.	Week 8
Phase 5: Recommendations & Final Report	Develop a comprehensive report that outlines prioritized actions, resource/tool recommendations, and next steps for implementation. Include strategies for cross-organizational efficiency and change management.	Week 9 - Week 11
Phase 6: Presentation & Planning Session	Present the final report and conduct a planning session with district leaders to establish immediate next steps, timelines, and accountability measures.	Week 12

Sample Data Inputs
(Mixed Methods Design)

1. Systems
- Quantitative:
  - District financial reports (budget allocation, spending patterns).
  - Technology and data infrastructure reports (LMS usage, data systems).
  - Resource allocation data (by department/school, equity analysis).
- Qualitative:
  - Leadership interviews on operational challenges.
  - Surveys on district communication effectiveness (staff, stakeholders).
  - Focus groups with administrative staff on system efficiency.

2. Culture
- Quantitative:
  - Attendance and behavior data (student engagement, discipline trends).
  - Equity audit metrics (disparities in student achievement, access).
- Qualitative:
  - Staff climate and engagement surveys.
  - Student and family surveys on school culture and inclusivity.
  - Focus groups with DEI officers and school leaders.
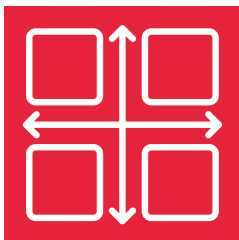
3. Instruction
- Quantitative:
  - Academic performance data (standardized test scores, graduation rates).
  - Professional development tracking (participation, effectiveness ratings).
  - Curriculum implementation reports (usage, consistency across schools).
- Qualitative:
  - Teacher surveys on instructional support and resources.
  - Classroom observation data (instructional practices, engagement levels).
  - Focus groups with curriculum leaders and principals.

4. People
- Quantitative:
  - HR data (teacher retention, turnover rates, vacancy data).
  - Professional development expenditure and participation.
  - Compensation and benefits analysis across roles.
- Qualitative:
  - Leadership development interviews (coaching, mentorship needs).
  - Surveys on teacher and staff well-being and support.
  - Focus groups with HR and talent management staff.

Final Report Deliverables

This framework not only provides a comprehensive view of district operations but also positions you and your team as essential partners in delivering the necessary support and tools for successful implementation.

SCIP PRIORITY MATRIX

A visual matrix of key findings and recommended actions across Systems, Culture, Instruction, and People.

CROSS-ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCIES

Highlights areas where better alignment or streamlined processes can improve overall district performance.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT ROADMAP

A practical, phased approach to implementing changes, ensuring the system can absorb and sustain improvements.

RESOURCE & TOOL RECOMMENDATIONS

A clear resource guide to evidence-based tools, frameworks, and resources (from you and your team) that the district needs to implement these changes successfully.

Message from our leaders

The Diagnostic Comprehensive Needs Assessment (D-CNA), is a transformative process designed to elevate district performance by providing a holistic understanding of its systems, culture, instruction, and people.

The D-CNA offers a comprehensive perspective on district operations, helping to identify both strengths and areas for growth. By focusing on key priorities, it enables district leaders to concentrate efforts where they will have the greatest impact.

Additionally, the process clarifies roles and responsibilities, ensuring that all teams and individuals are aligned with the district's goals. Each step is designed to build a clear roadmap for transformation, culminating in a detailed report and a collaborative planning session to establish next steps.

By engaging with this process, your district will gain a clearer understanding of its current state and a focused plan for future improvements. The D-CNA not only fosters cross-organizational alignment but also empowers leaders to drive meaningful and lasting change.

The D-CNA process is inclusive, collaborative, and impactful.

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