

**Making Connections in NCStar to Requirements of
§115C-105.27: Development and Approval of School Improvement Plans**

Statutory Reference: [Full Text of NC G.S. 115C-105.27](#)

Note: Use of italics in this document indicates a passage is a direct quote from the statute.

General Information	
NCStar Connection	Reference in Statute
Team Membership: Update Profile section contains a full and accurate membership roster of the properly elected school improvement team.	<i>(a) Representatives of the assistant principals, instructional personnel, instructional support personnel, and teacher assistants shall be elected by their respective groups by secret ballot.</i>
Team Membership: Parents	<p><i>Unless the local board of education has adopted an election policy, parents shall be elected by parents of children enrolled in the school in an election conducted by the parent and teacher organization of the school or, if none exists, by the largest organization of parents formed for this purpose. Parents serving on school improvement teams shall reflect the racial and socioeconomic composition of the students enrolled in that school and shall not be members of the building-level staff.</i></p> <p><i>Parental involvement is a critical component of school success and positive student achievement; therefore, it is the intent of the General Assembly that parents, along with teachers, have a substantial role in developing school improvement plans. To this end, school improvement team meetings shall be held at a convenient time to assure substantial parent participation.</i></p>
Open Meetings: Manage Meetings section contains a listing of SIT meetings that complies with the state's open meeting laws. SIT meetings should be properly noticed by listing them in the NCStar site that is made available to the public and the public is welcomed at any open session of the SIT. The public is excluded from closed session portions of SIT meetings where school safety components of the plan are discussed. A wise practice would be to set up all SIT meetings in NCStar	

General Information

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<p>scheduled for the school year at the beginning of the year at least 7 days prior to the first meeting. See also <i>NCGS 143 Article 33C Meetings of Public Bodies</i></p>	
<p>Public Records: Use NCStar’s Manage Meetings function to document relevant agendas/minutes for official meetings of the SIT. Clearly document somewhere in meeting minutes when the SIT members were elected to the team to meet statutory requirements. Otherwise, the guest access portal for NCStar would provide public access to the plan (comprehensive plan document) and the listing of team members as required by statute.</p>	<p><i>(a2) The school improvement plan, except for the school safety components of the plan, is a public record subject to Chapter 132 of the General Statutes and shall be posted on the school website. The names of the members of the school improvement team, their positions, and the date of their election to the school improvement team shall also be posted on the Web site. The school safety components of the plan are not public records subject to Chapter 132 of the General Statutes.</i></p>
<p>School Improvement Plan: The “Comprehensive Plan Report” in NCStar, which is edited and updated via the Assess/Create/Monitor link in the menu at left, serves as the official school improvement plan.</p> <p>Alignment: NC State Board of Education Strategic Plan for Alignment Purposes</p>	<p><i>(b) In order to improve student performance, the school improvement team at each school shall develop a school improvement plan that takes into consideration the annual performance goal for that school that is set by the State Board under G.S. 115C-105.35 and the goals set out in the mission statement for the public schools adopted by the State Board of Education.</i></p>
<p>Growth: Ensure that in at least one goal and/or indicator, the plan uses explicit language to address actual or intended use of EVAAS to analyze student data and determine root causes in order to determine relevant action steps required to improve student performance and properly place students in courses, where applicable.</p>	<p><i>All school improvement plans shall be, to the greatest extent possible, data driven. School improvement teams shall use the Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) or a compatible and comparable system approved by the State Board of Education to (i) analyze student data and identify root causes for problems, (ii) determine actions to address them, and (iii) appropriately place students in courses such as Algebra I.</i></p>

Required Contents of the Plan

School improvement plans shall contain clear, unambiguous targets, explicit indicators and actual measures, and time frames for meeting the measurement standards.

NCStar Connection	Reference in Statute	NCStar Suggestion
<p>Professional Development: Recommend using explicit language wherever appropriate in the school’s plan to address plans for professional development. This is likely to fit naturally within one or more indicators within the SIP.</p>	<p>(1) <i>Shall include a plan for the use of staff development funds that may be made available to the school by the local board of education to implement the school improvement plan. The plan may provide that a portion of these funds is used for mentor training and for release time and substitute teachers while mentors and teachers mentored are meeting;</i></p>	<p>Likely to fit within several different indicators</p>
<p>School Safety and Discipline: Among the current 12 Key Indicators, both A1.07 (classroom management/behavior) and A4.06 (guide students in managing their emotions/arrange for supports and interventions) are natural opportunities for alignment with this requirement. Additionally, some components of the school/district crisis or emergency plans that are not public documents are also likely to address this requirement.</p>	<p>(2) <i>Shall include a plan to address school safety and discipline concerns;</i></p>	<p>A1.07 A4.06</p>
	<p>(3) <i>May include a decision to use State funds in accordance with G.S. 115C-105.25;</i></p>	
<p>Effective Instructional Practices: Recommend using explicit language wherever appropriate in the school’s plan to address strategies used for supporting students who are at risk of being unsuccessful.</p>	<p>(4) <i>Shall include a plan that specifies the effective instructional practices and methods to be used to improve the academic performance of students identified as at risk of academic failure or at risk of dropping out of school;</i></p>	<p>A4.01 A4.06 B3.03</p>
	<p>(5) <i>May include requests for waivers of State laws, rules, or policies for that school. A request for a waiver shall meet the requirements of G.S. 115C-105.26;</i></p>	
<p>Duty Free Lunch: Recommend that the SIP communicates plans and processes to address duty-free lunch planning requirements. Even if the school marks this indicator as full implementation, the narrative box for that indicator can be used to provide information that addresses the requirements of the statute for sections (6).</p>	<p>(6) <i>Shall include a plan to provide a duty-free lunch period for every teacher on a daily basis or as otherwise approved by the school improvement team; and average of at least five hours of planning time per week; [and]</i></p>	<p>B2.03</p>
<p>Instructional Planning: Recommend that the SIP communicates plans and processes to address instructional planning requirements. Even if the school marks this indicator as full implementation, the narrative box for that indicator can</p>	<p>(7) <i>Shall include a plan to provide duty-free instructional planning time for every teacher under G.S. 115C-301.1, with the goal of providing an</i></p>	<p>B2.03</p>

<p>be used to provide information that addresses the requirements of the statute for section (7).</p>		
<p>Reporting Requirements: A key phrase in section (8) is “to the extent practicable.” When done well, the school improvement planning process itself can represent better focus and alignment within the school in an effort to obtain the best results in the most efficient, effective manner.</p>	<p><i>(8) Shall include a plan to identify and eliminate unnecessary and redundant reporting requirements for teachers and, to the extent practicable, streamline the school's reporting system and procedures, including requiring forms and reports to be in electronic form when possible and incorporating relevant documents into the student accessible components of the Instructional Improvement System</i></p>	

General Information Continued

NCStar Connection	Reference in Statute
<p>School Vote on the Plan: Once the SIT approves the plan, the principal conducts a vote with the full staff. If a majority approves the plan, it can be sent on to the superintendent/central office to be presented to the board of education (BOE) for their approval. While the NCStar process is always an on-going, continuous improvement process, the district simply needs to set a date that is the date for review and approval as of that date. In most cases, simply executing the plan by documenting progress and completion of action steps or by adding action steps as necessary as the team learns more information would likely not constitute an amendment or revision of the plan that would require another vote or approval process. If substantial changes are made to the overall school goals or the major focus area of the plan's indicators, a SIT may need to conduct another vote at the school level followed by approval of the amendments or revisions by the BOE. The district would need to determine a process for determining when or if another vote on a plan is warranted outside of the normal 2-year cycle.</p>	<p><i>(c) The principal of the school shall present the proposed school improvement plan to all of the principals, assistant principals, instructional personnel, instructional support personnel, and teacher assistants assigned to the school building for their review and vote. The vote shall be by secret ballot. The principal shall submit the school improvement plan to the local board of education only if the proposed school improvement plan has the approval of a majority of the staff who voted on the plan.</i></p>
<p>Consideration of the School Safety Components of the Plan: This is likely a process devised and executed by central services and/or the superintendent for the whole district.</p>	<p><i>(c1) The superintendent shall review the school safety components of the school improvement plans and make written recommendations on them to the local board of education. Prior to a vote to accept a school's improvement plan in accordance with G.S. 115C-105.27(d), the local board of education shall review the school safety components of the plan for that school in closed session. The board shall make findings on the safety components of the plan. Neither the safety components of the plan nor the board's findings on the safety components of the plan shall be set out in the minutes of the board.</i></p>
<p>Adoption of the Plan: The district can use whatever process that works locally to present approved SIPs to the board of education for approval.</p>	<p><i>(d) The local board of education shall accept or reject the school improvement plan. The local board shall not make any substantive changes in any school improvement plan that it accepts.</i></p>

General Information Continued	
NCStar Connection	Reference in Statute
<p>Effective Period of the Plan: A plan, once approved by the BOE, does not need to be approved again by the BOE again for two years from the initial approval date. Many districts have a process for annual reporting on progress or lessons learned in the “off year” that help board members remain informed. As addressed in section (c) above, the same process and timeline would apply if a school made substantial revisions to their plan requiring another BOE approval.</p>	<p><i>(e) A school improvement plan shall remain in effect for no more than two years; however, the school improvement team may amend the plan as often as is necessary or appropriate. If, at any time, any part of a school improvement plan becomes unlawful or the local board finds that a school improvement plan is impeding student performance at a school, the local board may vacate the relevant portion of the plan and may direct the school to revise that portion. The procedures set out in this subsection shall apply to amendments and revisions to school improvement plans.</i></p>
<p>Elimination of Other Unnecessary Plans: If your district or school can consolidate any other reports, rubrics, assessments, or plans into the school’s SIP in NCStar, that is encouraged by the statute and a naturally positive opportunity to improve efficiency, focus, and alignment.</p>	<p><i>(f) If a local board of education finds that a school improvement plan adequately covers another plan that the local school administrative unit is otherwise required to prepare, the local school administrative unit shall not be required to prepare an additional plan on the matter.</i></p>
<p>Compliance with Requirements:</p>	<p><i>(g) Any employee, parent, or other interested individual or organization is encouraged to notify the principal of any concerns regarding compliance with this section. In addition, any employee, parent, or other interested individual or organization may submit in writing to the superintendent concerns regarding compliance with this section. The superintendent shall make a good-faith effort to investigate the concern. The superintendent shall upon request provide a written response to the concern.</i></p>

Other Considerations:

School Designations of Low-Performing, CSI, or TSI may warrant including explicit language addressing particular subgroup performance monitoring and/or strategies that are being employed to improve those outcomes. Further, when federal grant funding (Title I, CSI funding, and etc.) or other state categorical funds are being used by a school or district, you will likely want to include language wherever appropriate within applicable indicators (as action steps) documenting the team’s plan for the use of funds as well as an analysis of how those strategies were both executed and monitored when federal or other grant funds were employed. This may be an opportunity to streamline or consolidate artifact collection as a part of both district and state monitoring processes.