

**Alaska Department of Education  
& Early Development**

**State System of Support (SSOS)  
Coaching Program**

**SSOS Coach Handbook**

2021-2022



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# Alaska Department of Education & Early Development

## State System of Support Coaching Program Information

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## **Alaska Department of Education: State System of Support**

### **Alaska Department of Education Purpose**

DEED provides information, resources, and leadership to support an excellent education for every student every day.

### **Alaska Department of Education Mission**

An excellent education for every student every day.

### **Alaska Department of Education Vision**

All students will succeed in their education and work, shape worthwhile and satisfying lives for themselves, exemplify the best values of society, and be effective in improving the character and quality of the world around them. AS 14.03.015

### **Alaska Department of Education Core Services**

- Public School Funding
  - Ensure appropriate funding distribution to recipients based on legislative appropriation and statute and following the foundation formula, other formula programs, or legislative intent for funding outside the primary funding formulas.
- Fiscal Accountability, Compliance, and Oversight
  - Ensure the department effectively and efficiently manages State, federal, and other funding by providing comprehensive fiscal and administrative services.
- School Effectiveness Programs
  - Assist school districts by providing programs, technical on-site and distance-delivery support, and early intervention services to increase the statewide graduation rate.
- Active Partnerships

- Provide opportunities for and collaborate with government entities and other public and private organizations to engage in active partnerships to pursue state educational goals.

### **State System of Support Contribution to the Alaska Department of Education Purpose:**

The purpose of the State System of Support Coaching Program (SSOS coaches) is to provide a team-based approach to better support schools designated as CSI Lowest 5% and their districts in school improvement efforts. The SSOS Coaching Program assists in providing access to the Department of Education core services; and offers support, guidance, and technical assistance to schools and districts to implement continuous improvement tools and practices for sustainable school improvement.

### **The DEED SSOS Coaching Program operates under the following theory of action:**

*IF* DEED supports and builds the capacity of district and school leaders to practice the four turnaround principles of the Four Domains of Rapid School Improvement, *THEN* district and school leaders will be empowered to implement bold decisions necessary to drive change. *IF* district and school leaders make proactive decisions essential to drive change, *THEN* they will create and sustain conditions (e.g., leadership, teaching and learning, family and community engagement) necessary for schools to fully and effectively impact and improve measurable student outcomes.

### **State System of Support Coaching Program (SSOS CP) Coach's Role:**

- Play an integral part in the school improvement efforts of DEED;
- Lead and are key members of regional support and improvement teams;
- Support the application of the four turnaround principles
- Work to support the operationalization of Alaska's Education Challenge in schools and districts; and
- Provide professional development opportunities to meet the needs of schools

## Regional Support Network for School Improvement and Turnaround

The redesigned SSOS Coaching delivery model utilizes regional support and school improvement teams consisting of SSOS coaches, DEED staff, and district, school, and community leaders.

Using the Center for School Turnaround's framework for rapid school improvement, SSOS Coaches will align services and efforts to each of these four domains:

- Transformational Leadership
- Talent Development
- Instructional Transformation
- Culture of Success

Each region of the state will have a team assigned to provide support to the lowest-performing schools identified in accordance with Alaska's ESSA state plan. The Southeast, Southcentral, Southwest, Interior, Northwest, and Northern regions teams will serve the district and school improvement and turnaround efforts in their geographic areas. The regional groups will receive leadership and guidance from SSOS coaches, whose primary responsibility will be to plan, convene, support, and monitor meetings and feedback to schools designated as requiring Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) Lowest 5% services.

A regional leadership team consists of one or two SSOS Program coaches as well as school and district representatives from each region, and DEED leadership will guide the regional teams' work. This team will meet quarterly to engage in continuous improvement conversations to improve the State's regional education turnaround teams' services and sustainability.

The concept of regional support network teams provides structure to delivering school improvement supports to Alaska's vast geographic region and is not meant to require hard and fast boundaries. DEED administration will take the lead in determining the school and district distribution to regional improvement and support teams.

**The teams will engage in practices identified through the latest research on school improvement and supported by DEED and the Center for School Turnaround's Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement.**

- Improvement practices:
  - Focus on goals outlined in Alaska's Education Challenge with a priority focus on K-3 reading improvement
  - Assist and guide data review and needs assessment activities
  - Assist and support SMART goal development
  - Provide improvement plan feedback, support, and monitoring
  - Help design and deliver professional development activities
  - Provide technical assistance
  - Guide and support ESEA grant applications for goal attainment  
[https://www.centeronschoolturnaround.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CST\\_Leveraging-Federal-Dollars.pdf](https://www.centeronschoolturnaround.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CST_Leveraging-Federal-Dollars.pdf)
- Rapid School Transformation practices:
  - Transformational Leadership
    - Prioritize improvement and communicate its urgency
    - Monitor short and long-term goals
    - Customize and target support to meet needs
  - Instructional Transformation
    - Diagnose and respond to student learning goals
    - Provide rigorous evidence-based instruction
    - Remove barriers and provide opportunities
  - Talent Development
    - Recruit, develop, retain, and sustain talent
    - Target professional learning opportunities
    - Set clear performance expectations
  - Culture of Success
    - Build a school culture focused on student learning outcomes

- Solicit and act on stakeholder input
- Engage students and families in pursuing education goals

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**State System of Support  
Coaching Program  
Coaching Model, Tools,  
and Protocols**



## I. State System of Support Coaching Program Objectives and Focus

### SSOS Coaching Program Objectives

To work within the DEED school improvement framework and help create and sustain conditions (e.g., Leadership, teaching and learning, family and community engagement) necessary for districts and schools to fully and effectively impact and improve measurable outcomes for the students of Alaska's lowest-performing schools (specifically, those designated as CSI Lowest 5%).

To support the five positive trajectories of Alaska's Education Challenge with particular focus on early literacy and reading:

- Support ALL students to read at grade level by the end of third grade
- To increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs
- Close the achievement gap by ensuring equitable educational rigor and resources
- Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals
- Improve the safety and well-being of students through school partnerships with families, communities, and tribes

To engage districts and schools in applying the prioritized strategies as described in Alaska's education Challenge, including a particular focus on reading:

- How can we achieve the goal of supporting all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade?
  - Prioritize early reading in all elementary schools, including K–12 schools
  - Adopt and implement effective reading programs and materials
  - Incentivize districts to adopt and implement effective curriculum and teaching strategies
  - Adopt 60- or 90-minute reading blocks in grades K–3 in all districts

- Encourage district review of different K–3 models, including movement through individual grades
- Create and disseminate materials for parents and community members on how they can support the development of their children's reading skills
- Provide consistent, ongoing professional development for educators and community members on the effective use of adopted reading curricula
- Implement effective early screeners in K-3
- Train teachers on state standards and on how to align instruction to these standards
- Assist school leaders in using data and classroom walkthroughs to ensure implementation of aligned curricula
- Use valid and reliable formative assessments to monitor students' progress
- Identify and implement effective interventions for struggling readers
- Inform and train educators, parents, and community members on how to understand reading data and how to support students in their reading skills attainment
- Establish voluntary district reporting to the State on K–3 reading measures

To act as a critical leader within a more extensive State System of Support to coach districts and schools through the integration and application of the Center for School Turnarounds' Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement (2017).

## **II. SSOS Coaching Program Coach: Responsibilities, Competencies, and Roles**

SSOS coaches are leaders in school improvement in the State. Utilizing a broad array of skills and the Center for School Turnaround and Improvement's Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement as a guide, the coaches will support districts and schools as they navigate the transformative process to achieve rapid school improvement.

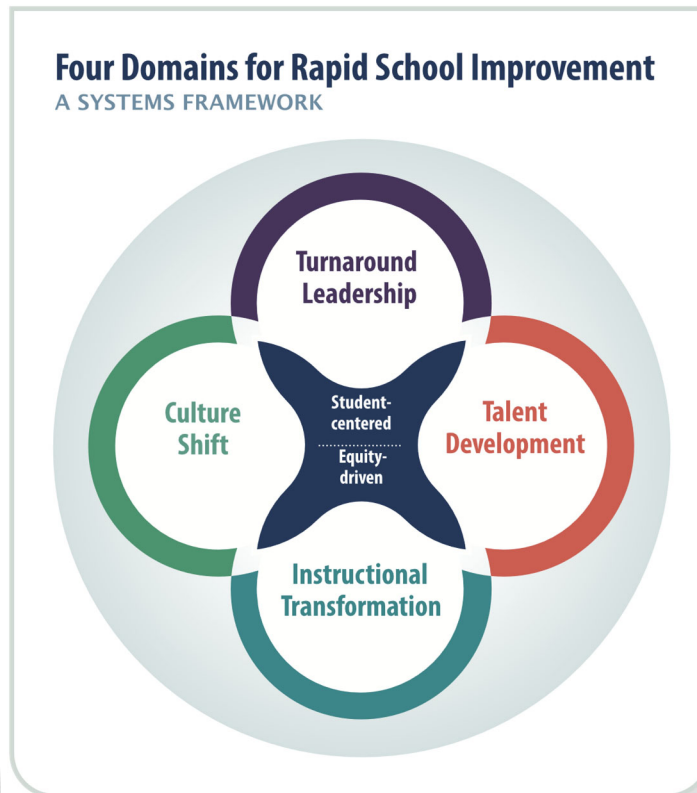
### **Duties & Responsibilities**

- Provide technical expertise to assist with capacity building in schools designated as CSI Lowest 5%, emphasizing effective schools' elements.
- Assist with implementing the Department of Education & Early Development (DEED) supported coaching cycle as directed by DEED staff / SSOS program management.
- Support SSOS Regional Support Team redesign efforts and activities as directed by DEED staff / SSOS program management.
- Adhere to and support priority areas and protocols identified by DEED, including, but not limited to, focus on early literacy and consistent use of data to inform planning, Leadership, and instruction in school improvement efforts.
- Communication with SSOS Coaching Program managing staff, district liaison, SSOS Coaches, and DEED is regular and timely.

The Center for School Turnaround and Improvement (CSTI) at WestEd is a nationally recognized leader in the research and development of solutions that support systemic improvement for all schools. They work with teams at all levels—from SEAs to districts and individual schools to identify and help sustain evidence-based, promising practices that ensure equity and drive systemwide change for rapid improvement.

The Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement: A Systems Framework is a research-based approach to school turnaround—proven to help states, districts, and schools in effectively leading and managing rapid school improvement efforts.

More information found at The Center for School Turnaround and Improvement (CSTI) at WestEd can be found at <https://csti.wested.org/>



**Transformational Leadership** ensures coordinated efforts by the team charged with executing improvement and leading those involved to a shared vision. Rapid improvement efforts prioritized, and urgency explicitly communicated. Monitoring short- and long-term goals routinely and providing targeted support customized to meet improvement needs transforms the educational process.

Rapid school transformation requires experienced and dedicated personnel at the school, district, and state levels. As such, there must exist a commitment to recruit, develop, retain, and sustain passionate talent. Additionally, targeted professional learning opportunities are essential to **Talent Development**, while clear performance expectations are essential to transform lowest-performing schools. Talent development requires a two-pronged effort to select dedicated and experienced personnel at each level. The commitment to recruit, sustain, develop, and retain talent is essential to demonstrating performance expectations.

**Instructional transformation** requires system-wide support that involves analyzing relevant student data with appropriate responses to student learning goals. Effective instructional practices should apply intense standards-based instruction, as demonstrated through the Alaska

State Standards, barriers eliminated and opportunities provide for every student's academic growth.

Focusing on developing a **Culture of Success** is required for rapid school transformation that involves open dialogue, trust, and shared accountability and equity. Building a culture focused on student learning and achievement requires concerted efforts with engaged stakeholder input. Cooperatively, students and families must pursue educational goals geared toward academic excellence and success. Additionally, school districts and state leaders must ensure an excellent education for every student every day. An excellent education requires access for "every student to the resources and educational rigor they need at the right moment in their education regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, family background or income" (PaTTAN, 2018)

## **Coaches Roles**

### **A. Coaching – Provides support to educational leaders.**

**Knowledge:** Views coaching relationships as reciprocal. Understands the context of when to coach versus when to consult. It relies on coaching as the primary function. Consults when requested. Includes choices and maintains a capacity-building focus when consulting or teaching.

**Skills:** Is precise, accurate, and articulate. Skillfully uses strategies of paraphrasing, meditative questions, and assessment of client's present skills and knowledge. Coaches bring data to light in the environment and interact to support self-directed learning.

**Traits:** Identifies as a mediator of thinking. Allows others to solve their problems. Coaches extend invitations instead of mandates.

### **B. Teaching and Learning – Provides support for improved student learning and well-being.**

**Knowledge:** Understands significant concepts and best practices central to the teaching profession and core learning areas. Possesses instructional leadership expertise and experience to direct all staff in effective teaching and learning. Knowledgeable about assessment systems

and understands how to use assessments to design effective instruction for all students. Coaches understand and demonstrate the application of the Alaska Cultural Standards.

Skills: Models effective teaching in the classroom. Coaches adapt to different learning situations. Analyzes student data with Leadership to determine instructional programs. Applies the Alaska Cultural Standards to learning situations to support educator capacity in increasing student engagement and make content relevant for students.

Traits: Believes all students can learn and have a right to high-quality education. Believes that all educators act with the best intentions and can make decisions that will benefit their students. Recognizes that students and educators bring particular experiences, interests, enthusiasm, needs, and fears to the school setting.

**C. Progress and Achievement – Provides support for continuous improvement of education systems.**

Knowledge: Understands the change process and the research about how to facilitate change in a system. Understands the school improvement process and how to develop a meaningful school improvement plan collaboratively.

Skills: Assesses the school/district's current status and offers improvement recommendations based on current research. Coaches create a sense of urgency with schools and communities yet respect and honor past and present contexts. Coaches model the use of tools and strategies to facilitate continuous improvement (data collection analysis, precision goal setting, and results in monitoring).

Traits: Coaches show resilience in the face of constraints, frustrations, or adversity. Deals skillfully with challenges and adjusts willingly and aptly to multiple demands, shifting priorities, ambiguity, and rapid change.

**D. Learning Community – Builds and maintains credibility within the school and community.**

Knowledge: Understands factors that influence motivation and engagement. Understands, or seeks to understand, local culture and community values of the school.

Skills: Builds teams and reaches consensus. Apply conflict resolution strategies.

Traits: Shows a high degree of personal integrity in dealing with others. Demonstrates respect for cultural diversity and believes that community involvement in the education of children is essential.

### **E. Management of Technical Assistance – Provides high-quality technical assistance services.**

Knowledge: Keeps current on research in the field of school improvement and content areas.

Skills: Actively engages in own professional development. Effective with written and oral communication. Respond quickly to inquiries, concerns, and problems. Coaches manage time well and navigate the technological demands of virtual work. Engages in effective planning while critically evaluates own performance.

Traits: Believes in and demonstrates high standards of professional conduct and ethics. Eager, humble, confident, and reflective.

### **III. SSOS Coaching Program Coach Scope of Work**

The SSOS Coaching Program provides technical assistance to support schools and districts to improve systems and structures that increase student achievement. Coaches work collaboratively with educators to assess district and school needs and design and implement supports based on education research.

During the **2021-2022 school year**, the coaching program will continue to be involved in a transformational continuous improvement process. Coaches will work with their assigned site(s) through mostly virtual means. Virtual visit activities will be based on school need and may include:

- Conducting planning, reflecting, and problem resolving conversations
- Analyzing instructional data with leaders and staff
- Facilitation and co-facilitation of collaborative meetings or professional learning communities (PLCs)
- Providing models of Leadership, instruction, and management for educational leaders
- Delivering professional learning
- Assisting with creation, monitoring, and revising a school improvement plan that includes the seven turnaround principles and utilizes the Alaska Steps Towards Educational Progress and Partnership tool, or Alaska STEPP.
- Supporting the School Recognition and Support Team in the transition to the Four Domains of Rapid School Improvement.
- Providing resources, consultation services, and referrals to outside assistance.

In addition to virtual site visits, coaches offer continuing support to their site throughout the month via teleconference, phone, email, text, and other distance communication tools.

### **SCOPE OF SERVICES: State System of Support Coach**

#### **Duties & Responsibilities**

The SSOS Coaching Program's mission is to support districts and schools as they build the leadership capacity to implement sustainable school improvement strategies in schools with CSI Lowest 5% designations.

The SSOS program works with district and school staff to promote improvement in the Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement, including Turnaround Leadership, Talent Development, Instructional Transformation, and Cultural Shift. This includes, but is not limited to, work in these areas:

1. Develop, implement, and sustain the 4 Domains of Rapid School Turnaround and Improvement



2. Support development and implementation of evidence-based reading and literacy programs with the goal of all students reading at grade level by the end of Grade 3
3. Support school leaders to align local curriculum and assessments with Alaska State Standards
4. Promote and integrate the Alaska Cultural Standards into the districts of service.
5. Support training and administration of interim assessments
6. Leverage interim assessments and progress monitoring to inform data conversations and drive instructional decisions.
7. Increase data literacy and the use of data to inform instruction.
8. Develop structures with leaders to support quality instruction and effective interventions for all students with an emphasis on English Language Arts and Math
9. Foster a positive school climate and learning environment that is attentive to local culture.
10. Engage in staff collaboration through weekly leadership check-ins that discuss school progress.
11. Support alignment of school-level professional development policies and practices with resources and academic goals
12. Develop principals as instructional leaders using tools such as regular walkthroughs, precision goal setting, and school-wide initiatives.
13. Provide professional development opportunities for literacy, math, social and emotional learning, and leadership training.

With the ongoing implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), school assignments will be made at the beginning of the school year, based on a regional team model. The State reserves the right to change school assignments throughout the school year, depending on need.

### **Deliverables**

Contractor shall provide the following deliverables:

- SSOS School Success Coaches shall serve the State by:

- Attending training sessions and professional development opportunities offered by EED and School Recognition and Support (SRS)
  - May include but not limited to RTI/MTSS Conference, ASLI, bi-weekly meetings with the DEED School Recognition and Support Team, one-on-one sessions with SRS Program Administrator
- Documenting hours, topics, and categories of service for legislative and board reporting
- Submitting monthly invoice for each month of service
- Providing updates and progress as needed on School Improvement plans with/to the School Recognition and Support Specialist
- Collaborating to share resources and provide training and development across the State in various platforms focused on Alaska's Education Challenge's priorities using the 4 Domains of Rapid School Turnaround.
- SSOS School Success Coaches shall serve the region assigned by:
  - Being assigned to multiple schools within a region of Alaska.
  - Collaborating to share resources and provide training and development across the State in various platforms focused on the Alaska Education Challenge's priorities using the 4 Domains of Rapid School Turnaround.
  - As part of a team, providing leadership facilitation, professional development, and data analysis.
- SSOS School Success Coaches shall serve the districts assigned by:
  - Working in collaboration with the district leadership team to ensure alignment of Alaska Education Challenge, district strategic plans, and site-based school improvement plans.
  - Engaging district leadership in opportunities to best support school sites.

- Providing professional development on continuous improvement, literacy, supporting school improvement plans, and utilizing the 4 Domains of Rapid School Improvement to improve student outcomes.
- SSOS School Success Coaches shall serve school sites by:
  - Working with site leadership to provide guidance and support with needs assessments.
  - Supporting site leadership with facilitation of community/school-wide SWOT needs assessment conversations and data analysis.
  - Providing professional development on literacy and continuous improvement practices
  - Creating a plan of service, which supports the school improvement plan for each site.
  - Documenting quarterly reports based on quantitative and qualitative data for each location.
  - Serving as a point of contact for designated schools and provide leadership support to ensure school improvement plans are focused, specific, measurable, and implemented according to established timelines and within budget.

### **Coaching Agreement**

The Coaching Agreement defines the structures required to be in place and maintained to support the coach and school staff's collaborative work. The Coaching Agreement aims to establish a framework for a collaborative relationship between the coach, the district, and site leader. The Coaching Agreement is developed with the district team before the start of the school year. Initials and a signature will note district approval, and a district contact person will be identified and noted on the agreement. The SSOS coach and site leader will review the Coaching Agreement on the first site visit, write notes from the discussion on the final page, initial, sign, and return to the Managing Director.

### **Creation of Plan of Service**

The site leader and SSOS coach will synthesize the multiple sources of information (including the Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement) into a School Service Plan (SSP) modeled after and included in the school's improvement plan. The planning process should begin with a thorough Needs Assessment. A summary of the Needs Assessment will assist in setting Areas of Focus, listed as School Service Plan (SSP) Goals. SSP primary elements support progress in Alaska's Education Challenge's strategic priorities, especially early reading.

The goals for a SSP should provide support to the goals listed by the site's school improvement plan.

All SSP goals should follow the guidelines for **S.M.A.R.T.** goals:

- **Specific:** State what is to be accomplished.
- **Measurable:** How will accomplishment be demonstrated and evaluated?
- **Achievable:** Create challenging goals within the ability to achieve the outcome.
- **Relevant:** How does the goal align with key responsibilities and objectives?
- **Time-Bound:** Set a timely completion date for accomplishing the goal.

Identify baseline data utilized to document monthly progress related to the school's improvement goals. Actions, or tasks, are determined through collaborative coaching conversations with site leaders. Actions should mirror those included in the school's plan for corresponding goals. The actions applied to the SSP goal areas are summarized in the Coach's quarterly reports. The School Service Plan should include graphic displays of applicable data from the Site's Needs Assessment.

### **Virtual Site Visits: Ongoing Coaching and Technical Assistance**

Subsequent virtual site visits build on prior work. The coach instills a sense of urgency and assists with barriers as they present themselves. The principal, and the educators of the school, work with the coach to set the agenda for the support services. While serving the site, the coach will follow established district procedures and direct school staff to do so as well. Virtual site visits

should follow the outline as described in the Coaching Agreement and will include the following elements:

- Entry and exit meeting with the principal for planning, goal setting and reflection;
- Virtual attendance at the site's collaborative meeting;
- Data analysis and application of data analysis to instructional program;
- Classroom observations through video conferencing if possible and feedback not tied to evaluation of teachers;
- Collaborative walkthroughs by the site leader focusing on the process of walkthroughs and feedback, not evaluating teachers;
- Coaching conversations with teachers for planning and/or problem-solving;
- Instruction and/or classroom management modeling via virtual delivery;
- Virtual presentations to school staff and/or community;
- Specific actions focused on analyzing, facilitating, implementing, and monitoring the School Service Plan (SSP) improvement goals by completing/modifying existing actions and/or writing new actions.

### **Data Review and Distance Support**

Coaches continue to monitor progress and review new data. During the 2021-2022 school year, support is provided primarily via video conferencing, email, phone, text, and/or during DEED-approved, scheduled face-to-face events.

### **Reporting**

Reporting requirements are part of the deliverables in a coaching contract. Timely completion of all reports is necessary prior to approving invoices for payment each month.

### **School Service Plan (SSP)**

SSOS coaches create a School Service Plan (SSP) as indicated above that lists the measurable goals that define the coach's work, based on DEED's priorities, district-specific initiatives, and school needs assessments and goals.

### **Distance Coaching Reports**

SSOS coaches are responsible for completing regular site communication and support reports.

The purpose of these reports is to:

- Maintain communication between the coach, the site, the district, and DEED.
- Provide essential information regarding data, progress, actions, and goals.
- Document progress, challenges, and resources needed.

### **Monthly Log Reports**

SSOS coaches log data about their work in the Monthly Log. The coach's log lists activities, time spent, numbers of staff served, and topics addressed in actions and communications. This log is a continuous form that is updated each month in the SSOS Coaches Shared Google Drive.

## **V. SSOS Coaching Program Guiding Documents and Tools**

The SSOS Coaching Program strives to provide responsive support based on the context of each site and district. While all SSOS coaches use similar processes, each makes ongoing decisions about when a protocol or other tool will be most useful to the educators they support. SSOS coaches use the strategies and resources of the SSOS program and do not deviate from the basic tenets and program objectives, thus ensuring consistency and coherency.

Coaches participate in the SSOS program's professional development and pursue topics on their own to increase their knowledge and skills in the concepts and processes that align with the SSOS coachwork.

The following guiding documents and tools provide coaches with a foundation for the approach and goals of the SSOS program.

- Expectations for Priority Schools
- Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement (explained earlier and will be transitioning throughout the year)
- School and District Improvement Plans
- Expectations for Priority Schools
- Alaska's Education Challenge
- Alaska ELA and Math and Other Content Standards
- Alaska Cultural Standards for Educators
- Collaborative Meetings

### **1. Expectations for CSI Lowest 5% Schools**

The Alaska Department of Education has developed specific targets for schools that further define the Four Domains. The targets are based on education research and provide clear guidelines for district and school administration to set policy and establish systems. Coaches support the district and site staff in their implementation of the plans related to these expectations. Each expectation should have a related goal in the site's improvement plan.

### **2. School and District Improvement Plans**

The coach's role is to facilitate positive change in the school's or district's processes outlined in the school improvement documents. The school improvement documentation and upload into GMS is the responsibility of the district/school staff. The coach uses the needs assessment and school improvement plan as a vehicle to assist the site leader in finding potential gaps in the school or district's systems and structures.

School Improvement Plans derive from a comprehensive Needs Assessment tool structured to promote a continuous improvement process. Schools and districts assess their implementation of effective practice indicators, create action plans to address focus areas, and monitor progress, revising when needed. The process is an ongoing process carried out by a team of educators and

others committed to the school's growth and monitored throughout the school year. The School Improvement Plan serves as the Title I School and District Improvement Plan and must meet federal improvement planning requirements for schools receiving Title I funding.

School Improvement Plans are student-centered and equity-driven; as part of the continuous improvement process, these plans will transition from Alaska STEPP to the four domains for rapid school improvement: Turnaround Leadership, School Culture Shift, Talent Development, and Instructional Transformation. <https://csti.wested.org/> These plans are also expected to include a focus on strategic priorities of the Alaska Education Challenge; k-3 reading and other strategic priorities <https://education.alaska.gov/akedchallenge> and <https://education.alaska.gov/akedchallenge/alaska-strategic-priorities.pdf>

Coaches support staff in their understanding of the domains and indicators. Coaches assist the site leader, and when applicable, the leadership team must assess current implementation and define and focus their improvement goals. Educators and coaches discuss these goals using the planning, reflecting, and problem-solving coaching conversations. When requested, coaches also provide additional support toward implementing the school's plan by consulting, analyzing data, providing professional development, or facilitating school improvement conversations. The Plan of Service is based upon the school's improvement plan's corresponding goals and serves to provide focus points to the overall school improvement plan.

### **3. Alaska ELA and Math, and Other Content Standards**

Alaska has academic standards in the following content areas: English Language Arts, Math, Science, Geography, Government and Citizenship, History, Skills for a Healthy Life, Arts, World Languages, Technology, Employability, Library/Information Literacy, Cultural Standards, and Alaska History found in the Alaska Content and Performance Standards document.

The standards adopted by the State Board of Education in 2012 for English Language Arts and Mathematics are located in the Alaska English Language Arts and Mathematics Standards document.



Coaches support staff in accessing and implementing standards-based instruction aligned to the Alaska Standards. Rigorous implementation and formative assessment are keys to improving student achievement in schools. Support includes coaching, consulting, presenting, and providing professional development. Coaches continually assess the most effective means of delivery and choose an appropriate method. Also, coaches direct school staff to other resources to improve understanding and implementation of the Alaska Standards into classroom instruction.

#### **4. The Alaska Cultural Standards for Educators**

The standards and the accompanying rubric and activities assist the school or district in assessing the current implementation of culturally responsive educational practices and increasing these practices to benefit their students and community.

Coaches support staff in understanding the standards and rubric and can assist the site leader in assessing the current implementation. Planning and implementing more in-depth implementation of practices that support the standards is facilitated by the coach through the planning, reflecting, and problem-solving coaching conversations. In addition, coaches consult, model, and present to enhance understanding and implementation of the standards.

#### **5. Collaborative Meetings**

Many districts take part in early release days to facilitate the use of collaborative meetings, sometimes referred to as Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), to examine student work and improve instructional practices. Coaches support this effort by attending collaborative meetings, providing facilitation assistance when requested, and offering resource support for the staff. Coaches will become familiar with the type of collaborative meeting model promoted by the district in which they serve to best support the process at sites.

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# State System of Support Coaching Program

## Logistics and Guides

## **I. SSOS Communication Protocols**

These protocols relate to the State System of Support group communication and how the SSOS team communicates with the school districts that they serve. In any confidential communications, protocols are modified accordingly. These protocols should never substitute for courtesy or common sense.

**SSOS Coaches represent the DEED SSOS Coaching Program (SSOS CP) and the Commissioner of Education.**

- Communicate all issues and problems that arise at the sites served by the SSOS CP to the SRS Program Administrator and appropriate managing staff at the Department of Education and Early Development.
- All SSOS coaches support the initiatives and policies of DEED when working with school district staff, speaking with members of the public while in work status, and in written documents that pertain to their work for the SSOS CP.
- All written records, including email, notes, reports, and notes in shared SSOS Coach Shared Google Drive, are public documents shared with the state legislature and the public.

### **Communication within the SSOS coaching team**

- All written and oral communication should always be respectful, particularly of third parties. Any language that demeans others should never be a part of SSOS CP communication (i.e., it is inappropriate to include demeaning or derogatory comments regarding any educator with whom we work in any context).
- Reserve email for communicating with individuals or small groups with information that does not pertain to the group at large.

- The SSOS team relies upon transparent, open communication to work effectively. Coaches must use the email Cc to include district administrators, school staff, coaches, managing director, and department staff when the conversation pertains to their work.
- Coach judgment is relied upon to determine at which point to include others. In general, including those with authority at the beginning of a potentially high-risk issue.
- Concerning email correspondence with district staff, when in doubt, Cc: or Forward to the SRS Program Administrator.
- **General Email Manners**
  - Subject lines should succinctly explain the main topic of the email.
  - Emails should be limited to one main topic whenever possible to allow for filing and retrieval.
  - One-word replies, such as "thanks," are usually unnecessary.
  - CC with mindfulness and be aware that not all parties may need to be involved
  - If you require a reply or a confirmation of receipt, please specify this in your message
  - Always double-check the recipient list.
  - Avoid forwarding or copying trivial emails to others (jokes, stories, etc.).

## **Confidentiality**

Coaches are expected at all times to conform to standard educational practices as outlined in the Professional Code of Ethics. In particular, coaches are to protect the confidentiality of information of all persons with whom they work and access data about those individuals. These individuals include students, staff members, community members, other SSOS coaching staff members, and the Department of Education and Early Development.

Confidentiality pertains to information obtained in the course of providing professional services, including but not limited to personal information, student performance data, and information held in confidence between a staff member and the coach. In reports, coaches refer to individuals by their title ( i.e., principal, 3<sup>rd</sup>-grade teacher, student 1, or student 2) rather than by name.

Protection of student performance data includes withholding information that may lead to the identification of a student due to small class sizes. In these cases, individual student data must not be released in a grouping of five or fewer students.

### **Communication with Districts in which SSOS Coaches Serve**

Each district has unique protocols regarding communication between the district and the SSOS coaching team. In general, the SSOS Coaches communicate directly with both site leaders and teachers before and after the one site visit per year to design their time on-site and follow up as necessary. Each district is to assign a contact person at the district level and be listed on the service documentation plan. All initial communications with the district office should go to this contact person.

Each site is assigned a lead coach in the regional model to facilitate communication with the district office. Coordination of contact with the district office is the responsibility of the lead coach. The lead coach will also communicate information from the district office to the other coaches serving that site/district.

## **II. State System of Support Coaching Program Reports Guidance**

### **School Support Plan**

**Keep in mind that this school year is a transition year:** The School Support Plan is aligned to the school site improvement plan and needs assessment. The SSP is developed collaboratively with district and school administrative staff and coach during the first interaction in August or September. The SRS Program Administrator must approve a draft of the SSP before implementation. Review of goals, actions, and progress should be part of quarterly reporting. This includes designating new goals or continuing to work toward the implementation of current goals.

1. Prior to the development of the School Support Plan (SSP), site leaders, with the assistance of the coach, complete the Needs Assessment to review student achievement and other data to identify needs.
2. Identify the primary area(s) of focus as a result of an analysis of the Needs Assessment. The SSP may include graphic displays of applicable data from the Site's Needs Assessment.
3. Identify the actions for each of the four domain(s) from the school improvement plan and the Priority School Expectations related to the primary area(s) of focus.
4. For an area of focus, identify a S.M.A.R.T. SSP goal for this school year.
5. There is no maximum or minimum number of goals for a SSP.
6. For at least one measurable S.M.A.R.T. goal, the focus must be on raising student achievement with baseline data identified to track progress. Include graphic displays of data when appropriate.
7. For each goal, domain, and indicator, identify the current level of implementation.
8. For each goal, domain, and indicator, identify the data utilized to document monthly progress (i.e., PEAK, STAR360, AIMSweb, MAP, professional development agendas, staff feedback, and classroom observations).
9. For each goal, domain, and indicator, describe initial actions for implementation of the goal. Actions should mirror those included in the school's improvement plan for corresponding goals.
10. Include a table or schedule of proposed coach site visits and important school events, such as in-service dates, throughout the school year.

### **Quarterly Reports**

The reports completed by the State System of Support coaches are evidence-based documents based on direct observation and data analysis of the district and sites' performance. They are tools for communication with the district, school, and department and provide a record of progress and specific coach support provided to the site. Quarterly reports include reports on each goal in the Plan of Service. The Quarterly Reports should show any relevant data relating to

progress towards goal achievement. Quarterly Reports should include any information pertinent to the goals and actions that clarify the information. It should provide additional information to increase understanding or provide context to issues surrounding the school's efforts.

This report should be posted in Google Docs as requested by the Managing Director under the project for the respective school site within one week of the site visit. Send a final copy to the site leader and the district contact person. It is essential to complete the quarterly reports accurately, as they are public documents. Reports are read regularly by the SRS Program Administrator, with feedback provided as needed.

### **SSOS Coaching Program Monthly Coach's Log**

Coach logs record each coach's work (the deliverables in the scope of work). The log lists activities, time spent, numbers of staff served, and topics addressed in actions and communications. This data serves multiple purposes. It provides information to cross-reference to invoices, and it includes data that is useful in reviewing program design and implementation. It includes information for required program reports to the Alaska State Legislature. It is essential that each coach accurately fills in his or her log monthly. The Monthly Log is an Excel spreadsheet template that is cumulative throughout the school year. Coaches serve multiple sites but only submit one monthly log. The SRS Program Administrator is responsible for reviewing the logs and providing feedback as necessary.

### **Deliverables to be Recorded in the Monthly Coach's Log**

#### **Virtual Coaching**

Virtual and On-site visits (i.e., Virtual activities; site visits, services, etc.). The log entry includes week/dates, hours, staff served, category of service, and associated topics. NOTE that during the 2021-2022 school year, only one on-site visit to the school will occur, coinciding with back-to-school professional development days and/or school opening in the fall.

#### **EED Meetings and Events**

EED meetings include in-person and audio coach meetings, data briefings, conferences, partner calls, and community of practice sessions. Coaching partner work/meetings should be added to this section.

## **Comments**

Comments include any information that clarifies notations in the log and particular actions taken during the month not listed in the log categories.

**Note:** Preparation Time is not to exceed 3 hours per month as it is not a deliverable

## **Protocol for Submitting documentation**

Coaches will submit Plans of Service, Quarterly Reports, and Coaching Logs in the SSOS Coach Shared Google Drive. Coaches will submit monthly invoices via email to SRS Program Administrator.

### **Format titles as listed below:**

- School Support Plan
  - Coach Surname. POS. FY (i.e., Thompson. SSP. FY22)
- Quarterly Report
  - Coach Surname. Quarter# Report . Date (Month-year)Year (i.e., Thompson. Q3 Report. FY22)
- Monthly Coaching Log
  - Coach Surname. Coaching Log. FY (i.e., Thompson. Coaching Log. FY22)
    - Note: Excel document created by the SRS Program Administrator and shared with the individual coach to fill out monthly



### III. SSOS Coach Site-Visit Travel Guide (based on Covid-19 restrictions)

- Travel to and from school sites is time-consuming and expensive. Therefore, one Face-to-Face on-site meeting will be required to establish relationships and build rapport **(based on Covid-19 restrictions)**
  - \$3000 provided as part of the contract for travel and arrangements

Coaches will be allowed to travel to sites (in tandem) one time during the 2021-2022 school year. Coaches make all travel and lodging arrangements for themselves. The cost of travel is built into the contract.

**All sites require travel on small planes, and many places require travel from the airstrip to the school on snowmachines or ATVs. The following are suggestions on travel logistics from SSOS coaches.**

#### **Wear on the plane (besides the usual, after Oct 1)**

Warm, waterproof coat, hat, gloves, snow pants, and boots

#### **Packing Suggestions**

In your daypack, carry everything you need if your luggage gets bumped:

- A plastic baggie containing some cash, credit card and a driver's license
- Computer and cord
- Enough materials to do your job in a pinch
- Folder with info about airlines options, phone numbers, district contact numbers, local airline agents and your reservations info
- A change of essential clothes
- Comb, toothbrush and toothpaste
- All medications and a spare pair of glasses
- Sunglasses
- Snack and water bottle
- Cell phone, camera (if you want/have)

- Hand sanitizer

In a waterproof bag (a large tub is an excellent alternative to a suitcase) labeled with your name and phone#:

- Sleeping bag, small camp mattress, pillow if desired
- Silk or fleece sleeping bag liner as a 2nd option (most schools are too hot to use a sleeping bag)
- Microwavable dish and cup, lightweight spork
- Towel, washcloth
- Plastic bag for dirty clothes
- Clothes (pack to reuse as much as possible)
- Modest sleepwear
- Clean, sensible indoor shoes
- Shower shoes, toiletries
- Headlamp or flashlight
- Alarm clock
- Thin pile gloves to wear under mittens (gives you dexterity option and still protects against frostbite)
- Earplugs for plane
- Ski goggles for winter travel on four-wheelers/snow machines
- Sunglasses to deal with intense glare off snow in spring
- Face mask, neck gaiter, or balaclava to protect face against wind chill
- Lip gloss and/or hand cream to keep your skin from cracking in overheated, low humidity buildings in winter
- Hand warmers and toe warmers - put in parka pocket to use if stranded at an airstrip
- Small first aid kit including OTC cold medication, Imodium and aspirin
- Diversions such as a book, knitting, etc.

## Hints

- Most small air carriers have a 40# limit.
- Bring enough warm clothes to get outside, even in bad weather.
- Many rural Alaska schools and buildings are hot inside; bring layers of clothing to adjust as needed.

### **Food ideas**

Many villages lack food supplies, so expectations are that coaches bring their food on their site visits. Pack perishables as your first choice, but always pack back up if it gets frozen, lost, overheated, etc.

- Tea, drink mixes, cocoa
- Pasta mixes and foil packets of chicken or tuna
- Quick soups
- Oatmeal
- Bagels and cream cheese or peanut butter
- Ready-made non-refrigerated meals
- Backpacker food
- Granola bars or energy bars
- At some sites, you may want to bring bottled water or a water purifier & water bottle because of bad pipes or water quality issues

### **Hints**

- Pack food for the duration of your trip plus two days of being stranded.
- Pack your perishables separately if possible, wrap them in plastic, and label them as perishable.
- Freeze homemade food, wrap it well in plastic, and stick it in your food box or the middle of your clothes.

- Fresh produce is always a treat. If you're planning to cook dinner for yourself, consider packing enough to feed two or three. You never know when you'll have the chance to share.

### **Job-Related**

- A dongle that connects your particular computer to a VGA Projector
- A memory stick as a back-up with all materials you plan to use on-site
- Materials on your laptop or a thumb drive
- Bring your own materials when possible (paper, pens, paper clips, stickies, etc.)
- Phone card or a phone that works in that region

### **Helpful Hints**

- Bring some small bills for taxis; charges are often \$5 - \$7 in remote villages.
- Plan for weather delays.
- If you're staying in a teacher's classroom, you might want to bring a small gift for him/her. A candy bar, coffee, notepad, or CD of your favorite tunes means a lot to folks off the road system.
- Current magazines or fresh fruits and vegetables are always appreciated.

## **IV. Guide to Completing and Submitting Invoices**

Invoices are due the first of the month for the deliverables from the previous month. Invoices are sent directly to the SRS Program Administrator. Follow instructions in the SSOS Coach's Contract

### **Information to Include on Invoice**

- **Coach business name, coach name, address, and phone**
- **Invoice number (the number must be different each month)**
- **Coach contract number (provided by EED)**
- **Date invoice submitted**

- **State of Alaska, SSOS Coaching program, DEED address**
- **Sites Served**
- **Charges per Invoice:** Please include the description and amount on separate lines for professional services and travel
  - Virtual Coaching Visit hours
  - Travel (Site visit, RTI Conference, ASLI)
- **Total amount of invoice**

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## Appendix A: SSOS CP Contact Information

More Appendices coming soon

# State System of Support Coaching Program

## Appendices

Name	Phone	Email	General Duties & Programs
Allie Gardner	907-269-6754	<a href="mailto:allie.gardner@alaska.gov">allie.gardner@alaska.gov</a>	SRS Program Administrator
Samantha Carlon	907-269-4553	<a href="mailto:Samantha.carlon@alaska.gov">Samantha.carlon@alaska.gov</a>	School Recognition and Support Specialist
Tamara Van Wyhe	907-269-4583	<a href="mailto:tamara.vanwyhe@alaska.gov">tamara.vanwyhe@alaska.gov</a>	Director of Innovation and Education Excellence