

## Evaluating State Accountability Systems Under ESEA

### Module 4: Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) Schools

All states have developed or revised their state’s accountability system in response to requirements in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). A state’s accountability system includes multiple indicators, each of which illuminates a different facet of school performance or quality. There are three different types of possible criteria for identifying CSI schools:

- Based on all indicators, states must identify the lowest-performing 5% of Title I schools for comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) (i.e., “lowest-performing 5%” CSI criteria).
- States can also identify high schools that fail to graduate one third or more of their students as CSI (i.e., “low graduation rate” CSI criteria).
- States can also identify Title I schools identified for additional targeted support (ATSI) under ESEA Section 111(d)(2)(C)(D) that must meet the statewide exit criteria within a state-determined number of years as CSI (i.e., “ATSI exit status” CSI criteria).

This module focuses primarily on the “lowest-performing 5%” CSI criteria. Because states have minimal flexibility around the methodology for identifying CSI schools based on the “low graduation rate” CSI criteria, this module does not include reflection prompts on the “low graduation rate” CSI criteria. Reflection prompts on the methodologies for identifying CSI schools by the “ATSI exit status” CSI criteria are included in **Module 5: Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) Schools.**<sup>1</sup>

Results across accountability indicators drive school differentiation and identification in various ways. **Module 2A: State’s System of Annual Meaningful Differentiation (AMD)** addresses how indicator results drive annual differentiation of schools through summative ratings or through individual indicator results. This module (Module 4) addresses how indicator results drive the identification of the lowest-performing 5% of Title I schools (i.e., CSI schools).

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<sup>1</sup> This module focuses on the identification of CSI lowest-performing schools. Evaluation of methodologies for the identification of CSI schools based on failing to meet exit criteria for additional targeted support schools is included in **Module 5: TSI and ATSI Schools**.

*This module is part of the Evaluating State Accountability Systems Under the ESEA tool, which is designed to help state educational agency (SEA) staff reflect on how the state’s accountability system achieves its intended purposes and build confidence in the state’s accountability system design decisions and implementation activities.*

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States vary in their approach to identifying the “lowest-performing 5%” of Title I (i.e., CSI) schools. See Table 1 below for more details.

**Table 1. State Approaches to Identifying CSI schools**

Approach A	Approach B	Approach C
In many states, the same composite index used to generate a summative rating for AMD is also used to rank and identify the threshold score for Title I schools (below which 5% of Title I schools are identified as CSI schools). These states may skip some components of this module that pertain specifically to the composite index if they have already addressed them in <b>Module 2: State’s System of AMD</b> .	Other states use a composite index for CSI identification but not AMD. All components of this module should be applicable for these states.	A third category of states does not use a composite index for CSI identification; instead, these states use a set of thresholds (also referred to as “business rules” or “profiles”) across all indicators to identify CSI schools. For example, a threshold rule such as “flag all schools with each accountability indicator ranking in the bottom 10% of Title I schools” might capture 5% of Title I schools. If not, thresholds for individual indicators are adjusted to identify the required number of Title I schools. States using a set of thresholds across all indicators to identify CSI schools can skip claim considerations or evidence reflections that pertain specifically to composite indices, focusing instead on the reflections specific to CSI identification status.

Although certain requirements for identifying CSI schools are defined by statute, there are some areas for state-level discretion with regard to CSI schools. For example, states may choose to identify the lowest-performing 5% of each grade span across the state or include non-Title I schools in CSI identification (as long as the state also identifies at least the lowest-performing 5% of Title I schools and as long as school improvement funds under ESEA Section 1003 are only allocated to schools that meet the statutory definition of CSI). In addition, all states have flexibility in determining the statewide criteria by which schools may *exit* CSI status as long as those exit criteria ensure continued progress to improve student academic achievement and school success in no more than four years. Variations such as these, as well as the overall approach to CSI identification, should reflect the state’s theory of action and overall intended outcomes. To clarify the state’s theory of action, see **Module 1: Theory of Action**.

This module includes three sets of self-reflection prompts that are intended to address the following concepts for the CSI schools identification component within the larger state’s accountability system. These three sets of prompts are not intended to be discrete; instead, they are intended to work together to help you answer questions in the next sections of this module.

**Table 2. Overview of Module 4: CSI Schools**

Section	What is it?	Why is it important?	How should it be used?
Articulate the Rationale Behind the CSI School Identification Methodologies	A description of why the CSI identification methodologies are designed the way they are	It is important to develop a message that can be used for multiple audiences to describe the “what” and “why” behind CSI identification to communicate effectively about school identification.	The <b>rationale</b> asks you to describe the expected policy objective, behavioral intent, and expected results associated with CSI identification. This rationale can be used as a point of comparison for examining the results of school identification and will help you understand where the rationale may be misunderstood.
Consider Stakeholder Perceptions of the Rationale for Identifying CSI Schools	A reflection on whether stakeholders understand the rationale behind the CSI identification methodology that can help identify possible areas that may be misinterpreted or misunderstood by the public	Determining what assumptions or connections require more clarification can help minimize the public’s misunderstanding and help prioritize resources to support communication efforts.	The <b>stakeholder perceptions</b> section asks you to think about your rationale as an outsider. To what degree will stakeholders understand this rationale? How public is its supporting documentation? How might people interpret, use, or misinterpret school identification? This may help you identify what areas may need additional explanation or whether additional communication is necessary.

Section	What is it?	Why is it important?	How should it be used?
Assess Confidence in Operations and Results of Identifying CSI Schools	Based on your rationale and potential risk, an examination of your level of confidence that CSI design decisions are sound and evidence supports your assumptions	Determining your overall confidence in the results and presentation of the CSI methodology can help you determine where to collect evidence, make system revisions, or develop outreach materials.	The <b>confidence in operations and results</b> section will help you identify potential evidence that can help confirm CSI identification rationale and design. The rationale can also be used as a point of comparison for design decisions, and the strength of rationale can be used to focus attention on key confidence claims.

**Evaluating State Accountability Systems Under ESEA**  
**Module 4: Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) Schools**  
**Section 1. Articulate the Rationale Behind the Identification Methodology of CSI Schools**

In **Module 1: Theory of Action**, you mapped the overall theory of action for the state’s accountability system. Each component of the state’s accountability system should then support the overall theory of action. To ensure the components are coherent with the larger vision of the state, each component of the system will have its own *component rationale*, or mini-theory of action describing how it is intended to function.

Consider the following questions regarding the component rationale for the comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) identification methodology. The questions below are intended to help you think about the high-level design associated with CSI identification methodology and how it aligns with policy, behavioral expectations, and accountability results. Later in this module, you will think about the risk associated with certain aspects and the level of confidence you have in the operationalization of the methodology. These questions will be used as a high-level point of comparison.

**Table 3. Articulate the Rationale Behind the Identification Methodology for CSI Schools**

Articulate the Rationale Behind the Identification Methodology for CSI Schools	
Reflection Questions	Notes
<p><b>Policy intent:</b> Consistent with federal requirements, what state policy objective(s) are you trying to achieve through the CSI identification methodology? How does this policy intent drive the larger theory of action policy intent supporting intended level of differentiation, school improvement, and public outreach? Examples may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritizing the identification of schools with low performance across indicators measuring proficiency rates and academic growth.</li> <li>• Providing access to high-quality educational opportunities.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Policy mechanisms or levers:</b> Based on your policy intent, how do you expect the CSI identification methodology to communicate performance? Examples include thresholds of performance for indicators, identifying by grade span, etc.</p>	

<i>Reflection Questions</i>	<i>Notes</i>
<p><b>Behavioral intent:</b> What behaviors are you trying to incentivize through the CSI identification methodology? These may include behaviors for policymakers, state staff, district leaders, principals, educators, and the public. That is, what do you expect people to do with this information?</p>	
<p><b>Expected results:</b> For the CSI identification methodology, what data-based findings or trends do you expect to observe? These may include strong alignment between CSI identification status, results for prioritized indicators, and AMD results/ratings. These expectations provide additional comparisons to evaluate the technical characteristics of the indicators and overall CSI identification methodology results.</p>	

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**Module 4: Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) Schools**  
**Section 2. Consider Stakeholder Perceptions of the Rationale for Identifying CSI Schools**

The overall objectives and design of a state’s accountability system should be well understood. The greater the understanding, the less risk there is of accountability results being misinterpreted. After articulating or revisiting the rationale behind the CSI identification methodology in Section 1 of this module, SEA staff should examine the strength of the rationale behind the CSI methodology to ensure that it supports state accountability objectives and is functioning as intended (the focus of Section 3 of this module) and consistently with federal requirements. In addition, SEA staff should examine whether the public perceptions of the system promote its intended behaviors. Together, the technical soundness and public perceptions of the CSI identification methodology are likely to contribute to its success.

Use the reflection questions in the following table (Table 4) to consider whether the design and presentation of the CSI identification methodology and its rationale is (or is likely to be) understood by stakeholders.

**Table 4. Stakeholder Perceptions of the Rationale for Identifying CSI Schools**

Stakeholder Perceptions of the Rationale for Identifying CSI Schools			
Perception Reflection	Why is it important?	Reflection Questions	Notes
<i>Stakeholder Perceptions of the CSI Identification Methodology</i>	Rationales help “connect the dots” of the state’s accountability system. It is important that stakeholders and the public understand the rationale behind CSI identification (as articulated in Section 1 of this module), which might include the mechanisms, connections, and assumptions that inform design decisions and evidence collection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you easily explain the rationale for how your state’s CSI identification methodology supports your policy objectives? (Note: For more information, please refer back to your reflections from <b>Module 1: Theory of Action.</b>)</li> <li>• Can you identify policy levers embedded in the rationale that could compromise the attainment of policy intent?</li> <li>• Does the design of the CSI identification methodology (e.g., weights, performance standards for indicators and summative ratings) support the intended level of differentiation among schools?</li> </ul>	

Perception Reflection	Why is it important?	Reflection Questions	Notes
<i>Potential Misunderstanding of the CSI Identification Methodology</i>	Public perceptions are important to increase buy-in for the system. Without considering public perceptions, advocacy groups may not understand how their concerns have been addressed, and stakeholders may not understand why indicators were weighted certain ways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which policy mechanisms or levers of the CSI identification methodology are most likely to receive public attention? Why?</li> <li>What constituencies, stakeholders, or advocacy groups might question the rationale for the CSI identification methodology? What kinds of questions would they ask?</li> <li>Is the CSI identification methodology coherent with local accountability policies or practices, and is this coherence communicated to the public?</li> </ul>	

Based on the results of your previous reflections, consider the degree to which you believe the following regarding (1) communication and clarity of your rationale and (2) the risk of the public misunderstanding the rationale.

**Table 5. Clarity and Risk of the CSI School Identification Methodology**

	No Clarification Needed	Clarification May Be Needed	Additional Clarification Needed	Notes
<b>Communication and Clarity of Rationale</b>	We have clearly stated the rationale behind CSI identification methodology, and the rationale reflects the overall objectives for the accountability and support system. These expectations are based on past experience or research and are readily available to the public.	We have stated the rationale behind CSI identification methodology, but the rationale may not clearly reflect the overall objectives for the accountability and support system. These expectations may have some support from previous experience or research. Some of this rationale is available to the public.	We have not clearly stated the rationale behind CSI identification methodology, or the rationale does not reflect the overall objectives for the accountability and support system. These expectations have not been supported with prior experience or research. Supporting materials are not available to the public.	



Risk of Misunderstanding the Rationale	Low	Moderate	High	Notes
	We have identified possible areas of CSI identification methodology that might be misunderstood by the public. Based on this examination, we have clarified aspects of the methodology and created clear documentation explaining the methodology.	We have examined what parts of CSI identification methodology might be misunderstood by the public but have not clarified them fully. Documentation specifically addressing areas of risk may or may not be available.	We have not examined CSI identification methodology for areas that could be misunderstood.	

For areas that need additional clarification or those that are high risk, you may need to prioritize future efforts. The potential next steps described below are important to consider as you review the confidence claims in the next section. If the rationale for the CSI identification methodology needs clarification or the risk for misunderstanding is high, what would you do next? For example, an undocumented rationale *may* increase the risk that CSI identification is being misunderstood because of a lack of documentation, or it may be a result of incomplete or less-than-ideal assumptions. These considerations are intended to help prioritize next steps in supporting stakeholder perceptions of the state’s accountability system.

**Table 6. Potential Next Steps Around Stakeholder Perceptions of the Rationale for Identifying CSI Schools**

Area of Exploration	Potential Next Steps	Notes
<i>Communication and Clarity of Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarify the rationale behind your CSI identification methodology. Ensure it supports your overall theory of action and the policy objectives associated with your state’s accountability system.</li> <li>Clarify how you expect the CSI identification methodology to communicate school performance. Clarify how thresholds of performance for overall ratings, if applicable, and indicators can support the CSI identification methodology’s policy objective(s).</li> <li>Document how you have addressed the two bullet points above. Ensure this information is presented, formatted, and available in a way that can be shared with the public and educators throughout the state.</li> </ul>	

Area of Exploration	Potential Next Steps	Notes
<i>Misunderstanding the Rationale</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify what aspects of the CSI identification methodology are likely to receive the most public attention. Specify whether there are particular design decisions, indicators, or reports that might be controversial or difficult to understand.</li> <li>• Refine messages to make controversial or challenging aspects of the CSI identification methodology more accessible. Anticipate the types of questions (or engage in additional listening sessions) to highlight the most important issues to address.</li> <li>• Document how you have addressed the two bullet points above. Identify how responses from the public perceptions and CSI identification methodology rationale <i>Next Steps</i> can be compiled into a single set of resources.</li> </ul>	

**Evaluating State Accountability Systems Under ESEA**  
**Module 4: Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) Schools**  
**Section 3. Assess Confidence in the Operations and Results of Identifying CSI Schools**

As part of validating the theory of action behind the state’s accountability system, it is important to consider whether the evidence generated by the CSI identification methodology upholds the underlying rationale. A state’s accountability system can be thought of as a measurement instrument that helps the public understand the degree to which schools and districts meet the state’s educational objectives and priorities. Furthermore, a state’s accountability system and their results serve as a policy lever to incentivize actions that help achieve those same objectives and priorities.<sup>2</sup> To what degree is that happening? If states can identify sufficient evidence that upholds the assumptions associated with the CSI identification methodology, then an argument can be made that CSI identification results are valid for identifying schools.

Respond to the following prompts to engage in the reflection around the operations and results of CSI identification:

1. Read the claim, consideration, and potential sources of evidence.
2. Examine the specific evidence available in your state. Reflect on whether you believe you have collected enough evidence to be confident in the claim stated or whether there is a need for further examination.
3. Finally, respond to questions that pose whether you have (a) sufficiently explored the confidence claims below and (b) believe that you have collected enough evidence that these claims can be confirmed. Some questions may be based on opinion, whereas others will require an examination of data, supplemental analyses, or conversations with other SEA colleagues.

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<sup>2</sup> See [Accountability Identification Is Only the Beginning: Monitoring and Evaluating Accountability Results and Implementation](#) from the Council of Chief State School Officers for more information. Note: The inclusion of links to resources and examples do not reflect their importance, nor is it intended to represent or be an endorsement by the Department of any views expressed, or materials provided. The U.S. Department of Education does not control or guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of any outside information included in this document.

**Table 7. Assess Confidence in the Operations and Results of Identifying CSI Schools**

<b>Claim 1: Schools identified for CSI align with the overall system theory of action.</b>	
<p>Statutory requirements specify directly how states must identify schools that require the most support. Despite the seemingly straightforward nature of CSI identification, states—whether using index or dashboard approaches to differentiation—should confirm that CSI identification provides meaningful information and that identification methodologies align with the overall theory of action for accountability and improvement efforts.</p> <p><i>For each consideration, review the key questions presented and use the key evidence checks to help answer those questions.</i></p>	
<b>Consideration 1.1: The lowest-performing Title I schools (i.e., those that are identified for CSI) are also those in need of the most support.</b>	
<b>Assess Confidence in Operations and Results</b>	
<b>Reflection Prompts</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<p><b>Key questions for the indicator:</b> What is the relationship among CSI identification status, the system of AMD results, and results from needs assessments for schools?</p>	
<p><b>Why is it important?</b> Schools identified for CSI demonstrate a combination of under-performance on key school outcomes and significant needs at the school level, the district level, or a combination of both. It is important to confirm that CSI identification methodologies align with state performance expectations and needs-assessment processes.</p>	
<p><b>Key evidence checks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare CSI status to results of needs assessments at the school level and across schools within districts, if applicable.</li> <li>• Compare CSI status to average per-pupil funding at the school level across all schools identified for CSI. In addition, compare these averages between CSI and non-CSI schools and whether non-CSI schools exhibit a higher per-pupil funding average than the CSI school average.</li> <li>• Determine whether all categories of school identification (CSI, TSI, ATSI) align with overall AMD results. This may include examining the relationship between CSI status and summative ratings (for index systems) or indicator scores (for both index and dashboard systems).</li> </ul>	

Reflection Prompts	Notes
<p><b>Potential next steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depending on the results of CSI comparisons using needs-assessment results, determine whether there are any misalignments (e.g., CSI identification status does not align with lower needs-assessment ratings). If that is the case, consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Revising the CSI identification methodology to prioritize indicators that align with measures of the needs assessment</li> <li>– Modifying needs assessments to prioritize measures that align with indicators of CSI identification</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Based on examinations of average per-pupil funding, if average rates are relatively high among non-CSI schools, consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Introducing indicators in CSI identification methodology that align with measures that correlate with school spending, such as school climate</li> <li>– Modifying per-pupil funding formulas to better align with outcomes prioritized in CSI identification methodology</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If CSI schools exhibit ratings that do not align with the state’s theory of action (e.g., “C” ratings or higher), then consider modifying mechanisms in the identification methodology such as the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Cutting scores for composite index scores for the assignment of summative ratings</li> <li>– Weighting of indicators in the composite index</li> <li>– Adding rules to supplement cut-score ranges (e.g., “CSI schools may receive a summative rating no greater than a “D.”)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If CSI schools exhibit high scores or ratings for indicators central to a state’s theory of action (e.g., a high academic growth score), then consider modifying mechanisms in the CSI identification methodology, such as the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Weighting of the respective indicator(s) in the composite index</li> <li>– Thresholds for indicator scores in school profiles that define CSI status</li> <li>– Other business rules that give priority to certain indicators</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

**Consideration 1.2:** CSI identification determination captures all grade spans meaningfully.

**Assess Confidence in Operations and Results**

Reflection Prompts	Notes
<b>Key questions for the indicator:</b> To what extent are the schools identified for CSI representative of all grade spans in the state?	
<b>Why is it important?</b> CSI identification rates across grade spans are influenced by the order of identification rules among elementary, middle, and high schools.	
<b>Key evidence checks:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compare the proportion of Title I schools by grade span to the identification rates of CSI schools across grade spans.</li> </ul>	
<b>Potential next steps:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the distribution of CSI status across grade spans is not comparable to the distribution of all Title I schools across grade spans, revisions or supplemental rules may be necessary for the CSI identification methodology. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider identifying the bottom 5% of Title I schools from each grade span for CSI status to total 5% of all Title I schools.</li> <li>Critically evaluate how the distribution of CSI schools across grade spans aligns with the state theory of action for overall improvement (e.g., if the state is prioritizing early intervention to increase reading levels by Grade 3, then a disproportionate identification of elementary schools for CSI may, in fact, align with the state’s theory of action for improvement and early intervention).</li> <li>Consider differentiating support for CSI schools based on the identified school’s grade span of schools (e.g., if disproportionate high school CSI identification results in an unusually low rate of elementary and middle school identification, consider differentiating supports for high schools compared to elementary and middle schools).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

**Consideration 1.3:** CSI identification determinations align with objectives for subgroups.

**Assess Confidence in Operations and Results**

Reflection Prompts	Notes
<b>Key questions for the indicator:</b> What is the relationship between CSI status, the proportion of historically disadvantaged students (race/ethnicity, English learners and students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged) in a school?	
<b>Why is it important?</b> Subgroup performance has substantial implications for schools identified for targeted support and improvement (TSI) or additional targeted support and improvement (ATSI). A challenge for CSI schools is that overall performance levels can mask subgroup performance of low-performing subgroups. Consider examining performance and progress for subgroups in CSI schools to monitor progress or the presence of any achievement gaps as CSI schools receive support.	
<b>Key evidence checks:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compare the average percentage of subgroup performance across CSI schools to the average percentage of subgroup performance across non-CSI schools.</li><li>• Determine the number of non-CSI schools with subgroups performing better than those subgroups at CSI schools.</li><li>• Compare HD subgroup performance on key indicators in CSI schools to HD subgroup performance on key indicators in non-CSI schools. This should include the use of data disaggregated by specific subgroup.</li></ul>	

Reflection Prompts	Notes
<p><b>Potential next steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If there are relatively high proportions of higher-performing subgroups in non-CSI schools compared to CSI schools, then evaluate whether this aligns with objectives for support of lower-performing subgroups in the state. Examine the relationships between indicator results and proportions of subgroups with low performance to determine which indicators have high correlations with subgroups. If the state’s theory of action is to provide more support to schools with high populations of low-performing subgroups, do the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Ensure that the correlations between low-performing subgroups and indicator results are as expected. If there is not a significant correlation between CSI status and subgroup scores on key indicators, consider adjusting the weightings of key indicators or how they are otherwise prioritized to identify CSI schools.</li> <li>– Test the relationship between the English language proficiency (ELP) progress indicator and CSI status in particular to ensure that the ELP progress indicator is supporting the state’s objectives around supporting English learners (for more information, please see <b><u>Sub-module 3D: English-Language Proficiency Indicator</u></b>).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
Claim 1 Reflection Prompts	Claim 3 Response
Reflecting on your notes above, consider your confidence in responding to the reflection prompts below.	
My state has sufficiently explored the confidence claims above to understand how our CSI determinations align with our state objectives.	Yes/No
We have collected enough evidence to sufficiently address the key questions and can confirm the CSI determinations are functioning as intended.	Yes/No



**Claim 2: CSI identification results in meaningful exploration of and continuous improvement action taken in response to indicator results.**

CSI identification is a signal indicating schools are significantly under-performing across the state’s accountability indicators. However, statutory language in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESEA) includes a strong focus on support, planning, and continuous improvement. It is important to evaluate and understand the degree to which CSI identification results in the examination of accountability data, how those data are linked to capacity building and local data, and how this information can be used to drive changes in behavior. *For each consideration, review the key questions presented and use the key evidence checks to help answer those questions.*

**Consideration 2.1:** Systems and processes are in place that will enable adults to access and understand CSI-specific accountability results in meaningful ways.

**Assess Confidence in Operations and Results**

Reflection Prompts	Notes
<b>Key questions for the indicator:</b> Are technology systems established that will house relevant data and deliver them to key stakeholders who enact improvements? Are protocols and processes established to ensure system intake and delivery of data? Are communication systems established to ensure meaningful and timely delivery and exploration of data?	
<b>Why is it important?</b> The quality and completeness of systems at the state, district, and school levels can differ significantly. This may be especially true for schools identified for CSI.	

Reflection Prompts	Notes
<p><b>Key evidence checks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider examining the degree to which systems, processes, and procedures are in place to support the meaningful exploration of data to support continuous improvement.</li> <li>• Conduct a self-assessment of current practices that evaluates the degree to which district and school technology, systems and processes, and communications support the meaningful exploration of and access to data. It is also important to consider how needs in these areas may differ between CSI schools and non-identified schools, especially with regard to how the state responds to support needs at the district or school levels.</li> <li>• For technology, consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Whether hardware and software systems are in place on the data intake side that can practicably capture and report accountability data</li> <li>– Whether hardware and software systems are in place on the data consumer side that can practicably present and manipulate data to meet the needs of end users</li> <li>– Whether educators have been granted the proper authorizations to access data, given privacy considerations</li> <li>– Whether staff are in place with the capacity to modify and/or program software on an ongoing basis as needs are clarified</li> </ul> </li> <li>• For protocols and processes, consider whether protocols have been identified for the intake of data from capture at the source level to input into state and district systems that are specific to CSI school performance.</li> <li>• For communications, consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Whether data mapping has been documented and disseminated with appropriate messaging to technical status developing the data pipeline</li> <li>– Whether expectations and processes for using data have been documented and disseminated to educators</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

Reflection Prompts	Notes
<p><b>Potential next steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convene working groups at the district or state level to respond to results of self-reflection. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– As needed, develop clear data maps to document the flow of data for all accountability indicators and additional reporting elements for state report cards.</li> <li>– Develop plans to phase in progressively more meaningful data as acquisition and development of hardware and software becomes feasible.</li> <li>– Identify additional staff and resources needed to implement and maintain systems.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Conduct focus groups of educators regarding their current and prospective use of data. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Examine protocols of communities of practice around data to determine what data points should be prioritized.</li> <li>– Examine current procedures for accessing and generating data reports.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>2.2: Stakeholders have the capacity to use the data in a meaningful way to enact improvements.</b>	
<b>Assess Confidence in Operations and Results</b>	
Reflection Prompts	Notes
<p><b>Key questions for the indicator:</b> What level of knowledge do key stakeholders have to access and capture data in a useful format? What level of data literacy do key stakeholders have to interpret data to identify root causes of problems and appropriate evidence-based practices (EBPs) to address them? What level of capacity do key stakeholders have to meaningfully implement EBPs to impact student outcomes?</p>	
<p><b>Why is it important?</b> It is likely that schools identified for CSI will need support in building capacity around data awareness, literacy, and use related to selecting relevant and effective interventions. Putting in place systematic training and data collection can help states evaluate whether efforts to improve educator capacity are well designed and well targeted.</p>	

Reflection Prompts	Notes
<p><b>Key evidence checks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convene working groups that include principals and department heads to assess the training needs across the areas of data access, data literacy, and strategy implementation aligned to local needs.</li> <li>• Conduct formative examinations of educator knowledge at training events to support these three areas.</li> <li>• Collect artifacts of teacher and leader performance during evaluation cycles that can serve as evidence of data literacy and reflect the capacity to use EBPs effectively.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Potential next steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and conduct professional development events and resources to support capacity building in the areas of data access, data literacy, and improvement strategy implementation aligned to local needs.</li> <li>• Develop resources and training for locating and selecting EBPs (for more information, please see <b><u>Module 7: State Support System for Identified Schools</u></b>).</li> <li>• Embed development of educator proficiency in these three areas into educator evaluation and development systems.</li> </ul>	
<b>2.3 Designating schools as CSI positively incentivizes stakeholder behavior in a way that outweighs potential unintended consequences.</b>	
<b>Assess Confidence in Operations and Results</b>	
Reflection Prompts	Notes
<p><b>Key questions for the indicator:</b> What is the relationship between CSI status and behavior of educators and staff at the school level? What is the relationship between CSI status and district behaviors?</p>	
<p><b>Why is it important?</b> CSI identification can be a pathway to help focus district and school efforts on relevant and impactful improvement strategies. It will be important to observe, monitor, and evaluate whether CSI identification leads to positive changes in behavior and whether any unintended negative consequences emerge.</p>	

Reflection Prompts	Notes
<p><b>Key evidence checks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate the extent to which CSI identification promotes positive behaviors that advance meaningful learning. These may include classroom and artifact observations, evaluating alignment of communities of practice, or interviewing and observing school-leadership efforts.</li> <li>• Evaluate the extent to which CSI identification promotes negative behaviors.</li> <li>• Evaluate the extent to which CSI identification promotes positive behaviors at the district level that facilitate systemic examinations of school needs that better align district support.</li> </ul>	

Reflection Prompts	Notes
<p><b>Potential next steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When evaluating whether CSI identification promotes behaviors that advance meaningful learning, consider the following:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Observe classrooms and artifacts to determine whether teachers adjust practices to respond to areas of improvement identified by accountability results.                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Are they integrating the use of accountability results and classroom-level data into professional development and demonstrating how data drive instructional adjustments?</li> <li>▪ Is there an emphasis on professional development (e.g., emphasizing teaching standards around the integration of data into instructional adjustments)?</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Determine whether communities of practice utilize data that align with areas of improvement identified by accountability results. For example:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Are there updated protocols for communities of practice that integrate accountability results and related data?</li> <li>▪ How are local training and support efforts aligned to these protocols?</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Determine whether school leadership is communicating and supporting priorities that align with areas of improvement identified by accountability results. This might include the following:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adjusting principal training (e.g., integrating capacity building for supporting school improvement in response to accountability results).</li> <li>▪ Updating principal evaluation and professional development systems (e.g., prioritizing use of data and response to accountability results, including communication and support).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

Reflection Prompts	Notes
<p><b>Potential next steps (continued):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When evaluating whether CSI identification promotes negative behaviors, consider the following:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Audit state tests to ensure that there are no irregularities in procedures and/or results. To help prevent irregularities, consider providing intervention and support to teachers to help them integrate authentic adjustments to instruction.</li> <li>– Analyze state results by depth of knowledge, complexity, or coverage of items to determine whether gains are meaningful (e.g., instructional practices focused on test-taking strategies might not meaningfully increase depth of knowledge). Consider providing intervention and support to teachers to help them integrate authentic adjustments to instruction.</li> <li>– Survey teachers or conduct focus groups to measure perceptions around accountability, including buy-in and responses to accountability results. Consider working with teachers to develop meaningful, realistic approaches to supporting changes in instruction or curricular use.</li> <li>– Monitor teacher retention statistics to determine how accountability results might be impacting perceptions around quality of work and what can be done to improve perceptions.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

Reflection Prompts	Notes
<p><b>Potential next steps (continued):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When evaluating whether CSI identification promotes examinations of school needs and improved district support, consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Confirm that school improvement plans reflect accountability results and the results of local needs assessment. This may require the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Providing additional support around reviewing accountability results and conducting/using local needs assessments to drive school improvement plans</li> <li>▪ Ensuring supports are in place for the identification and selection of EBPs</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Review monitoring reports for implementation information and responses of district staff. Results of monitoring reports and response may require the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Revisions to promote buy-in at the school level regarding improvement activities identified in school improvement plans</li> <li>▪ Revisions to ensure adequate training and resources are in place for successful implementation</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
Claim 2 Reflection Prompts	Claim 3 Response
Reflecting on your notes above, consider your confidence in responding to the reflection prompts below.	
My state has sufficiently explored the confidence claims above to understand how stakeholders understand our CSI determinations and improvement plans.	Yes/No
We have collected enough evidence to sufficiently address the key questions and can confirm that stakeholder engagement around CSI determinations is functioning as intended.	Yes/No



**Claim 3: CSI identification and exit mechanisms for identified schools reflect meaningful differentiation within and across school classifications.**

CSI identification methodologies differ in their degree of differentiation and prioritization of outcomes. It will be important to ensure that the system of AMD serves its intended purpose to differentiate performance, monitor progress, and detect changes in performance for the lowest-performing schools (i.e., schools identified for CSI).

*For each consideration, review the key questions presented, and use the key evidence checks to help answer those questions.*

**Consideration 3.1:** The state’s CSI identification methodology can meaningfully detect differences among or changes in the performance of lowest-performing schools.

**Assess Confidence in Operations and Results**

Reflection Prompts	Notes
<b>Key questions for the indicator:</b> Are CSI and non-CSI schools meaningfully differentiated by their current-year performance (i.e., are their respective AMD results meaningfully different)? How does this differentiation change over time?	
<b>Why is it important?</b> States should be aware of the performance ranges for schools identified as CSI. This can help inform needs assessments, data exploration, and support prioritization of supports, especially when examining schools that are at risk of CSI identification.	
<b>Key evidence checks:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For schools identified for CSI, examine the range of performance on indicators (e.g., composite index scores or the range of school dashboard profiles).</li> <li>• Compare CSI school performance to that of non-CSI schools at risk of being identified for CSI (e.g., non-CSI schools in the six- to 10th-percentile of Title I schools).</li> <li>• Determine the relationship <i>over time</i> between CSI identification status and scores on indicators (for both summative rating systems and other types of systems).</li> </ul>	

Reflection Prompts	Notes
<p><b>Potential next steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within the set of schools identified for CSI, it is helpful to understand the range of performance between the first and fifth percentile schools. Examining the range of performance overall (for summative rating states) and on specific indicators can help in grouping CSI schools by level of need, by level of state support, or identifying performance and progress trends overall or among subgroups.</li> <li>• Depending on the state’s theory of action, the differences in results between CSI and non-identified CSI schools can vary. Determine how differentiated CSI schools and non-CSI schools actually are, by overall score or performance on individual indicators. For example, CSI high schools for a particular state might have proficiency rates ranging from 30% to 40%, and non-CSI schools near the CSI threshold (e.g., within the 6%–10% percentile) might have a proficiency rate range of 32% to 42%. This similarity in ranges might have significant implications for how states adjust indicator weights or otherwise prioritize indicators or how states approach differentiation of supports.</li> <li>• For CSI schools, analyze the relationship between overall results and indicator-level results over 2 or more years to help better understand the drivers of improvement over time and consequently how to adjust indicator priorities or responses to results. This may be particularly helpful for improving schools that fail to meet exit criteria, which are discussed in the next consideration.</li> </ul>	
<b>Consideration 3.2:</b> Exit criteria are calibrated with a level of improvement considered meaningful for indicator scores.	
<b>Assess Confidence in Operations and Results</b>	
Reflection Prompts	Notes
<b>Key questions for the indicator:</b> How reasonable are exit criteria when compared to typical changes in results over time?	

Reflection Prompts	Notes
<p><b>Why is it important?</b> Exit criteria are important drivers for CSI identification status and support levels. Ensuring the reasonableness of exit criteria while still reflecting meaningful and rigorous progress is important for developing a credible state accountability system that supports continuous improvement.</p>	
<p><b>Key evidence checks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the exit criteria (and their intent) is documented, clearly described, and available to schools and the public.</li> <li>• Determine the magnitude and volatility of performance for indicators and index scores (if applicable) over time and how those changes compare to the exit criteria.</li> <li>• Based on trend data, current data and projected performance data over time, compare CSI school performance to exit criteria to understand the degree to which schools may not exit CSI status.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Potential next steps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frame exit criteria in a meaningful and accessible way that communicates expectations for improvement aligned with the state’s objectives and the state’s accountability system’s theory of action. It may be worth reframing or bolstering communications around the support-oriented nature of CSI identification and the value of meeting exit criteria.</li> <li>• Evaluating the rate at which CSI schools are meeting exit criteria using trend data, projections, and current performance can help contextualize the range of improvement across CSI schools. If exit expectations reflect unattainable criteria or criteria that are too easily met, consider revising exit criteria by doing the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Evaluating thresholds or cut scores at the indicator level required for exit to reflect meaningful yet attainable progress</li> <li>– Evaluating the number of years of improvement required for exit to adjust the overall level of supports received and ensure sustained improvements</li> <li>– Determining whether there are other measures that can be used to support interpretations of accountability results</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

Claim 3 Reflection Prompts	Claim 3 Response
Reflecting on your notes above, consider your confidence in responding to the reflection prompts below.	
My state has sufficiently explored the confidence claims above to understand how our CSI exit criteria aligns with our state objectives.	Yes/No
We have collected enough evidence to sufficiently address the key questions and can confirm the CSI exit criteria is functioning as intended.	Yes/No