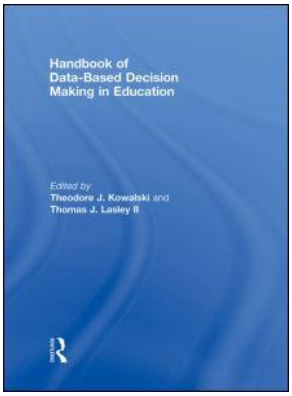

Handbook of Data-Based Decision Making in Education

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Using Data to Assess School Culture

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24

Using Data to Assess School Culture

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Across virtually all states, policy makers have shifted from centralized change strategies to tactics intended to produce improvements at the individual school level. This adjustment has been prompted by the realization that needs and resources among schools, even within most districts, are dissimilar—a condition that largely explains why federal and state generic reforms did not achieve their objectives (Baumann, 1996). Authors who have analyzed the drift toward decentralized school reform (e.g., Hall & Hord, 2001; Sarason, 1996; Spady, 2001) caution, however, that school-based initiatives will suffer the same fate if reformers ignore or fail to improve negative school cultures. This insightful conclusion has made culture change a core reform strategy (Fullan, 2001a); and consequently, diagnosing and altering counterproductive assumptions influencing educator behavior have become imperative tasks (Schein, 1992).

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how two types of data, those derived quantitatively from inventories and those derived from a state accountability program, provide functional evidence that can be used to identify and analyze school culture. First, culture change is defined and its relevance to school reform explained. Then four examples of standardized assessment instruments and aspects of Kentucky's accountability programs are presented to demonstrate that these sources can generate relevant diagnostic data. Last, recommendations are made for broadening research on assessing and evaluating school culture.

Understanding and Assessing School Culture

Districts and schools are organizations; that is, they are social inventions (Johns, 1988) that have been deliberately designed to achieve specific goals (Reitz, 1987). Composed of people functioning independently and in groups, schools have often been compared to biological systems, most notably, the human body. Owens (2001), for example, wrote that groups and individuals function interdependently much like cells and molecules, and therefore, when one part of the system malfunctions, other

parts are usually affected. Organizations have also been compared to mechanical systems. Morgan (1986), for example, explained that an organization's parts are purposely designed to interface with each other to ensure a minimum loss of energy. Both metaphors demonstrate that districts and schools are complex systems in which outputs are produced by an intricate and usually inconstant mix of causes (Weick, 1979).

Defining School Culture

Organizational climate is a concept that determines how people feel about organization (Hanson, 2003); it is an enduring quality experienced by organizational members that subsequently influences their behavior (Burton, Lauridsen, & Obel, 1999). This characteristic is the equivalent of a personality. According to Taguiri (1968), climate is composed of four elements: *ecology* (physical attributes), *milieu* (social attributes), *organization* (structural attributes), and *culture* (symbolic attributes). Culture, consisting of an invisible framework of norms emanating from shared values and beliefs, is commonly considered the vaguest but most important of these elements (Deal & Kennedy, 1982). Noted scholar Edgar Schein (1990) defined culture as:

> (a) a pattern of basic assumptions, (b) invented, discovered, or developed by a given group, (c) as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, (d) that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore (e) is to be taught to new members as the (f) correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (p. 111)

Through its norms, culture influences both how employees do their work (Schein, 1996; Trimble, 1996) and the degree to which employees promote and accept change (Duke, 2004; Leithwood, Jantzi, & Fernandez, 1994).

Though all public schools share some aspects of a generic culture (Fullan, 2001a, 2001b; Sarason, 1996), the *strength* and the *quality* of individual school cultures vary. Culture strength refers to the extent to which norms and values are clearly defined and rigorously enforced (Cox, 1993). Maslowski (2001, 2006) explains that even if only a minority of employees shares the same convictions, a school could have a strong culture if a set of convictions is consistently and rigorously reinforced so that they influence group behavior. In weak cultures, sub-systems are usually balkanized, a specific set of convictions is not consistently reinforced, and individual responses to problems of practice are dissimilar. Culture quality, on the other hand, is defined by the extent to which dominant values and beliefs are supported by espoused and action theories. In a positive school culture, underlying assumptions guiding important pedagogical decisions are consistent with the established professional knowledge base (Kowalski, 2003). Studies of effective schools (e.g., Cotton, 2003; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Zigarelli, 1996) have commonly reported that highly successful institutions possess an atypical ethos manifested by traits such as decentralized authority, shared decision making, considerable parental involvement, high student expectations, and instructional leadership provided by principals.

Need to Assess Culture

Some elements of culture, such as artifacts and espoused beliefs, can be identified rather easily; however, they may not reveal a culture's true nature.[1] The greatest influence on organizational behavior is a set of *underlying beliefs* (Schein, 1992), but unearthing them is difficult and time consuming. Some teachers, for example, may be unable to discuss them because they are held at a sub-conscious level (Firestone & Louis, 1999). Suppressing fundamental assumptions is most likely when they are known to be (a) politically unacceptable, (b) professionally irresponsible, or (c) the source of intra-personal conflict (Schein, 1992). Over time, these assumptions go through a metamorphosis in which they become routine behaviors that organizational members encourage and reinforce. Thus, as new organizational members enter the organization, they are pressured to accept these norms through a process called socialization.[2]

Failed efforts to improve schools through staff development help us understand the power of culture. Often educators become enthusiastic about new programs or procedures immediately after attending workshops; but if the innovations prove to be incompatible with a school's culture, they almost always get discarded before being fully implemented (Fullan, 1999). This occurs because school culture influences how educators view the need for change and how they evaluate specific change initiatives. Consider a school in which teachers believe that they have little power to affect student learning. As changes are proposed, this assumption prompts the teachers to view them as uncomfortable, inconvenient, and risky ventures that have little or no prospect of improving learning (Hall & Hord, 2001). When change initiatives conflict with the prevailing culture, they usually fail unless culture is altered or severe penalties are imposed for non-compliance (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

A deeper understanding of school culture reveals why it is essential for educators to accurately understand the culture in which they work (Conway, 1985). More precisely, reform at the school level requires them to first identify counterproductive assumptions and then to analyze them in relation to their effect on reaching an acceptable vision at some point in the future (Schein, 1992). Only then will they be able to pursue culture change as school-improvement strategy.

Culture Inventories

Studies that have reported associations between positive school cultures and higher student outcomes (e.g., Cavanagh & Waugh, 2004; Gaziel, 1997; Gruenert, 2005) have typically been conducted with quantitative surveys of teacher opinions and self-reported behaviors. The validity of such studies is challenged by the contention that culture must be "measured only by observation of the setting using qualitative methods" (Hall & Hord, 2001, p. 194). In large measure, this belief is nested in the realization that an organization's members are often incapable of identifying or unwilling to discuss their actual beliefs (Schein, 1992).

Though quantitative instruments do not identify underlying assumptions directly,

they provide pieces of evidence relevant to institutional culture. Maslowski (2006) points out that after these elements are assessed, "behavioral aspects can be interpreted in terms of values and norms" (p. 28). One of the most popular concepts associated with quantitative assessments is the competing values framework developed by Quinn (1984) and subsequently revised by Cameron and Quinn (2006). After studying six quantitative instruments developed specifically to measure school culture,[3] Maslowski (2001) concluded that they were effective, efficient, and could be used to compare school cultures. He cautioned, however, that they did not produce a reliable measure of the strength of a school's culture.

A growing number of quantitative instruments are being developed for assessing aspects of school culture. Four such instruments are briefly summarized here to demonstrate their usefulness with respect to diagnostic work. Administrators should evaluate the merits of instruments in relation to their data needs, because these instruments vary in cost, complexity, and foci.

School Culture Survey (SCS)

The SCS was developed by Saphier and King (1985) as a diagnostic tool for educators pursuing planned culture change. The instrument was later revised by Edwards, Green, and Lyon (1996) and now contains three subscales: *teacher professionalism* (ten items), *professional treatment* (eight items), and *teacher collaboration* (six items). Response choices use a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*almost never*) to 5 (*almost always*). Reliability (Cronbach's alpha) ranges from .81 to .92.

An extensive study involving the SCS was conducted by Edwards et al. (1996). They administered this and two other instruments, the *Teacher Efficacy Scale* (Gibson & Dembo, 1984) and the *Vincenz Empowerment Scale* (Vincenz, 1990) to 425 teachers in the United States. They found all the SCS subscales to be correlated at a moderate level—an outcome supporting the contention that the instrument measures distinct facets of a commons construct. They also reported that all three SCS scales were significantly correlated with teacher efficacy and with five of the six empowerment scales.

School Work and Culture Profile (SWCP)

The SWCP, created by Snyder (1988), was based on the *Managing Productive Schools* model originated by Snyder and Anderson (1986). After pilot testing and input from a panel of experts, the instrument was reduced to a 60-item questionnaire. It consists of four subscales, each with 15 items: *Schoolwide Planning, Professional Development, Program Development*, and *School Assessment*. Intended to measure work-related behavior in a school, it uses a 5-point Likert response scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Maslowski (2006) reported that the instrument had been subjected to several validation studies, and "Cronbach's alphas for the four subscales were found to be between 0.88 and 0.93, with an alpha for the total scale of 0.97" (p. 16).

A study conducted by Bruner and Greenlee (2004) compared low-achieving schools and high-achieving schools in Florida using the SWCP. They found that the two groups of schools had dissimilar work cultures; on all four subscales, the high-achievement schools had higher means. The researchers noted that the effect size statistics suggested "notable differences between the two groups" (p. 42).

Organizational Culture Inventory (OCI)

The OCI is a quantitative, statistically normed, and validated survey that has been used primarily in business and industrial organizations. Developed by Human Synergistics International (Cooke & Lafferty, 1987), it addresses actual and ideal aspects of culture. With respect to actual conditions, the instrument assesses both individual normative beliefs (when the perspective of only one person is plotted) and shared behavioral expectations (when individual perspectives are combined). A picture of preferred culture is established by measuring 12 sets of behavioral norms associated with three general styles of organizational culture: (a) constructive, (b) passive/defensive, and (c) aggressive/defensive. It has been used most frequently to validate the need for change, planning, and monitoring organizational development programs, supporting programs designed to enhance member engagement, organizational learning, and measuring culture for academic and research purposes Though the OCI has been used primarily in large corporations and small businesses, it is advertised as being equally appropriate for governmental agencies, professional organizations, and non-profit organizations (Human Synergistics Incorporated, 2008).

The focus on behavioral norms is a characteristic that distinguishes the OCI from other surveys that assess more global aspects of culture such as shared values and beliefs. Though behavioral norms are related to beliefs and values, they arguably have greater influence on day-to-day activities and work situations (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988). As such, they "also have a relatively great impact on individual and organizational outcomes and are potentially indicative of environments that support organizational learning and knowledge management" (Balthazard, Cooke, & Potter, 2006, p. 713).

School Culture Quality Survey (SCQS)

Developed by Katzenmeyer (1999), the SCQS is a standardized instrument used to assess teacher perceptions of their work environments and it produces a school culture profile. The instrument has four subscales:

(a) *Shared Vision* (a collective awareness of an organization future members would like to share);
(b) *Facilitative Leadership* (the capacity to actively facilitate the work of organizational members);
(c) *Teamwork* (the capacity to work together productively toward common goals);

(d) *Learning Community* (a cadre of colleagues who are actively seeking and learning together the new skills and knowledge needed to achieve the desired organizational future).

Several studies have examined the relationship between school culture scores and student learning. One was conducted by Borman, Katzenmeyer, Barber, and Moriarty (2002). Comparing low and high math gain schools, they found that two-thirds of the high gain schools had moderate to high SCQS scores whereas only one-third of the low gain schools had such scores.

A more recent study (Herrmann, 2007) was conducted with all nine high schools located in Allen County Ohio. Results revealed that these schools had dissimilar culture profiles. Moreover, positive associations were found between a school's overall culture score (composite of the four subscales) and two performance variables: scores on Ohio's 10th Grade Graduation Test (high positive association) and a school's graduation rate (moderate positive association). This research demonstrates the usefulness of assessing culture in relation to state accountability programs (Kowalski & Herrmann, 2008).

School Culture as Accountability Measure

Transforming school cultures into dynamic learning communities is a recommended strategy to improve student achievement and school performance (e.g., Danielson, 2002: Elbot & Fulton, 2007; Zmuda, Kuklis, & Kline, 2004). A foundational requirement for sustainable organizational change is collaboration by broad-based stakeholder groups in schools that determine specific goals and then work collaboratively and strategically to achieve them (Beaudoin & Taylor, 2004; Fullan, 2005; Marazza, 2003). The required relational trust within such systemic initiatives develops capacity for individuals and schools to respond appropriately to changing student and community needs (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Kochanek, 2005; Sergiovanni, 2007). Likewise, when action plans are assessed regularly and decisions are made based on diverse data, continuous improvement becomes imbedded in school cultures (Bernhardt, 2002; Phillips & Wagner, 2003). These concepts form the framework for statewide school reform and renewal initiatives in Kentucky (Browne-Ferrigno, Allen, & Hurt, in press).

Kentucky's School Accountability System

Passage of the Kentucky Education Reform Act of 1990 (KERA) introduced a dual system of *assessment* of student learning outcomes and *accountability* of school performance (Foster, 1999; Pankratz & Petrosko, 2000). Both cognitive measures (e.g., student scores on standardized tests) and non-cognitive measures (e.g., attendance, retention, and drop-out rates; successful transition to college or workforce following graduation) are used in assigning an annual academic index for each school. The index is then used to assess school improvement measured against state-assigned

improvement goals. The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) is required by law to audit schools that failed to meet their improvement goals and conduct voluntary formal reviews of a sample of schools that achieve or surpass their performance goals to gather data for comparison. A standardized accountability framework is used to support school improvement efforts and cross-school comparisons.

The *Kentucky Standards and Indicators for School Improvement* (SISI) are nine school standards grouped under three broad categories:

(a) *academic performance* (i.e., curriculum, classroom evaluation and assessment, instruction);
(b) *learning environment* (i.e., school culture, external support system, professional development and evaluation), and
(c) *efficiency* (i.e., leadership, organizational structure and resource allocation, comprehensive and effective planning).

Because the accompanying 88 indicators of school performance were developed after a comprehensive analysis of effective schools research literature (KDE, n.d.), the framework is appropriate for whole-school improvement at all P-12 levels.

KDE published a companion *School Level Performance Descriptors for Kentucky's Standards and Indicators for School Improvement* to assist building level personnel in preparing their annual improvement activities and portfolios required for accountability audits or reviews. Each SISI indicator in the *Descriptors* is presented separately with examples of appropriate supporting evidence listed (e.g., curriculum maps and instructional program plans, student performance reports, professional development activities, school governance and committee documents). A matrix is used to display descriptions of actions and activities within four performance levels (e.g., 4 = exemplary level of development and implementation; 3 = fully functioning and operational level of development and implementation; 2 = limited development or partial implementation; 1 = little or no development and implementation) for each of the 88 indicators. Appendix A presents a page about a school culture indicator from the *Descriptors* document.

Although all 88 indicators in the SISI framework are implied district requirements for guidance, assistance, and support to schools, 54 indicators have explicit district accountability responsibilities for oversight and monitoring their schools performance. KDE is required to audit any district that has any low-performing schools within the lowest third of that category (Level 3) for two consecutive accountability cycles (i.e., four years). KDE published a companion *District Level Performance Descriptors for the Kentucky Standards and Indicators for School Improvement*, presented in the same format as the one for schools, to assist district-office personnel in the preparation for an audit. Audited districts are accountable for all 88 indictors in SISI.

Data-Informed Planning and Action

Principals, teachers, and parents use the SISI framework to conduct self-studies about their schools' performance and use data collected to develop comprehensive

improvement plans, a process similarly employed by superintendents and central office personnel to support district-wide efforts aimed at improving schools.

KDE uses the SISI framework to evaluate school progress toward goal achievement in the accountability system when sending teams of trained reviewers to conduct mandated audits and voluntary reviews. KDE-trained teams collect and analyze data from multiple sources of evidence (e.g., documents, interviews, observations) and then assign a numerical rating for each SISI indicator. One member of each team is assigned to input ratings into the central database maintained by KDE. At the conclusion of each accountability biennium, ratings for Level 3 schools and successful schools are compared. Chi-square and gamma computations on the most recent accountability data revealed statistical significance on 45 of the 88 indicators, which are collectively identified as *Variance Points 2004–2006* (see Appendix B).

School Culture

The highest number of variance points (n = 10) are located under the standard for school culture. Table 24.1 displays the 11 indicators under the school culture standard. All but one (i.e., effective assignment and use of staff strengths) emerged as variance points during the 2004–2006 accountability cycle, indicating the critical importance of school culture on student achievement and school performance.

External Application of Accountability Model

Although the SISI framework was developed for Kentucky schools, several states have adopted it without any modification or used it as a guide for developing their own statewide standards to guide school improvement efforts. Nine state departments of education have sought direct assistance from KDE to develop capacity for statewide

Table 24.1 SISI Standard 4: Learning environment—school culture indicators.

Effective learning community with climate . . .	
4.1a	Leadership support for safe, orderly environment
4.1b	Leadership beliefs and practices for high achievement
4.1c	Teacher beliefs and practices for high achievement
4.1d	Teachers and non-teaching staff involved in decision making
4.1e	Teachers accept their role in student success/failure
4.1f	Effective assignment and use of staff strengths
4.1g	Teachers communicate student progress with parents
4.1h	Teachers care about kids and inspire their best efforts
4.1i	Multiple communication strategies used to disseminate info
4.1j	Student achievement valued and publicly celebrated
4.lk	Equity and diversity valued and supported

Source: Kentucky Department of Education (2004).

school improvement efforts. Copies of SISI documents are available from the KDE website.

Discussion

A myriad studies examining planned organizational change have found culture to be the most significant variable determining success or failure. Cameron and Quinn (2006) concluded that many as three-quarters of redesign efforts, including those focused on total quality management and involving strategic planning, either completely failed or created serious problems because they were incompatible with prevailing values and beliefs. Leading education scholars who have analyzed planned change and school improvement (e.g., Cotton, 2003; Duke, 2004; Fullan, 1999) conclude that culture has been no less influential in schools. Thus logically, school improvement seems probable in situations where leaders can (a) diagnose shared values and beliefs, (b) determine the extent to which these values and beliefs enhance or hinder school performance, and (c) forge a plan for changing or replacing counterproductive values and beliefs.

In his studies of public elementary and secondary schools spanning more than 20 years, Sarason (1996) found considerable inertia which he attributed primarily to administrators and teachers. He concluded that educators comprehended neither school culture nor organizational change, and consequently, they were incapable of reculturing schools.

Today, most principals recognize that culture change is difficult but necessary (Barth, 2002). The systemic approach to school improvement in Kentucky, which includes statewide use of the SISI and widely disseminated biennial reports of school audit and review results, has informed educators and parents about the critical influence school culture has on both school performance and student achievement. In fact, KDE regularly receives requests for voluntary audits. Additionally, all principal preparation programs and most professional development activities in Kentucky use the SISI as an instructional resource.

Nonetheless, many principals remain less than enthusiastic about engaging in this process. This reluctance stems from a mix of individual and organizational conditions, such as a lack of confidence, an aversion to change, and a preference for addressing other responsibilities. Their doubts and preferences not only prevent them from addressing culture, they prompt them to behave counterproductively, such as promoting culture change verbally while continuing to act in ways that sustain the prevailing culture (Kowalski, Petersen, & Fusarelli, 2007). Though teachers readily detect such contradictions, they are more prone to emulate the principal's behavior than to challenge it (Reeves, 2006–2007).

Premised on the conviction that understanding culture and diagnostic data lessens aversions to culture audits, this chapter examined the utility of standardized diagnostic instruments and state accountability programs. Both resources broaden our understanding of school culture and of the critical nexus between culture and school performance. They also generate essential evidence that should be used to solve existing problems by virtue of objective and informed decisions.

Given the essential nature of culture audits, surprisingly little research has been conducted on this topic. Additional research is needed in several critical areas including: (a) associations between culture profiles produced from standardized instruments and qualitative data stemming from observations (e.g., levels of collaboration and collegiality), (b) the feasibility of interfacing culture profiles with student performance data (e.g., student test scores, student grades), (c) identifying elements of state accountability programs that potentially contribute to diagnosing school culture, and (d) possible associations between culture profiles and data used to make summative school assessments (e.g., value-added components of state accountability programs).

Notes

1. Artifacts and espoused beliefs, such as those found in school philosophies and visions, may represent "ideal" rather than "real" underlying beliefs directing behavior.
2. Culture is also protected and preserved through the process of socialization—the use of routine and social pressures intended to make new organizational members comply with existing norms (Hart, 1991).
3. The instruments were: *School Culture Survey; Social Work Culture Profile; Professional Culture Questionnaire for Primary Schools; Organizational Culture in Primary Schools; School Values Inventory; School Cultural Elements Questionnaire*. Of these, only the first two were tested in the United States.

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Appendix A: *Kentucky Standards and Indicators for School Improvement*

Standard 4: School Culture

Indicator	*Ratings of Performance*			
	4 *Exemplary level of development and implementation*	*3* *Fully functioning and operational level of development and implementation*	*2* *Limited development or partial implementation*	*1* *Limited or no development and implementation*
4.1c Teachers hold high expectations for all students academically and behaviorally, and this is evidenced in their practice. *Examples supporting evidence:* • Lesson plans • Walkthrough observations • Student, parent, staff interviews • School discipline plan • Student and parent handbooks • Posted behavior standards • Posted academic standards and rubrics • Perception surveys • School council policy • Individual growth plans • Student work	Meets criteria for a rating of "3" on this indicator plus: Students and staff members collaborate to establish, sustain, and demonstrate in practice schoolwide high academic expectations that are applicable to all. Students and staff members collaborate to research and adopt an effective program of schoolwide student behavior that emphasizes self-discipline and responsibility.	Teachers set high academic expectations for all students, challenge the students to set high expectations for themselves and provide the structure and support to ensure student success. Standards of student behavior collaboratively developed, clearly communicated to stakeholders, and equitably applied to all students.	Teachers set high academic expectations for some students, but not all. Standards of behavior are developed by staff members and communicated to students, but not equitably applied.	Teachers do not set high academic expectations for students. Standards of behavior exist, but are neither communicated to students nor equitably applied.

Appendix B: Variance Points 2004–2006*

Standard 1—Academic Performance—Curriculum
Rigorous, intentional and aligned . . .

1.1a Aligned with academic expectation, core content, program of studies *(.82)
1.1b Discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards
1.1c Discussions among schools to eliminate overlaps, close gaps
1.1d Vertical communication w/focus on key transition points
1.1e Links to continuing education, life, and career options
1.1f Process to monitor, evaluate, and review curriculum
1.1g Common academic core for all students *(.94)

Standard 4—Learning Environment—School Culture
Effective learning community with climate . . .

4.1a Leadership support for safe, orderly environment *(.98)
4.1b Leadership beliefs and practices for high achievement *(.97)
4.1c Teacher beliefs and practices for high achievement *(1.0)
4.1d Teachers and non-teaching staff involved in decision making *(.94)
4.1e Teachers accept their role in student success/failure *(.94)
4.1f Effective assignment and use of staff strengths
4.1g Teachers communicate student progress with parents *(.97)
4.1h Teachers care about kids and inspire their best efforts *(.9O)
4.1i Multiple communication strategies used to disseminate info *(1.0)
4.1j Student achievement valued and publicly celebrated *(1.0)
4.1k Equity and diversity valued and supported *(.93)

Standard 7—Efficiency—Leadership
Instructional decisions focus on support for teaching/learning, organizational direction, high performance expectations, learning culture, and developing leadership capacity . . .

7.1a Leadership developed shared vision
7.1b Leadership decisions are collaborative, data driven, performance *(.95)
7.1c Leadership personal PD plan focused on effective skills *(.71)
7.1d Leadership disaggregates data
7.1e Leadership provides access to curriculum and data *(.96)
7.1f Leadership maximizes time effectiveness *(.96)
7.1g Leadership provides resources, monitors progress, removes barriers to learning *(.93)
7.1h Leadership ensures safe and effective learning *(.83)
7.1i Leadership ensures necessary SBDM policies
7.1j SBDM has intentional focus on student academic performance
7.1k Leader has skills in academic performance, learning environment, efficiency *(.93)

Standard 2—Academic Performance—Classroom Evaluation/Assessment

Multiple evaluation and assessment strategies . . .

2.1a Classroom assessments are frequent, rigorous, aligned
2.1b Teachers collaborate in design of assessment, aligned *(.89)
2.1c Students can articulate the expectations, know requirements *(.93)
2.1d Test scores used to identify gaps *(.87)
2.1e Multiple assessments provide feedback on learning *(.94)
2.1f Performance standards communicated and observable *(.83)
2.1g CATS coordination—building and district
2.1h Student work analyzed

Standard 5—Learning Environment—Student, Family, and Community Support

School works with families/community to remove barriers . . .

5.1a Families and communities active partners *(1.0)
5.1b All students have access to all curriculum
5.1c School provides organizational structure *(1.O)
5.1d Student instructional assistance outside of classroom *(1.0)
5.1e Accurate student record-keeping system

Standard 8—Efficiency—Organizational Structure and Resource

Organization maximizes time, space, resources . . .

Organization of the School

8.1a Maximizes organization and resources for achievement
8.1b Master schedule provides all students access *(.87)
8.1c Staffing based on student needs *(.93)
8.1d Staff's efficient use of time to maximize learning *(1.0)
8.1e Team vertical and horizontal planning focused on improvement plan
8.1f Schedule aligned with student learning needs *(.93)

Resource Allocation and Integration

8.2a Resources used, equitable
8.2b Discretionary funds allocated on data-based needs
8.2c Funds aligned with CP goals
8.2d State/Federal funds allocated with CP goals and data needs *(.88)

(Continued overleaf)

Appendix B: Continued

Standard 3—Academic Performance—Instruction

Instructional program engages all students . . .

3.1a Varied instructional strategies used in all classrooms *(.96)
3.1b Instructional strategies/activities aligned with goals
3.1c Strategies monitored/aligned to address learning styles
3.1d Teachers demonstrate content knowledge *(.97)
3.1e Teachers incorporate technology in classrooms
3.1f Sufficient resources available *(.88)
3.1g Teacher collaboration to review student work
3.1h Homework is frequent, monitored and tied to instructional practice * (.96)

Standard 6—Learning Environment—Professional Growth, Development and Evaluation

Researched-based, professional development and performance evaluation to improve teaching and learning . . .

Professional Development

6.1a Long-term professional growth plans *(.87)
6.1b Building capacity with ongoing PD *(.93)
6.1c Staff development aligned with student performance goals *(.96)
6.1d School improvement goals connected to student learning goals
6.1e PD ongoing and job embedded *(.87)
6.1f PD aligned to analysis of test data

Professional Growth and Evaluation

6.2a School has clearly defined evaluation process
6.2b Leadership provides sufficient PD resources *(.86)
6.2c Evaluations and growth plans effectively used *(.89)
6.2d Evaluation process meets or exceeds statutes *(.78)
6.2e Instructional leadership needs addressed
6.2f Leadership provides evaluation follow-up and support *(.9O)

Standard 9—Efficiency—Comprehensive and Effective Planning

School improvement plan . . .

Defining the School's Vision, Mission, Beliefs

9.1a Collaborative process

Development of the Profile

9.2a Planning process involves collecting, managing, and analyzing data
9.2b Uses data for school improvement planning

Defining Desired Results for Student Learning

9.3a Plans reflect research/expectations for learning and are reviewed by team
9.3b Staff analysis of student learning needs
9.3c Desired learning results are defined

Analyzing Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness

9.4a Data used to determine strengths and limitations
9.4b School goals are defined

Development of the Improvement Plan

9.5a School improvement action steps aligned with goals and objectives
9.5b Plan identifies resources, timelines, and person responsible
9.5c Process to effectively evaluate plan
9.5d Plan aligned with mission, beliefs, school profile, desired results

Implementation and Documentation

9.6a Plan implemented as developed
9.6b Evaluate degree of student learning set by plan
9.6c Evaluate student performance according to plan
9.6d Evidence to sustain the commitment to continuous improvement

Note: **Variance points** based on significant differences (chi square .001) between Level 3 and Successful Schools during 2004–2006 accountability cycle are identified by *(Gamma score).