

LEARNING SUPPORTS

Guide for Continuum Mapping

All schools/districts provide learning supports for students. The number of different activities/programs/initiatives/services (learning supports) that are available in any one district can be staggering. Many of these supports were implemented because of a particular funding stream, mandate, or as a reaction to a particular incident. Overtime, it becomes easy to lose track of all the supports that are available and the reasons that they are offered. Supports can also be developed in isolation from other supports rather than part of an integrated system that includes supports for all students, targeted groups of students and those students that require very individualized and intensive supports in order to be successful. Continuum mapping helps schools/districts to view all of the supports that are available to students and to identify which students receive those supports.

The framework for Learning Supports (Attachment 1) includes six content areas (triangles):

1. Supports for Instruction
2. Community Partnerships
3. Safe, Healthy, and Caring Learning Environments
4. Child/ Youth Engagement
5. Support for Transition
6. Parent Support and Involvement

Each of these content areas includes a three-tiered continuum of supports.

Level 1 (green) – **Core** supports that all students receive. When there is a strong **Core**, in all content areas, problems are prevented or significantly reduced.

Level 2 (yellow) – **Supplemental** supports that are targeted for groups of students. When problems are identified early and supports put in place, positive youth development is promoted and problems can be eliminated or reduced.

Level 3 (red) – **Intensive** supports that are individualized by student.

Continuum mapping is an activity that helps districts/schools graphically organize the supports that are available to students in each tier, across all six content areas. Continuum mapping also makes it possible to identify gaps in supports. A completed continuum map can help families and other community stakeholders understand all of the activity that takes place in a school or district and where they might have a role to play in promoting student success.

INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of continuum mapping is to begin developing a system of learning supports and reduce fragmentation and duplication of efforts. The purpose of continuum **is not** to fill in all of the blanks. If you do not have students that require very intensive, individualized supports in order to manage their behavior and ensure their safety and the safety of other students, your school/district would not need to have supports in place for the **intensive** level of the Safe, Healthy, Caring Learning Environments Content Area. If all of your parents participate in the activities that involve parents, your district may not have supports at the **supplemental and intensive** levels of the Parent Support and Involvement Content Area. **Remember:** The supports that are available at the supplemental and intensive levels should be driven by your district data.

1. Convene a team of individuals that are familiar with the support in your school/district. Think about these representatives: administrator, general education teacher, special education teacher, guidance counselor, nurse, at-risk coordinator, Safe and Drug Free Schools coordinator, student, parent.
2. Describe the Six Content Areas of Learning Supports graphic model.
3. Ask the team to generate a list of all of the supports that are available to students in any of the six categories. One way to do this would be to provide all team members with post-it notes and to ask them to write each idea on a separate note. Don't be concerned about the different levels at this point or identifying the specific Content Area for each support.
4. For each support, discuss as a group and decide which Content Area is the best fit. The most important part of this activity is the discussion that is generated – not finding the “right” Content Area. The group should reach consensus about the “best” fit for the support.
5. Now decide the level of support based on these criteria:
 - Is the support available for/delivered to all students? Is it professional development that includes all staff? If yes, then this is a **Core** support.
 - Is the support available to a targeted group of students to meet a specific need or remove a barrier? If yes, then this is a **Supplemental** support.
 - Is the support individualized for specific students? If yes, then this is an **Intensive** support.

Again, it is more important to focus on the discussion and why team members feel a particular support belongs at a particular level.

EXAMPLES

Let's say that you have identified Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW), Talented and Gifted, 2nd Chance Reading, and Assistive Technology as some of the supports that are provided in your district. Since they are all directly connected to the classroom and student access to the Iowa Core Curriculum, these would most likely be placed in the Supports for Instruction Content Area. AIW is for all students and would be

considered Core. Talented and Gifted includes similar strategies that are delivered to groups of students and may be considered Supplemental. This would be true if a group of students are identified as Talented and Gifted and they receive a support that is only available to that group. For example, a math class that is only for those students that have been identified as Talented and Gifted. There could also be activities that are highly individualized for a particular Talented and Gifted student that would be considered intensive. This type of situation demonstrates the importance of the dialogue that occurs during the mapping activity. There is no right or wrong response for where a support may be placed – it depends on how the group has determined the best fit according to the guidelines provided above.

Additional examples of how supports can be mapped by Content Areas across the three tiers is provided as Attachment 2. The supports that you see listed are certainly not an exhaustive list and are only provided as examples. Schools/districts will have supports that include statewide initiatives as well as those that are unique to the needs of that school/district and the resources that are available.

WHAT NEXT

Completing the mapping exercise is a beginning for further discussion and action, not an end. Because supports frequently change, a schedule should be developed for updating information. The information gathered on the continuum map can be used for a number of different purposes. Here are some possibilities:

- ◆ Create a resource guide for your school/district that identifies the supports that are available and contact information.
- ◆ Match the supports on the Continuum Map with learning needs that you have identified from both academic and behavioral data. Are there any gaps in supports? Are there duplications?
- ◆ Identify quality supports that can fill gaps.
- ◆ Re-align resources where duplications exist. Consider using these resources to implement supports where a gap has been identified.
- ◆ Invite community stakeholders to add their services to the Continuum map to generate a community map.
- ◆ Map school/district instructional supports separately for each Iowa Core Curriculum Content Area.
- ◆ Review outcomes for the identified supports. Are the outcomes consistent with school priorities? If data is not available, is there a good reason to continue this support? If data is available, are the results moving in the desired direction? If not, why not? Are you implementing this support with fidelity? Can you improve something about the way the support is being implemented? Is the support worth a continued investment of time or financial resources?
- ◆ Complete a Resource Map (Attachment 3) that includes all of the information from the Continuum Map and provides additional information about targeted groups of students and resources that are dedicated to supports.

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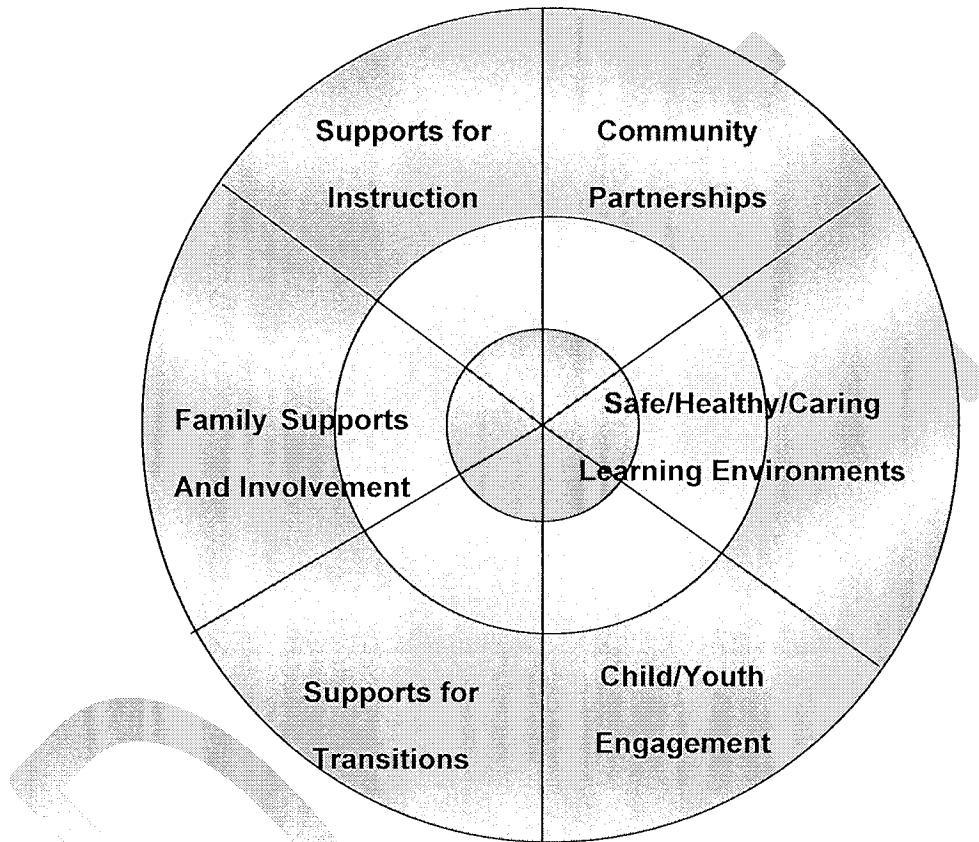
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ATTACHMENT 1: LEARNING SUPPORTS GRAPHIC

LEARNING SUPPORTS

Enhancing a continuum of integrated supports for learning in order to promote (1) student learning in the Iowa Core Curriculum, (2) healthy development, and (3) success in school and in life.



Learning Supports are the wide range of strategies, programs, services, and practices that are implemented to create conditions that enhance student learning. Learning supports:

- ◆ promote core learning and healthy development for all students,
- ◆ are proactive to prevent problems and serve as early interventions and supplemental support for targeted groups of students, and
- ◆ provide intensive and highly individualized supports for some students.

The Six Content Areas of Learning Supports

The six content areas of Learning Supports form the structure for organizing, understanding, and selecting research-based interventions. The content areas provide a broad unifying framework within which a school-family-community continuum of learning support programs and practices can be organized.

▲ ***Supports for Instruction*** foster healthy cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development. Supports for instruction are inherent in the Instructional Decision Making process which uses multiple strategies to provide supplemental and intensive supports to ensure that children and youth have the full benefit of quality instruction.

▲ ***Family Supports and Involvement*** promote and enhance the involvement of parents and family members in education.

▲ ***Community Partnerships*** promote school partnerships with multiple sectors of the community to build linkages and collaborations for youth development services, opportunities, and supports.

▲ ***Safe, Healthy and Caring Learning Environments*** promote school-wide environments that ensure the physical and psychological well-being and safety of all children and youth through positive youth development efforts and proactive planning for management of emergencies, crises and follow-up.

▲ ***Supports for Transitions*** enhance the school's ability to address a variety of transition concerns that confront children, youth and their families.

▲ ***Child/Youth Engagement*** promotes opportunities for youth to be engaged in and contribute to their communities.

ATTACHEMENT 2: SAMPLE Continuum Map

Core	Supplemental	Intensive
<p>Supports for Instruction foster healthy cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development. Supports for instruction are inherent in the Instructional- Decision Making process which uses multiple strategies to provide supplemental and intensive supports to ensure that children and youth have the full benefit of quality instruction.</p>		
Iowa Core Curriculum Authentic Intellectual Work CRISS Strategies KU Strategies	Second Chance Reading Talented and Gifted Program English Language Learners Program Tutoring	Special Education Reading Recovery Assistive Technology
<p>Family Supports and Involvement promote and enhance the involvement of parents and families members in education.</p>		
News letters Open House Activity Back Packs Parent Volunteers Conferences Plays, sporting events, music events Family Homework or Literacy nights	Parent Program GED Program for parents Home Visits Supports to meet basic needs Orientation for new families	Family conferencing Support Networks
<p>Community Partnerships promote school partnerships with multiple sectors of the community to build linkages and collaborations for youth development services, opportunities, and supports.</p>		
Business partners Community Festivals Classroom speakers Internships in private and public sector Homework hotline volunteers	Mentoring program that pairs community volunteers with at-risk students Work experience programs for students with high rates of absenteeism	Individualized work experience opportunity for student with IEPs
<p>Safe, Healthy and Caring Learning Environments promote school-wide environments that ensure the physical and psychological well-being and safety of all children and youth through positive youth development efforts and proactive planning for management of emergencies, crises and follow-up.</p>		
School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Support Teen Screen Olweus Bullying Prevention	Peaceful School Bus Check in - Check out	Wrap Around Check and Connect
<p>Child/Youth Engagement promotes opportunities for youth to be engaged in and contribute to their communities.</p>		
21 st Century Schools Youth representation on school committees	Service Learning Projects for students in juvenile justice system	Restorative Justice
<p>Supports for Transitions enhance the school's ability to address a variety of transition concerns that confront children, youth and their families.</p>		
Orientation for students entering Kindergarten, middle school and high school 8 th grade plan	Summer program for students entering high school who were not proficient in reading in 8 th grade. College visits for student who would be first generation	Individual plan for student reentering school from out-of-home placement