

Quality Review

Purpose

The purpose of the SchoolWorks Quality Review® (SQR) is to measure a school's performance against a set of research-based criteria in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Benefits

SQR develops an objective, evidenced-based report on school quality that can be used for multiple purposes. The reports are often used to:

- Assess progress against a school's stated goals in an improvement plan or accountability plan
- Provide a needs assessment report at the beginning of an improvement planning process

Research Base

SQR is a criteria-driven process linked to research on effective school practices. All of the key questions answered through the process address what years of studies have shown to be practices that lead to higher student results.

Process and Results

The SQR answers its key questions by collecting evidence from student achievement data, school documents, interviews and classroom observations. The evidence is collected and analyzed by a team of qualified educators over the course of several days in a school.

The criteria for the SQR specifically address the following domains of effective practice:

Student Attainment

- Absolute student performance
- Student performance growth

Teaching and Learning

- Curriculum
- Instruction and student engagement
- Ongoing assessment
- Classroom management

Governance and Leadership

- Governance
- School management
- Organizational leadership
- Instructional leadership

Learning Community

- Mission, vision and values
- School climate and culture
- Professional culture
- Student culture
- Continuous process for improvement

The final products of the SQR are a verbal report on the last day of the visit and a subsequent written report. Both reports focus on priority strengths that should be celebrated and priority areas for improvement that must be addressed to better serve students. The reports do not attempt to document every aspect of the school.

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How can the SchoolWorks Quality Review be useful?

The SchoolWorks Quality Review is used for self-assessment, formative assessment and summative assessment. For example, a school may choose to use the process as part of its annual school improvement planning. An agency with oversight and technical assistance responsibilities may use the protocol as part of a needs assessment or assessment of progress against an existing improvement plan. The process usually yields the most value when parties outside the school are involved in gathering at least some of the data.

What are the concrete steps in the process?

Planning and Pre-visit Analysis

The school prepares necessary documents. The team leader works with the school to organize the visit. Team members review documents and write down their initial claims about the school's performance against the protocol's standards.

Evidence Gathering On Site

The team of educators spends multiple days on site, conducting classroom visits and interviews with administration, faculty and students, parents and Board members.

Development of Findings

The team's primary objective is to develop findings about key strengths, areas for improvement and to accompany these findings with recommendations for next steps. To do so, the team works to develop a consensus, based on the evidence available to it. Collected evidence is discussed throughout the process.

Feedback to the School

While on site, the team leader communicates regularly with the school's leadership to keep the school informed of the team's progress and to seek the school's input on that progress. At the end of the visit, the team verbally reports its key findings on strengths, areas for improvement and recommendations.

Written Report

After the site visit, the school will receive a written report that formalizes the findings and recommendations discussed on site.

Follow-up

Using this report, SchoolWorks will work in partnership with the school to develop next steps, including the possible implementation of SchoolWorks Improvement Planning, a process that helps schools plan for and monitor improvement initiatives.



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