



### COMPACT TOOL #3:

## ALIGN THE COMPACT WITH YOUR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Do your parents, students, and teachers understand the goals of your school improvement plan? Your School-Family Compact offers a great opportunity to explain the goals and decide what students, parents and teachers can do together. To reach those goals, everyone needs to be on board!

But there's one hitch: We've found that many school improvement goals are overly general and hard to understand. First, we must put them in family-friendly language and then break them down into specific steps that can be taken to reach them. These steps will form the basis of your School-Family Compact.

This tool lays out a step-by-step process for translating your goals, linking them to priorities in the school action plan, and then identifying specific home learning strategies to carry out the priorities. In the examples that follow on the next pages, there is an improvement goal, a suggested re-wording of the goal, examples of high priority actions from school improvement plans, and specific home learning strategies that match the priorities and that are taken from actual revitalized compacts.

- Step One:** Pick one of your school improvement plan goals. What does it say? How would you explain it to a group of parents?
- Step Two:** Revise the wording so that it's family-friendly and clearly explains what should happen. You also can use this wording for your newsletter, posters, and other communications about your school's plan to improve student achievement
- Step Three:** Look at your school action plan. What high priority actions are listed that match the goal? Select these for your compact.
- Step Four:** Identify some home learning strategies that are linked to the high priority actions. These are what you should discuss with families at each grade level. Revise and make them more specific, based on parents' questions and ideas.

Discussing what the goals and priorities mean can lead to real insights into how students are doing, and what needs to happen in each grade to improve student learning.



First Example: Elementary School Reading Goal

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Step One: Look at the original SIP Goal	Step Two: Revise the wording to make the goal family-friendly	Step Three: Link the goal to high priority actions in your school action plan	Step Four: Identify strategies teachers and families can use to reach the high priority goals
<p><i>Student proficiency in reading on the CMT will increase by 10% over two years.</i></p> <p>Not clear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will all students improve by 10%?</li> <li>• Or will 10% more students reach proficiency?</li> <li>• Where are we now?</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Over the next two years, 10% more of our students will become proficient in reading on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT).</i></b></p> <p><i>For example, the fourth graders who are proficient in reading will move up from ___% to ___%.</i></p>	<p><b>Example from 1<sup>st</sup> grade:</b> Our first grade data show a weakness in sight word vocabulary and application of sight words to text passages.</p> <p><b>Example from 5<sup>th</sup> grade:</b> Our 5th grade CMT results show that students are having difficulty making connections from non-fiction passages to situations in real life.</p> <p>(Note: Just two grade-level examples are given to save space)</p>	<p><b>Grade 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will focus on vocabulary development -- sight words and phonetic pronunciations.</li> <li>• Monthly word lists will be sent to each family.</li> <li>• The school web page/parent section will include the words of the month.</li> <li>• The literacy coach will hold three parent workshops per year on extending vocabulary development.</li> </ul> <p><b>Grade 5:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will focus on strengthening students' ability to make text-to-self connections in non-fiction reading.</li> <li>• At back to school night, each classroom teacher will conduct a short lesson to explain text connecting and how families can continue this learning at home.</li> <li>• Samples of text connecting will be included in the monthly newsletter and on the website.</li> <li>• Two workshops per year will be provided to assist families in strengthening text connecting, with examples from the CMT as a foundation for each lesson.</li> </ul>



**Second Example: Positive Behavior Goal**

<p><b>Step One: Look at the original SIP Goal</b></p>	<p><b>Step Two: Revise the wording to make the goal family-friendly</b></p>	<p><b>Step Three: Link the goal to high priority actions in your school action plan</b></p>	<p><b>Step Four: Identify strategies teachers and families can use to reach the high priority goals</b></p>
<p><i>PBIS will be implemented throughout our school and each classroom, reducing referrals and suspensions by 15% over a two-year period.</i></p> <p>Not clear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is PBIS?</li> <li>• Does this mean that 15% fewer students will be referred and suspended?</li> <li>• Or will there be 15% fewer incidents requiring referral and suspension?</li> <li>• How many students get in trouble now?</li> </ul>	<p><b>All school staff will learn to use a new system to support positive behavior called PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions &amp; Supports). Over the next two years, this will reduce the number of referrals and suspensions by 15%.</b></p> <p><i>In the next two years, referrals to the principal's office will go down from ___ to _____. Suspensions from school will go down from ___ to _____. (Make sure these numbers show a 15% decrease!)</i></p>	<p>Grade level data teams determined that student behavior was affecting academic achievement across all the grades.</p>	<p>Each classroom will introduce PBIS at their orientation and provide parents with sample strategies to continue with these supports at home.</p> <p>A PBIS section will be included in each newsletter highlighting good deeds and positive modeling by students and teachers.</p> <p>The PTO will host a speaker series, which will focus on Positive Behavioral Interventions &amp; Supports which can be done at home.</p>



**Example Three: Elementary School Math Goal**

<p><b>Step One: Look at the original SIP Goal</b></p>	<p><b>Step Two: Revise the wording to make the goal family-friendly</b></p>	<p><b>Step Three: Link the goal to high priority actions in your school action plan</b></p>	<p><b>Step Four: Identify strategies teachers and families can use to reach the high priority goals</b></p>
<p><i>Students' ability in math concepts as measured by teacher observations and CMT will increase by 15% over a three-year period.</i></p> <p>Not clear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does ability mean performance?</li> <li>• What will teachers observe?</li> <li>• How are students doing now?</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Student's knowledge and skills in math, as measured on the Connecticut Mastery Test as well as by teacher assessments, will improve by 15% over the next three years.</i></b></p> <p><i>For example, all students will improve their math scores on the CMT by 5% a year in the next three years, from ____ average score to ____ average score.</i></p>	<p><b>Example from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade:</b> Our latest CMT and district wide data repeatedly show that students need clear and frequent instruction in estimation and measurement in grades K-3.</p> <p><b>Example from 6<sup>th</sup> grade:</b> Data from pre-tests, classroom observations, and CMT results show the need for clear instruction and more practice on problem solving skills.</p> <p>(Note: Two grade-level examples are given to save space)</p>	<p><b>Math/grade 3:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our students will concentrate on mastering skills in estimation and measurement</li> <li>• Teachers will send home a packet of materials for students to use (ruler, compass, tape) with fun activities for students and parents to do at home.</li> <li>• The math coach will host a "Measuring for Success" evening twice per year to make parents aware of the skills the students are expected to know by the end of grade 3.</li> </ul> <p><b>Math/Grade 6:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers will send home samples of problem-solving techniques monthly, with tips to identify key words and phrases that help students choose the correct operation for solving a variety of math problems.</li> <li>• Samples of word problems will be included in each classroom newsletter.</li> <li>• A family math game night entitled, "Solving Math Mysteries: What's the Problem?" will be held in the fall and spring to demonstrate to parents similar teaching strategies used in class, along with fun ways to solve everyday math problems at home.</li> </ul>



**Example Four: High School Reading Goal**

Step One: Look at the original SIP Goal	Step Two: Revise the wording to make the goal family-friendly	Step Three: Link the goal to high priority actions in your school action plan	Step Four: Identify strategies teachers and families can use to reach the high priority goals
<p><i>On the CAPT in reading, the grade level gain at or above proficiency will increase by 15% points over a three-year period.</i></p> <p>Not clear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is grade level gain?</li> <li>• Will all students' scores improve 15% or will the percent of students who are proficient increase by 15%?</li> <li>• What percent of our students are at grade level now?</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>On the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT), the number of students who will be proficient in reading for their grade level will increase by 15% over the next three years.</i></b></p> <p><i>For example, the percent of 9th graders who are reading at a 11th grade level at the end of the 11th grade will increase from ___% to ___%.</i></p>	<p>Weakness in understanding longer passages of non-fiction writing is reflected in our 2010 CAPT scores.</p>	<p>Teachers will provide examples of non-fiction reading essays/stories and provide parents with standard questions that go along with the samples.</p> <p>At orientation and report card night, parents will be encouraged to visit the library and the conference room where samples of required non-fiction books will displayed for parent review and check out.</p> <p>Content area teachers will send home samples of CAPT questions with strategies that can be applied to each type of question. All of these will be in the genre of non-fiction.</p>