



## Focusing tool for Essential School-wide Practices in Literacy

**Purpose.** The School-wide/Center-wide Reflection Tool and Planning Guide serves as a resource for school leaders to reflect on implementation of the Essential School-wide and Center-wide Practices in Literacy.

**Structure.** The School-Wide Essentials Focusing Tool is designed as one option for assessing the level of Literacy Essentials implementation as defined in the GELN “*Essential School-Wide Practices in Literacy*”. These practices include those associated with the leadership team, organizational climate, learning environment, professional learning, allocation of literacy support, responses to individual challenges, instructional resources, family engagement, summer initiatives, and connections with the community. The tool is broken down into corresponding subscales for each essential school-wide practice.

**Scale.** Implementation of each essential practice is measured by 3-5 items on a 6 pt. scale: (1) Not yet considered; (2) Discussed, but no action; (3) Ready to act, but need more information; (4) In planning stage; (5) In process of implementing; (6) Fully implemented.

**Users.** This tool is designed for use by school leaders including principals, literacy coaches, and members of the school leadership and/or literacy teams. Each user should complete the ratings individually; then, participate in the consensus rating dialogue as described below.

**Individual and Consensus Ratings:** Individuals will average scores within each set of items for an essential practice for a total subscale score for each practice. All users will then engage in a dialogue about their ratings and offer objective evidence until the group comes to a consensus rating for each essential practice.

**Interpretation.** An interpretation of individual subscale ratings is limited as no subscale is defined by a comprehensive set of items for a given essential practice. An average rating below four reflects a need for further understanding of that essential practice and/or the school’s status regarding that practice. All practices with low average scores should be considered in the larger context of the school along with other relevant data. Ratings for each essential practice will help identify priority growth edges for the school to focus on as it pursues its literacy goals. Guidance towards developing a more comprehensive picture of selected practices (growth edges) will require additional resources and protocols not yet fully developed at this time.

**Triangulation:** We recommend using the data from this tool concurrently with other school data and in a transparent manner to (a) create school performance profiles with multiple data sources (student background, school process, stakeholder feedback, and student learning); (b) hold regular data dialogues to reflect on and explore the intersections between various data points; and (d) host reflective dialogue to interpret the school status, identify growth edges, and prioritize growth targets for school improvement and renewal or transformation related to literacy and other school goals.

**Growth over Time:** This tool is designed for repeated use over time to support ongoing reflection and assessment of growth on the “*Essential School-wide Practices in Literacy*”. When used this way, the school leadership team can track ratings over time. We project that consensus ratings which increase over time may reflect positive growth of that essential practice at the school level or, at least, positive growth in the level of understanding and intentionality regarding that practice.



### Practice 3: Learning Environment (cont.)

Throughout the learning environment, there is evidence that teachers and students are actively engaged in literacy during science related activities

Throughout the learning environment, there is evidence of events and activities that generate excitement about books

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Total score: \_\_\_\_\_/4 = Average Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

### Practice 4: Professional Learning

Professional learning in our school regarding literacy instruction is developed based on identified learner needs

Professional learning in our school regarding literacy instruction is collaborative

Professional learning in our school regarding literacy instruction is focused on research-supported literacy instructional practices

Professional learning in our school regarding literacy instruction includes modeling and coaching

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Total score: \_\_\_\_\_/4 = Average Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

### Practice 5: System of Literacy Support

There is a system for identifying children who need additional literacy support

There is a system for providing additional literacy support

Additional literacy support for students who need it is consistent with classroom instruction

Highly trained educators are teaching the children who need the most support

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Total score: \_\_\_\_\_/4 = Average Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

### Practice 6: Response to Individual Challenges

- We have systems in place to identify individual learning, physical, visual, and socio-emotional needs that may impede literacy development
- We have systems in place to ensure that individualized support is provided to all students with individual needs that may impede literacy development
- All adults intentionally work to modify learning environments to decrease problem behaviors that may impede literacy development

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Total score: \_\_\_\_\_/3 = Average Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

### Practice 7: Instructional Resources

- Teachers have consistent access to high-quality literacy resources
- Teachers have appropriate professional development to ensure effective use of literacy resources
- Resources reflect culturally diverse characters and themes
- All students have access to well-stocked classroom libraries

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Total score: \_\_\_\_\_/4 = Average Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

### Practice 8: Family Engagement Strategy

- We engage families in learning about family literacy practices
- We provide literacy support to families through social and community networks
- We offer families research-based guidance on how families can support literacy development

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Total score: \_\_\_\_\_/3 = Average Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

### Practice 9: Summer Reading Support

Our school has a summer reading initiative

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We support summer reading by facilitating opportunities for every child to read

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We support summer reading by using texts of high interest to all students

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We support summer reading by providing structured guidance to parents about how to support reading at home

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Total score: \_\_\_\_\_/4 = Average Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

### Practice 10: Connections with the Community

Connections beyond the school provide opportunities for children to read and write for purposes beyond school assignments

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Connections beyond the school provide opportunities for children to develop literacy outside of school hours.

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Connections beyond the school provide access to tutoring or enrichment opportunities

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Total score: \_\_\_\_\_/3 = Average Rating: \_\_\_\_\_